Book of Habakkuk

By Charles Feinberg

Charles Feinberg:

Nothing to do with the way that, those three k's were used today and it is a beautiful word in Hebrew, Habakkuk, from Habbak, which means what you ought to be doing every day of your life to your husband or your wife. Embrace. That's what that means. This is how to make a tremendous success out of life, how to have victory over defeat. Oh, name is embraced, how? He's been in the midst of doubt then he embraces God for all his worth. And he goes from doubt to faith. Writing is about the 7th century BC. Luther had a beautiful word, Martin Luther. He was a real student of the word. Habakkuk signifies an embracer or one who embraces another, takes him into his arms, he embraces his people, takes them into his arms, comforts them, holds them up as one embraces a weeping child to quiet it with the assurance that if God wills it shall soon be better. It's a little bit of a homiletic, it's good, But you know we need some homiletic of course. He seems to have prophesied about the end of Monas' reign or the early part of Josiah's reign. Something [inaudible]. Well there is no actual date but I would say about 7, you know 7th century BC. How much more do you want, you have a hundred years there. You have a little bit of a place to rattle around in especially the short people like me.

Now the judgement of Judah by the Chaldeans is impending. Right in the [inaudible]. And the first chapter verses 2-4 oh how that is confirmed and corroborated in 2 Kings 21 and 22.
What do we read here, the burden which Habakkuk the prophet did see he saw it God gave it to him in vision form. Oh Lord how long shall I cry. Here's a man whose heart was burdened for God and for truth. Listen to him. Oh Lord how long shall I cry and thou art not here. God seems to be so behind time, he's never behind time and he's never ahead of time. Even cry out unto the violence and thou would not save. We want our own time table. As one dear brother said I remember when I was in uh the board of elders in my church. You ought see what Godly men, all of them I'm sure and I wasn't even worthy in a sense to be in their company but I tell you we'd get down and pray about things that were so important and so on and then almost invariably we'd wind up and say oh lord, lord, do something about it and do it quickly.

We have a time table for the Lord. As if we have to tell as with a person now uh we want you to do this and you don't have too much time to make up your mind. Who are we to dictate to God? Remember when God seems to be slow to meet our judgement it's because of his love. You say well I can't understand why that lady takes so much time with that child. It's because it's her child. If she wacked it over the head all the time she wouldn't have anything to see afterwards. You know you can hit the head that is right above the shoulders so many times. That's the grand central station you knock that out of commission, God help us I mean it. You have to watch there are places in the human body that were made for chastisement and the head isn't one of them. That's why the head has two ears and has two eyes and one mouth without us sees and hears twice as much as we talk. I gotta get on. Oh Lord how long shall I cry thou art not here? Here's a man of God. You'd say well that's no skin off his nose. That's what you say. It may not be any skin off his nose but it's agony on his heart. Even cry out unto the violence and thou would not save it. It just seems as if the devil gets nine chances out of ten. Seems as if he's always ahead.
Where have we been? Well here it is. Judgement of Judah by the Chaldeans is pending. Corroborated I said 2 Kings 21-22. Moral, spiritual decline in the nation. You know that worried some, it did Habakkuk. You say Lord I grant you immediately my heart exercised by thee is in agony over the ungodliness and corruption in the nation. But please Lord will you do me a favor, one favor. Will you please tell me if you're going to chasten them why don't you do it with some kind of a rod or staff or whip or paddle and not use a nation less righteous than they are? You see we want to dictate to God and everything, it's amazing. Isn't it amazing how God has been in existence all these years from eternity and he needs our help. But why would you want to worship a God like that that you had to dictate to. Why dost thou show me iniquity and cause me to behold grievance, verse 40 violence is before me and there are those who raise up strife and contention and the only reason Habakkuk could say then he was telling the truth was because God by his spirit had given him wisdom to know that, he wouldn't have known that himself.

