

A WARNING TO AMERICA HABAKKUK 1:1-11

Introduction:

1. Earth may look wonderful from space, but for those who live on this dusty planet things tend to look rather grim.
2. Increased turmoil, rising terrorism, mounting tragedies, unprecedented trauma, increasing pollution, deepening trials, and unparalleled tensions cast dark shadows over earthlings.
3. The world looks more and more like some ominous black sphere with a very short fuse, a time bomb waiting to explode.
4. Is it little wonder that thinking people begin to ask questions? Why is there so much oppression? Why all the injustice? Why do the wicked prosper? Why do the righteous suffer? Why doesn't God do something? Why doesn't God clean up this mess? Why?
5. These questions are hardly new. Centuries before Jesus came to earth, an ancient prophet looked around at the violence and wickedness of the world and cried out to God, "Why do You tolerate wrong? Why are You silent while the wicked swallow up those more righteous than themselves?" **vv. 3; 13**
6. The answers given by the Creator of the universe are carefully recorded in this book called Habakkuk.

I. THE WICKEDNESS OF JUDAH. **vv. 3-4**

- A. The prophet was perplexed. Wickedness and violence seemed to go unchecked.
- B. So Habakkuk took his complaint to God. "Why don't You do something?"
- C. God answered, "I am doing something. Judah will be punished by Babylon."
- D. Then Habakkuk was more perplexed. So he continued his conversation with God. "Why would You use those wretched Babylonian barbarians to judge Judah?"

II. AN AGE OF SIN. **Psalm 12:1** *Help, LORD, for the godly man ceases! For the faithful disappear from among the sons of men.*

- A. Each word told Habakkuk more of his God, and the more he heard, the more exalted God became in Habakkuk's eyes.
- B. But as Habakkuk began to see the perfect holiness of God, he became more and more concerned about the imperfections and sins of God's people.
- C. The hearts of the men and women who came to worship at the Jerusalem temple were much the same as when they had bowed before pagan altars!
- D. Simply knowing the Law did not produce holiness. God's people were not obeying the commands of their God.
- E. To Habakkuk this situation was intolerable. Here was Judah, a people called by the name of God, blessed with the Law of God, daily bringing shame on His holy name by flagrant disregard of what was right.
- F. They twisted and perverted the Law, and even did violence against those who tried to walk by it.

III. THE PROMISE OF GOD TO PUNISH SIN. **vv. 5-10**

- A. Man never believes that God is serious until His judgments come.
- B. So it was before the flood, and with Sodom, and with Lot's sons-in-law; so it was with Ahab and Jezebel; so with this destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians.
- C. Since they will not be brought to repentance by the long-suffering of God, He will take another course of action with them.

D. This judgment of God upon Judah will be:

1. A public punishment, which shall be beheld and regarded among the heathen, which the neighboring nations shall take notice of and stand amazed at.

Deuteronomy 29:24-25 *All nations would say, 'Why has the LORD done so to this land? What does the heat of this great anger mean?' Then people would say: 'Because they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD God of their fathers, which He made with them when He brought them out of the land of Egypt.'*

2. An amazing punishment, so strange and surprising, and so much out of the common road of Providence, that it shall not be paralleled among the heathen. **v. 5**
3. A speedy punishment. **v. 8**

IV. A LESSON FOR AMERICA. **2 Timothy 3:1-5** *But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power.*

A. The wickedness of America is not unlike that of Judah in the days of Habakkuk. **vv. 2-4**

B. We are living in an age of sin when there is no fear of God. **Psalms 36:1** *An oracle within my heart concerning the transgression of the wicked: There is no fear of God before his eyes.*

C. God has not turned judgment away from America. **v. 5**

D. God may use other nations to bring harsh judgment upon our country. **v. 6**

1. Could it be that God is raising up the Chinese to bring His judgment against America?