# Habakkuk

Habakkuk the record of the prophecy given to the Prophet Habakkuk.  
  
It foretells JeruSalem’s destruction by Babylon, written sometime around the middle 7th Century BCE.  
  
  
*Most of this book is poetry*  
  
Something that only a Bible translator would notice is when words are in the form of Hebrew poetry. There’s a definite cadence that can be seen in the original language. Therefore, because this is the chosen style of God, we’ve tried to recreate it as it was originally intended: in poetic verse.  
  
  
*Why use poetry?*  
  
Poetry must conform to a certain rhythm and style. These act as memory aids, helping you to recall the words, making it easier for messages to be spread via the most common communication method of the time: song.  
  
  
*Who was talking?*  
  
When translating the words of the Prophets, you can’t help but notice the constant changing personal pronouns (I, you, he, they, etc.) used in the text. It makes it very confusing to figure out exactly who’s talking.  
  
However, we now realize one reason for the confusion that’s usually overlooked: God didn’t speak to the Prophets personally. Rather, He sent His messages through a mediator, either referred to as a messenger (an angel), or sometimes as ‘The Word’ (which some interpret to mean Jesus).  
  
So there are actually *three* voices speaking:  
  
 1. That of the Prophet, who sometimes quotes himself,  
  
 2. That of the angelic messenger who’s bringing the message from God,  
  
 3. The words of God Himself (which we put in italics).  
  
  
How can we tell the difference? From the context, the pronouns, and the tenses:  
  
  
 1. When the Prophet speaks, he’s either clearly reporting what he said or did, or is simply saying what was happening.  
  
 2. When the angelic messenger speaks, he talks about God in the third person.  
  
 3 When God is speaking, all references to God are naturally spoken in the first person.  
  
  
Did we get it all right? Probably not, but it has been an honest attempt at doing so. If you think you’ve spotted a place where our choice is incorrect, please let us know and we’ll reconsider it.

### Habakkuk

## Chapter 1

1**These are the things that Prophet HabakKuk saw:**   
  
 2‘How long, O Lord, must I cry out  
 As You don’t listen [to me]?  
 How long should I yell to You over wrong  
 As You don’t bring us salvation?  
  
 3‘Why have You shown toil and trouble to me,  
 As you look upon misery and irreverence?  
 Right opposite me, there’s judging going on…  
 But it’s the judge that carries away!  
  
 4‘Because of this, the Law has been shaken,  
 And in the end, there’s no justice;  
 For the godless are tyrannizing the righteous,  
 And the justice they receive is perverted!’  
  
5[Then the Lord replied]:  
  
 *‘Look, O you who’s speaking such words…*  
 *Gaze and wonder at wonders,*  
 *And thereafter, just pass away!*  
 *For I’ll do a work in your day,*  
 *Which you won’t believe and none can describe!*  
  
 6*‘{Look!} I’ll awaken the Chaldean people,*  
 *And they’ll travel across the breadth of the earth*  
 *To inherit tents not their own.*  
  
 7*‘[Their king] is known to be fearsome,*  
 *And he [creates] his own kind of justice,*  
 *For his only concern is himself.*  
  
 8*‘His horses leap higher than leopards,*  
 *And [their teeth] are like those of Arabian wolves.*  
  
 *‘His horsemen will make great advances…*  
 *They’ll spread [their wings] out like eagles*  
 *That are eager for something to eat.*  
  
 9*‘Then, upon those who don’t show him respect,*  
 *He will bring a consumption…*  
 *It’ll come upon all who oppose him,*  
 *And he’ll gather captives like sand.*  
  
 10*‘Then among all their kings, he will revel…*  
 *Their sovereignty will be things he plays with,*  
 *And he will mock every fortress…*  
 *He’ll build siege mounds around them and win!*  
  
 11*‘But thereafter, his spirit will change;*  
 *For, he will repent and then say,*  
 *This power has come from my God!’*  
  
12[And Habakkuk replied:]  
  
 ‘O Jehovah, my God and most Holy One;  
 You’re from the beginning!  
 But, although there’s no reason for us to die,  
 You’ve ordered up justice…  
 For discipline and correction, You’ve shaped us.  
  