Therefore the law is slacked. Oh it's like a nose of clay. Put whichever way they want. Justice shalt never go forth; the wicked doth encompass about the righteous therefore justice goes forth perverted. You can't get a decent bit of justice anywhere. Spirit should decline. And this dear man Habakkuk you won't read very long before you'll see it. Here was a dear saint of God deeply tender nature, spiritual character. Beloved his people and he watched over them. He didn't say well it doesn't make any difference what will be will be yes. And some people wrongly use certain names. Well he proved to be a good Calvinist now waits a minute. Wait a minute. After all Calvin was a man of God, Arminius was a man of God. Let's not get in these fights you know between so and so and so and so. One fellow said I can hardly see a cat fight or dog fight without taking sides, well quite it. That's that's not as bad as some of these other fights. Let's not waste our energies fighting the people of God. That's one thing about BSF. That's why God's
prospered it and make it personal and that's why he will. They are in the important areas they're not in these puny areas. How much strength. I tell you the devil must laugh himself sick before he gets himself so worried he goes to be early.

When he sees how so many saints do his work. Quite it. he needs a kick in the shins not any help. Let's not do the devil's business. The reference in this beautiful beautiful book in the last verse is on my stringed instruments isn't that beautiful. You, those of you who know how to play oh if I had time I’d certainly, certainly would be jealous of you. Yes. To the chief singer, the last verse of the third chapter, 19 verse, and third chapter 19th verse. To the chief singer on my stringed instruments there [inaudible] reference there, definitely. Makes it more than probable that he was a musician and those who had that wonderful privilege were the Leviticus musicians. And so on. So if you want an analysis of the book, beloved. The prophet's perplexities and anguish chapter 1:1 to 2:4 the prophet's perplexities and anguish then 2:5 to the end of the book 3:19 aren't you glad you took up shorthand? God's proclamations and answer you say why is it the preaches often, they shouldn't do it by strangulating a text but why do they always go for alliteration. It helps memory. And anything that'll help you remember the word of God or the truth of God is marvelous, it's good, do it. Yes.

Now if you want a simple illustration or shall I say outline, analysis of the book, chapter 1 the problem of the triumph of evil and that's with us and I dare say beloved is gonna be with us until Gabriel blows his horn. The problem of the triumph of evil. God allows evil. Great men of God have struggled with this, not only Habakkuk but others, yes. The triumph of evil, that problem. Then God's reply second reply chapter 2 his third reply in chapter 3. In other words Habakkuk please don't rush things I know I have a time table of my own, yes. What's the key verse? Oh how well it's known ha-ha. Yes the just shall live by faith it's out of this book,
Habakkuk 2:4. Behold his would that is lifted up is not upright in him that's arrogance before they're over with they think they know more than God. But strong adversity but the just shall live by faith in God. The key words are live by faith, Habakkuk 2:4 the key word the key verse lives by faith what's the key thought in this book? Always get something that you can have as a peg to hang things on. Here it is. The prophet's concern, his perplexity over God's permission of evil but if you haven't learned by this time go back in Genesis and one of the heart breaking things is is what happened there in the second chapter and the third chapter, the third chapter.

Why did God permit evil altogether? Some people keep saying that. You deal with the unsaved ones about their relationship to God. Well what is your God is he all powerful, yes. Is he all loving, yes. Is he all-fatherly all concerned yes. God is love. Ok. Then why in heaven's name did he allow sin to get into the world in the first place? Well if I knew all the things about the workings of God I’d be as great as God and I'm quite a ways away from that. And these people that ask these questions think that they can think God's thoughts after him. The only way to think God's thoughts after him is in the context of the Word of God, and then you know you're on the right track according to the rules and so on. But between us brothers and sisters if what happened in Genesis three did not ultimately by God's working and overruling bring ultimate and greater glory to God than ever before then God would never have allowed it to happen. How would this work, they don't know it yet. After Calvary how would they have ever known the extent, the length and breadth and height and depth of the love of God except you see it? you see it Christ height and the depth length and the breath that's the love of God. Christ didn't die just like that no. he died this way and so to indicate to you and me truly it was so that he embraces the whole world.
And so my dear friend, prophets perplexed about the permission of evil. It has perplexed oh lord why don't you deal with those things. You know what God likes to say to you and me. Uh if you know it don't you think perhaps I know it too? Don't you think I know it too, I do know it. Very definitely. He's perplexed over the permission of evil and the use of all things of the Chaldeans, the Babylonians, that with the old name of the Babylonians, [inaudible] in Greek. As the rod of correction for Israel they were less wicked, Israel was than the others. Oh how thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil. How can you ever, ever allow this to happen? Yes Stand on my watch yes. And set thyself upon the tower to one will watch to see what it will say to me well I shall answer when I’m reproved oh my my my here it is. First chapter verse 12 art thou not forever lasting. Lord you know of this universe, you created it. Shall not die lord. We know you have purposes of grace and rescue and deliverance oh Lord thou hast ordained them for judgment. Oh mighty God thou hast established them for [inaudible]. Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, that's it. Cast not a look on iniquity. That means not just that he looks at it but looks at it with complacence.

