

The Christian's Worry: Why Does God Tolerate Evil?

Habakkuk 1:1-11

The Righteous Will Live by Faith

1. The Question: Why does God tolerate evil?

The Problem of Evil: If God is all good, and God is all powerful, why is there so much evil in the world?

A. The Prophet's Complaint: How long O Lord?

Habakkuk 1:1-3a | ¹ The oracle that Habakkuk the prophet saw. ² O Lord, how long shall I cry for help, and you will not hear? Or cry to you "Violence!" and you will not save? ³ Why do you make me see iniquity, and why do you idly look at wrong?

B. The People's Condition: Evil is everywhere!

Habakkuk 1:3b | ^{3b} Destruction and violence are before me; strife and contention arise.

C. The Prophet's Conclusion: There is no justice.

Habakkuk 1:4 | ⁴ So the law is paralyzed, and justice never goes forth. For the wicked surround the righteous; so justice goes forth perverted.

2. The Answer: God doesn't tolerate evil forever, judgment is already on the way.

A. God's admonition: Look around You!

Habakkuk 1:5 | ⁵ "Look among the nations, and see; wonder and be astounded. For I am doing a work in your days that you would not believe if told.

B. God's announcement: Judgment is coming, but not from where or from whom you'd expect.

Habakkuk 1:6 | ⁶ For behold, I am raising up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, who march through the breadth of the earth, to seize dwellings not their own.

C. God's agent: More wicked than the offender.

Habakkuk 1:7-11 | ⁷ They are dreaded and fearsome; their justice and dignity go forth from themselves. ⁸ Their horses are swifter than leopards, more fierce than the evening wolves; their horsemen press proudly on. Their horsemen come from afar; they fly like an eagle swift to devour. ⁹ They all come for violence, all their faces forward. They gather captives like sand. ¹⁰ At kings they scoff, and at rulers they laugh. They laugh at every fortress, for they pile up earth and take it. ¹¹ Then they sweep by like the wind and go on, guilty men, whose own might is their god!"