 13‘If Your eyes are too pure to look at the bad,  
 And You’ll not view any evil;  
 Why do You endure those who hate You?  
  
 ‘And why do You remain silent and watch  
 As the impious are consuming the righteous?  
 14Will You let us be like the fish in the sea  
 Or like things that crawl [on the ground]  
 Where no one is taking the lead?  
  
 15‘You’ve let [Babylon’s king] catch destruction…  
 Yes, he pulled it up with a hook  
 And lifted it up with his net…  
 Then he brought it all in with his dragnet,  
 And this is why he’s so joyful.  
  
 16‘So to his dragnet, he’ll offer sacrifices,  
 And to it, he will also burn incense.  
 For by it, he’s fattened his portion,  
 And provided himself the choicest of food.  
 17So he’ll keep on casting his net  
 To destroy many nations, not spare them!’

### Habakkuk

## Chapter 2

1‘[Now I’ve told You] that during my watch,  
 I’ll be the one who stands guard…  
 I’ll climb on the rocks and observe,  
 Then listen to all that You’ll tell me,  
 So I’ll know what I must say in reply  
 When I’m receiving correction.’  
  
  
2Then the [messenger of the] Lord told me this… He clearly said:  
  
 ‘Now, you must write down this vision  
 To elevate those who’ll read it.  
 3It’s a vision of a time in the future…  
 It’s what will happen in the time of the end.  
  
 ‘Be patient if it seems to be late;  
 For it’ll surely arrive…  
 No way will its coming be tardy.  
  
 4‘To the depths of My core, I don’t find favor  
 In one who would hold back [these words].  
 Yet, by their faith, the righteous will live!  
  
 5‘But, those who are arrogant and filled with hate,  
 And any man who’s a braggart  
 Will receive no [blessings] at all.  
  
 ‘Now he’s widening his soul like the grave,  
 And like death, he never gets filled.  
 6So, if he should assemble all nations  
 And gather their peoples [under his rule];  
 Wouldn’t they say this against him…  
 Wouldn’t they speak this riddle and say:  
  
 *‘Woe to the one who takes what’s not his…*  
 *How long [can he stand] all the pressure?*  
 7*For suddenly, there’ll come those who’ll bite him…*  
 *Yes, those plotting against him will awaken*  
 *And then they’ll saw him in two!*  
  
 8*‘For, many nations, he’s ravaged.*  
 *But those who remain, will soon ravage him*  
 *Because of all the blood that he’s shed,*  
 *And the things that he did to their cities and lands…*  
 *What he did to all those who lived there.’*  
  
 9‘O you who’ve desired all their wealth;  
 These same things will come upon you and your house…  
 Yes, on you who’ve arranged your ‘nest’ in the heights,  
 And whose hands have brought evil [to others].  
  
 10‘For, you’ve shamed your own house!  
 Since, throughout your life, you’ve sinned,  
 And you’ve ended [the lives] of [many great] men.  
  
 11‘Therefore, from your stone walls, I’ll yell,  
 And the beetles in the woods will repeat it:  
  
 12*‘Woe to those who build their cities on blood,*  
 *And [grow] their countries by doing what’s wrong!’*  
  
 13‘Yet, it’s by Jehovah the Almighty  
 That so many have been tested by fire,  
 And the nations have proven faint-hearted!  
  
 14‘So, like the waters that cover the seas,  
 The earth will soon become filled  
 With the knowledge about all His glory.  
  
 15‘But, you’ve forced your neighbors to drink  
 Something intoxicating and cloudy  
 In order to gaze on their private parts.  
  
 16‘So drink deeply to the glory of your dishonor  
 And get extremely excited!  
 For thereafter, you’ll be completely surrounded  
 Within the cup in Jehovah’s right hand,  
 Where your glory will meet with dishonor.  
  
 17‘By Lebanon’s irreverence, you’ll also be covered,  
 And the misery of wild beasts will terrify you,  
 Because of the blood of men that you’ve shed,  
 And the badness within [your] cities and lands,  
 Along with the [evil] of your people.  
  
 18‘So, what good are the idols that they’ve carved,  
 Or the molded castings they’ve shaped…  
 The false things that they can see with their eyes?  
 For your people rely on things that they’ve shaped…  
 On idols that they’ve made, which can’t speak!  
  