Why lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously and holdest they tongue when no one could devoureth the man that is more righteous than thee. It's amazing how many people no matter how young they are that know more than God. At home there were seven of us and never a dull moment and when anyone when the parents weren't around that took airs to himself you know what we'd often say, who died and left you boss? And that's the answer to Habakkuk. This world is not without a moral compass. The very fact that you have some concept of morality where did you get it? It doesn't come from the unredeemed heart of a man or even from the heart of a redeemed man. It comes from God. He's the source of all truth. Thou art of purer eyes than to look upon evil. You cannot behold those that deal so treacherously. Then God says ok. He, in
the second chapter says I’m gonna set a watch and see what happens. So the book begins with questioning and doubt, ends with assurance, certainty, and confidence.

The pivot of the whole book is three chapters, its chapter 2:3-4 the just shall live by faith. Oh definitely, not what you could do not what you hope to do not what you resolve to do but what Christ has done in Christ Jesus by faith. I tell you that he said that during world war two when the going was unbearable and unspeakable there were a certain group that were unshakable I'll never forget as long as I live the battle of Britain. You say well they're staunch people, thank God they are I know that. But what sustained them was faith in God. And there were preachers of God there that said that devil of a Hitler will never he will never triumph and he didn't. After all God is on his throne and he hasn't abdicated it yet and he never will and thank God he's seated there when he riseth he's gonna rise to shake terribly the earth, that's what my bible says. the central passage is 2:4 the prophet lays hold on God in prayer, evil conditions in Judah after all they'd been privileged Zealous, jealous for the holiness of God thank the Lord. And he waits for God's answer. Chapter two he's saying.

And then he prays at the end, oh a concerned man of God and a man who hears God's message will do what? He prays. Oh yes. We have chapter three verse one the prayer of Habakkuk the prophet upon [inaudible], that means loud crying. You say well I like to pray silently, praise the Lord be sure you do a lot of it. I like to pray loudly praise the lord. Do it. not while somebody else is praying and all because you'll get confused and so on and if you keep doing that you're liable to think you it he's giving you the answer to your prayer no no no you'd both better look to the Lord, yes. And God hears silent prayers. You know some of the greatest prayer that have been prayed on the face of God's created earth have been just two words. Oh God. Oh God. and for unsaved ones just four words, oh God save me. yes. you don't need a lot.
It's the condition of the heart, not your vocabulary. It's a big word to begin with don't try to teach your children that before they're one year of age, it’s a long word. So he's praying for the intervention of the hand of God in the affairs of Israel. You see just because, just because God has chosen doesn't mean he's oking everything.

And you get that impression often with the people who are just starting out the work and you'll have them in your classes at BSF and that's understandable. Well why in the world did the Lord choose them? Why didn't he choose us, why didn't he choose somebody tod- well for one thing, you say he had made them for his purpose, see. I remember hearing some of the old ones during world war 2 well they said God is going to give victory, he'll never allow that devil of a man, that demon of a man Hitler remember? And I heard even good Christian gentile folks say remember God loved them God chose them. You know it's all those dear old saints that were agonizing in Israel you know what they said? they didn't mean to be irreverent they said you mean we're God's chosen people, let some other nation be the chosen people once in a while and get it in the head. Well. You have to take it in context.

