Habakkuk 1:1-11 – How Long, O Lord?
When God is silent in a world gone wrong.

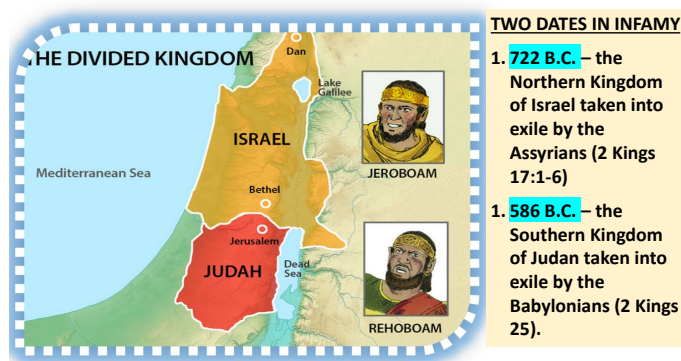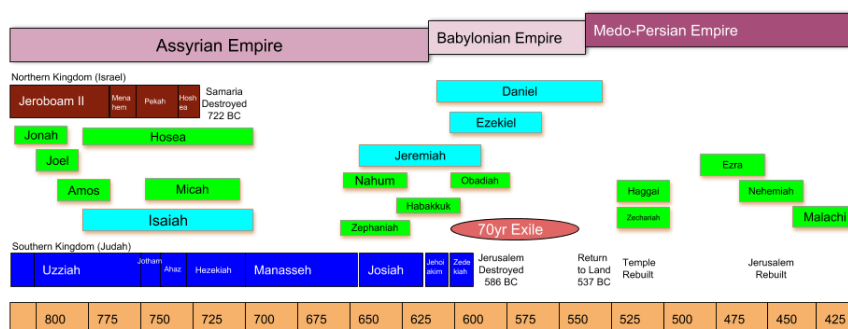**Preamble to the Series – "What in the World, God…" The Book of Habakkuk**

Life often raises hard questions: Why does God seem silent? Why does He use broken people and unjust systems? How long must we wait for His justice? How can we rejoice when everything falls apart?

The book of Habakkuk walks us through these struggles, showing that real faith doesn't ignore our questions—it brings them to God, waits for His answer, lives by faith, and chooses joy.

> חֲבַקּוּק - Habakkuk = "embrace"

- Habakkuk wrote around 612 and 586 BC – before the Babylonians invaded and destroyed Judah and took the survivors into exile.

Timeline of the Prophets

TWO DATES IN INFAMY

1. **722 B.C.** – the Northern Kingdom of Israel taken into exile by the Assyrians (2 Kings 17:1-6)

1. **586 B.C.** – the Southern Kingdom of Judan taken into exile by the Babylonians (2 Kings 25).

Habakkuk's BIG QUESTION: How do we deal with questions of injustice and suffering in light of our relationship with an all-powerful God?

Theological themes
- 1. The problem of injustice:
- A) Why does God allow injustice to continue in our world? (1:1-4)
- B) Why does God use the wicked as part of his righteous judgement and discipline of the righteous? (1:12-2:1. See Deut 28:20-25)

- 2. The sovereignty of God. (3:17-19)
- 3. The need for faith and hope in times of crisis and hardship. (2:4b)

HABAKKUK
The Perplexed Prophet

The Rise of Babylon (612 BC)

THE PROPHET'S FIRST COMPLAINT:	THE PROPHET'S SECOND COMPLAINT:	THE PROPHET'S PRAYER OF TRUST:
"Why don't you stop your people's sinfulness?" (1:1-4)	*"How could you use worse people to judge bad people?"* (1:12-2:1)	*"What you have done, do again! Judge and save!"* (3:1-15)
God's Answer: *"I am raising up the Chaldeans..."* (1:5-11)	God's Answer: *"The vision awaits its appointed time...wait for it"* (2:2-20)	Habakkuk's Resolve: *"I will quietly wait...I will rejoice... I will take joy in the God of my salvation"* (3:16-19)
1:1-11	1:12-2:20	3:1-19
THE QUESTION OF GOD'S INACTIVITY	THE QUESTION OF GOD'S INCONSISTENCY	THE QUESTION OF GOD'S INABILITY
Judgment for Judah	Five Woes for Babylon	Judgment & Salvation for the Earth

The Invasion of Babylon (586 BC)

All nations will someday answer to the God who judges and saves:

SOMEDAY:
"The earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." (2:14)

TODAY:
"But the Lord is in His holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before Him." (2:20)

From confusion and gloom → *to trust and praise*

Key Verse (2:4):
"The righteous... (Romans 1:17)
"...shall live... (Hebrews 10:38)
"...by his faith." (Galatians 3:11)

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Habakkuk 1:1-4

- The first 4 verses are a prayer of lament, similar to those found in the psalms. See Psalm 6:3, 35:17, 82:2 and 94:3, for example.
- There are also WHOLE individual psalms of lament like Psalm 6, 13, 22, and 88 as well as communal psalms of lament like Psalm 44, 74, and 79.
- Habakkuk was apparently a man of prayer but he was getting impatient.

Habakkuk 1:5-11

Lessons for God's people:
- 1. God is immanent. He is closely involved in the socio-historical reality of Israel, and he is deeply involved in His people today. (Theism versus Deism).
- 2. There is mystery to our life of faith in this world. Yet, God is sovereign and will work out his good purposes (Rom. 8:28). We know now only in part (1 Cor 13:12 cf Deut 29:29, Isaiah 55:8).

WE MUST TRUST GOD ABOVE ALL!