 19‘So, woe to those who say to the wood [idols]:  
  
 *‘[It’s time for you to] awaken and rise!’*  
  
 ‘And who say to things made of stone:  
  
 *‘Become great!’*  
  
 ‘For, they’re only things you can look at…  
 Things that you’ve hammered from silver and gold,  
 Which are still unable to breathe.  
  
 20‘But, in His Temple, Jehovah is [alive]!  
 So in every land, they should bow before Him!’

### Habakkuk

## Chapter 3

1**The prayer of Prophet HabakKuk, in a song:**  
  
 2‘O Lord,  
  
 ‘I heard Your report and I was afraid.  
  
 ‘O Jehovah,  
  
 ‘I thought of your works and I trembled.  
  
 ‘You stand between the two cherubs,  
 And in coming years, all will know You…  
 Yes, when that time arrives, You’ll be seen.  
  
 ‘And when disturbance comes into my life,  
 You’ll think of [me] and show mercy.  
 3For, God will come out of TeMan…  
 Yes, from the shadow of Mount Paran,  
 The Most Holy one will arrive.’  
  
PAUSE  
  
 ‘His virtues cover the skies  
 And His praises fill the [whole] earth…  
 4Like all kinds of light is His brightness.  
  
 ‘In His hands, He carries a trumpet;  
 And by His might, He sends us His love.  
  
 5‘So, from His face, a word will go forth,  
 Which will travel from there to the plains;  
 6And where His feet stand, the [whole] earth will shake.  
  
 ‘When He looks upon them, the nations dissolve…  
 By [His] might, the mountains will break  
 And the hills of the ages will melt.  
  
 7‘On the tents of Ethiopian peoples,  
 I saw distress about to arrive,  
 And the tents of Media were also disturbed.  
  
 8‘Were You provoked by their rivers, O Lord…  
 Did their rivers make You so angry  
 That against their sea, You took action?  
  
 ‘O you who’re arriving on horses;  
 As you ride, are you bringing salvation?  
 9No, Jehovah has told you to stretch out…  
 Against their tents, you must stretch tight your bows!’  
  
PAUSE  
  
 ‘You’ll divide up their lands by their rivers,  
 10And when they see you, they’ll start having birth pangs;  
 For they’ll know that the rivers will be their new borders.  
  
 ‘Then the abyss will shout to the heights  
 When it sees that you’re arriving.  
 11For the sun won’t rise in the sky,  
 And the moon will fail and stand still.  
 But, by the flash of your arrows  
 And sparks from your weapons, they’ll move.  
  
 12‘When [God] threatens, He’ll leave just few in their lands;  
 For in His rage, He wipes nations away.  
 13But to His people, He’s bringing salvation,  
 And He will save His anointed.  
  
 ‘But to the heads of the lawless, He will send death…  
 First, He’ll put chains on their necks,  
 Which will shake and astonish the mighty,  
 And then He will chop off their heads!’  
  
PAUSE  
  
 14‘Yes, He’ll split the heads of the mighty,  
 After He makes them all shiver.  
 So then they’ll put down their reins  
 And look for places to hide…  
 Where they’ll be fed like the poor.  
  
 15‘For He’ll lead their horses into the sea,  
 And there they’ll muddy its waters…  
 Which will bring fear to all, when they see it.  
  
 16‘On my lips, there was the sound of a prayer…  
 Trembling entered my backside and bones…  
 Yes, all of my ways were disturbed.  
 But I’ll find rest in that day of distress…  
 When I leave the people to whom I was sent.  
  
 17‘For their fig trees won’t bear fruit anymore,  
 And there’ll be no grapes on their vines.  
 Their olives will also be gone,  
 And there’ll be no crops in their fields.  
  
 ‘At that time, there’ll be no more sheep,  
 And there’ll be no oxen left in their barns.  
  
 18‘But I’ll shout in joy to Jehovah…  
 I’ll rejoice over my Savior, God!  
 19For Jehovah God is my strength,  
 And He’s provided straight paths for my feet…  
 Upon a high place, He’s set me,  
 And by His song, I’ll win!’