God never, I often say God has yet to make his first mistake and he’s not gonna make it. Isn't that a wonderful assurance? He's not gonna make it. So here it is. He says write this out; make it so plain that you can run to spread the message. What a stimulus to service. And who's the proud one there, in 2:4 well the proud one there soul is lifted up is not right in him that's the Chaldeans. So here he prays at the end, prays for the intervention of hand of God in the affairs of Israel as of old. And in verse 2 the wrath is to fall on his people. Yes, definitely. Right the vision made it plain upon the tablet that he may run that readeth it and then look here in the third chapter in verse 2 oh Lord I've heard thy speak and was afraid oh Lord revive thy work in the midst of the years make known in wrath remember mercy what's the meaning of that? The wrath
is to fall on his people because they deserved it. God always mixes wrath with mercy. The whole world, hear me, was worthy on its own of destruction and yet out of the grace of God he populated this whole world with eight people. you say talk about an investment man alive I wouldn't invest in the bank after so many years go from two people then four with Cain and Abel, go from four people to eight! Well God can make the whole world out of nothing, he sure can. Let's not limit God; God's hand is not shortened. So the answer to the plea of the prophet is in the form of what appearance of God coming in judgment mingling as I said wrath with mercy. Coming of the Lord to judge but recollecting in this third chapter recollecting the coming at Sinai here it is.

Oh my dear friends and he winds up this triumph of faith in Habakkuk yet I will rejoice in the Lord, verse 18 I will joy in the God of my salvation, look at this. This isn't feet that are so full of lead you can hardly lift one after the other. The Lord God is my strength he'll make my feet like hinds feet. Make me walk upon mine high places. You don't have to go dragging. This to the chief singer on my stringed instruments, yes. Addressed to God and God to all mercies the effect of the prophet is to bring out what? Faith in God and all his doings. Now the day of the Lord will be the theme in Zephaniah and we'll begin with that next time. I do want to get to the glory and the kingdom to I will apologize to all the Minor Prophets and the Major Prophets for going so rapidly over them but time as one fella set tempus fugut and never come backut.

Now we have 15 more minutes and I want to allow before our break I want to allow for some questions. Someone's already handed in this word and I rather think it's a lady's because it's in that kind of a nice script. We know Jonah went in person to deliver God's message to Nineveh. I like that. If you have a question always start with something positive that you do know. That is. You see too many people, even in classes and everything else they go from the unknown to the
unknown and that where they remain. Go from the known! This I know. I know that my
redeemer liveth and in the last day is gonna stand upon the earth and even though the words
devour this flesh yet shall I see God and shall see him for myself and not as another. Yes. We go
from the known to the unknown you can wind up in the known then. Here. We know Jonah went
in person to deliver God's message to Nineveh yes he did. He went by fish express.

How would other people, other prophets deliver God's message to the gentile nations they
were addressing. May I give a word of instruction? I see it in so many of these letters they talk
about Gentile nations. There is no other kind of nations. That's what the word Gentile means.
Gentile nations means nations nations. That's like talking about a Greyhound and then if you say
greyhound dog now you see grey in a Scandinavian language means dog. Grey and then hound
that's a dog hound and then if you say a greyhound dog my you're that's what you call three
stanzas, dog dog dog. What do you have against the dogs? No don't say gentile nations. There is
a nation, Israel and the others are gentiles or nations. Gentiles come from a Latin word
[inaudible]. That's where we get the word Gentile. So don't say gentile nations. I almost have to
scribble all over books I get from these learned folks that write and they're always talking about
gentile don't do that. Time is so short let's spend it on what matters.

How were the other prophets delivering God's message to the nations they were
addressing. There was my friends then as now a universal language. yes. A universal language
like today as we say it's English. You say I'm thrilled I don't have to learn any other language.
Well let's not put it that way it is a wonderful language. Very expressive and so on. So that's
universal language. There was one in the time of Scripture what was that? Well it was Aramaic.
It was known throughout. That's why the Assyrians in their vile defiance of God there before
Jerusalem at the time of Sennacherib in the 26th chapter of Isaiah they could speak they said
don’t talk to us in the Hebrew language the Jude-and language [inaudible] but talk to us Aramaic. They still speak. Our Lord Jesus spoke in Aramaic. He spoke in Aramaic.

I have a question from a dear friend recently he was in Detroit first year I was there I was on my way to do Jewish missionary work in Michigan in 1932 after after I had been one year in seminary that was the year I met my wife in Chicago on the way she was a missionary there and on the children under a denominational work in Chicago and so I stayed in a certain home and they became just like my parents and so one of the family. Tom Greene was his name a family like and all I got a letter from the sister, there was a son and a daughter. She said Tom would like to know and he was a minister. course I don't think he ever went to seminary that doesn't mean everything you see uh some folk go to college and their college bread on one brand loaf but at any rate she said would you please write, Charles would you please write, Charles will you please write Tom because he wasn't to know what language our Lord Jesus spoke.

I said there are indications you see my professor in theology Dr. Shaffer founder of the seminary always said men, be like a detective if you want to study the word and know the word. Look for clues! That honors the word, you see. God says things to be understood and so I said our Lord Jesus spoke in Aramaic and you can get it even from your English text. The King James version, NASB, NIV the New King James we worked on that for a little while too for the folk down in Tennessee, Nashville, Tennessee. Uh Nelson, folk Thomas Nelson, he's named after Lord Nelson now belongs to a dear brother who was from uh the Middle East, good Christian gentleman. So I said look through and you’l notice which being translated is did [inaudible] portions. When he says Jairus’ daughter, [inaudible] well that's not Hebrew. That’s not Greek. You won't find it in any of those. Talletha is like to rah but it's Aramaic. You see our Lord Jesus actually said it in Aramaic but the Spirit of God had the scriptural writers write it in
Greek and then he said which being translated is. So [inaudible] means made to rise. [inaudible] open! Open your eyes. So uh and the way to know it friends is which being translated is so it's being translated form what? Aramaic yes. I'd say a man'll find out how to do it. you know if there're two dogs running around out there, not that we should be compared with dogs but the two dogs out there and they want to be friendly it's amazing they don't talk but hey can rub their noses or whatever they get to the place where they're not chewing at each other. And man finds out you know it's amazing how I wanta go so and so but of course there are languages too that are universal languages so how do they speak. Well I don't doubt, thank you lady, I I don't doubt that he spoke in the general langue, Aramaic language.

There are universal languages like today is English. Who was the proud one in Habakkuk 2:4 that- the enemy thank you that’s the enemy, the Assyrians because that's the one uh proud one is [inaudible] the just shall live by faith. He's on the other side of the spiritual spectrum. Yes mam, thank you. All these questions are received with real appreciation and that comes by the courtesy of BSF. What response can I give my class this year if they ask what happened to Jonah? When, before or after it? What happened to him you mean in the fish? You know some point ever since the humor of [inaudible] they think that Jonah in that prayer there when he was in the fish uh that he probably had a little writing table and a little lamp and a chair just like thy provided you know for [inaudible] and Elijah. Uh and uh so on. No. He wrote that he said that prayer when he was in the fish and he wrote it later on. What will be your response when they ask what happened to Jonah?

Now if you mean there he was kept alive by God no question about it. After all he couldn't live without air for one thing and don't forget a big fish has to have air too doesn't it? It's no problem. My God that could make all those fish and animals so if they ask what happened to
Jonah just say what he said himself in his hymn of praise, thanking God for God's preserving him. Well somebody's gonna say well all those gastric juices and all why worry about that? God could protect him. Someone has said you know the reason the fish gave up Jonah he could not masticate him and he couldn't digest him. Neither one, so on. There's some lady that once asked a question which ought to be written beloved. How's this one? See that's the trouble I can't hear will someone closer

[Speaker 2, audience member]

What happened to Jonah at the end of the-

[Feinberg]

Oh! at the end of the book! Bless you I didn't indicate that I thought maybe- you see I have trifocals did you know that and by the way I must thank BSF cuz I wrote and said I'm going into surgery and was exactly three weeks ago the 9th of July. This is what, the 30th exactly. It was on a Wednesday and after two hours now everybody's gonna tell about the operations but after two hours of dilation in less than thirty minutes a cataract was removed not not not like the cataract of the Nile, you know what a cataract is? They are huge areas of stones rocks like the first cataract was elephantine, the ebb and so on but this is a covering of the eye that was removed and an intra-ocular, Dr. uh Jensen will tell you all the details of that there was put in sowed in a lens, now I know they advertised about 15 minutes is what they take and all. Don't want anybody playing around with my eye for 15 minutes. The whole thing takes about 6 hours so I wanna thank you I wrote here I don't know where tit was I wrote pearl Hamilton or someone else here and they were very gracious to remember in prayer and when I had a call later on beautifully, beautifully helped.
What happened to Jonah after it we do not know. Now the interesting thing beloved is that before God called him to go to Nineveh he was a prophet in Israel you see? But the important thing is this precious book some people never get through it at all. How many of you? All the rest you close your eyes, close your eyes. How many of you read through this blessed book once in your life? Praise the Lord. How many have read it thre- a lot of you keeping your eyes open that's not cricket as we say in England that's not Cricket. How many of you read three times? Ten? Oh bless your heart how many read it 15? Now well reading the bible doesn't get you to heaven but believing its message will. But God has given me a desire to read this blessed book I read it four times every year. You say well my you what else do you do well a few things. Get a chance to go down to San Antonio you know how to do it I'll tell you. In my Bible you see since there is one fourth of the Bible in the new and three fourths in the old I try to read three times as many pages in the Old as in the New. Now don't do it this way or you'll be three fourths of the time in the old and only one- you can do them together. Ten pages in the old and three, two to three in the new and you can do it in 90 days, that's three months.

That's the way we read it, I do, four times a year. You say well my must mean you know a lot know that means it takes a long time to get through a head like that. You know right around here you know rights here that are some of the, the roughest bones you know the strongest bone in your body are right here and for a reason. Right here and then this and then some people cut if off I don't know why but here and then you have the eyelash and the lids and all that and then that uh wonderful wonderful uh uh moisture there and so on so 90 days you can do it. Somebody says well you must spend the whole day no. I spend I daresay less time than some people so reading the morning news. All depends on where that's important. And then now since I've been over 50 years working in Isaiah one of these days I’m gonna hope I can get to understand it more
uh I read in the original I read Isaiah 15 days each time. I read 7 pages in the Hebrew every day and that I get through in 15 days that means twice I used to do it once a month twice or once every two months I said well that's not enough I'd better do it a little more if I ever want to get a handle on it so every 15 days seems to fit. Now where's it said judgement is God's strange work now you would ask and it'd be the exact chapter I will look it up but I will there's one more minute so if you'll just let me.

Yes. Judgement is God's strange work; it is in the scripture yes. Uh wouldn't you know [inaudible] anybody have a oh look at this it says gentile nations shame on them. Shame on them. Though they didn't that wasn't part of my work on this no I didn't say that OK. Judgement is God's strength well judgement is such a general word if you can't find it in the word uh look for the and this is a good uh help always look for the word in the passage that is the least common like strange is more uh uncommon than is uh judgement. Did anyone have it? I hear my friends here that might have it. Strange. S-t-r-a-I think that's the way they spell it now strange work judgment is God's strange work. Oh wait a moment wait a minute ha-ha here it is Isaiah 20 oh good for you Isaiah 20 that's the point that's why these peop- if you don’t use those you don't get your money's worth out of that. Isaiah 28:21 yes. You see been in Isaiah so long you can get [inaudible] Isaiah 28 and 21. This is not the Bible that I usually use I have certain ones that I do my reading in uh Isaiah 28:21 yes. And the way that reads beloved is the Lord shall rise up as a [inaudible] he shall be angry as in the valley of Gibeon that he may do his work his strange work and bring to pass his act his strange act yes.

Judgment is God's strange. It's not something he delights in. No living parent will say ok you've done just a little you've transgressed my word just a little but some time when you do more I'm gonna let you have it by the barrel between the eyes. Isaiah 28:21. The Lord bless you
you have 15 minute and fellowship fellowship that's what heaven's gonna be about. Thank you.
Yes. Ok. You're welcome. Good to be here. Did you get it Isaiah 28:21 my dear, there you are.
Oh yes good idea, no I didn't get no I could you do that yeah and uh where will I - [inaudible murmuring and talking].