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Havakuk

(Habakkuk)

Introduction

In this document, we can read the prophet Havakuk's (Habakkuk's) discussions about Yahweh God. Havakuk lived in Yehudah (Judah) and this document was likely written by 600 before Yeshua/Jesus (B.C.) Havakuk questions God as to why he punishes his Israeli relatives when they're more godly people than those who attack them. Yahweh answered that he sent armies from Bavel in order to punishment them. At that time, the Babylonians solders were very feared because they were very fierce and had already defeated Ashur and Mitsrayim. Havakuk didn't understand why his master Yahweh would allow that. He also asked God, "Why are you silent while the wicked destroy those who are more godly than them?" (1:13). God answered that he would step in and help in due course: "...godly people live by their faith." (2:4)
The other part of this document is the prophecy about the coming destruction of evil people. Havakuk still fears God's curse on Yehudah, but he trusting that his people would be saved and given of strength to endure the difficulties that they were experiencing. This document finishes with a song praising the Yahweh for his faithfulness.

Main components of this document

The complaints of prophet Havakuk and the answer of Master God *1:1–2:4*
The destruction of evil people *2:5-20*
The praying for Havakuk *3:1-19*

Lighter type marks additions. Underscores join parts of a single source word.
Struck words are untranslated. The ◘ sign marks a verse with no text.
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Readers' Version

1:1 Here is the message that the prophet Havakuk (Habakkuk) saw:

Havakuk's complaint · Southern kingdom

2 For how long, Yahweh, must I call for help before you listen?
I cry out about the violence, but you haven't rescued me.
3 Why do I have to keep seeing injustice and looking at trouble?
Destruction and violence are all around—there's such strife, and conflicts keep happening.
4 That's why the law is paralysed and why justice doesn't prevail—
because those who do good are surrounded by wicked people, so justice gets perverted.

Yahweh's response · Southern kingdom

5 Watch the other countries and observe them, and be astonished and amazed,
because I'm about to do something in your time
that no one will believe would happen, even if they were told about it.[1]
6 Listen, I'm about to stir up the Babylonians[2]—
that fierce and impetuous empire
that marches around the world to seize cities for themselves.
7 They're dreaded and feared.
They go by their own rules to boost their own pride.
8 Their horses are faster than leopards
and more menacing than the wolves in the evening.
So their horsemen arrive from a great distance, then come charging—
they fly like an eagle that's swift to devour.
9 They all come for violence—
hordes of faces advancing like the wind in the wilderness.
They gather captives like sand.
10 They scoff at kings, and rulers are just a joke to them.
They laugh at fortresses as they pile soil up around them and capture them.
11 Then they sweep past like the wind and move on.
They become guilty of thinking that their own strength is their god.

Havakuk's second complaint · Southern kingdom

12 Yahweh, aren't you the eternal God?
You're my heavenly protector who won't die.
Yahweh, you've appointed them for judgement.
Our rock, you've established them for punishment.
13 Your eyes are too pure to endure seeing evil,
and you're not able to look on wrongdoing with favour.
Why then have you tolerated those who are treacherous?
Why are you silent while the wicked destroy those who are more godly than them?
14 You've made those people like the fish of the sea—
like reptiles that have no ruler.
15 The invader brings them all up with a fishhook.
He drags them up with his fishing net.
He catches them all in his drag net,
which makes him happily celebrate.
16 Therefore he sacrifices to his fishing net
and burns incense to his drag net,
because it's his net that gives him plenty of food,
and his food is the richest kind.
17 So will he keep harvesting with his net?
Will he continue destroying nations without mercy?
2:1 I'll stand at my guard post and station myself on the watchtower,
and I'll wait there to see what he will say to me,
and how I should respond when I'm corrected.

Yahweh's second response to Havakuk · Southern kingdom

2 Yahweh responded, saying:
"Write this vision clearly onto tablets
so that messengers can run with them and read them aloud. **3** This vision is for a future time, but in the end anyone waiting for it will see it happen, because when it comes, it won't delay.[3]
4 Listen, those who don't have noble desires are puffed up,
but godly people live by their faith.[4]

The punishment of sinners · Southern kingdom

5 Wine betrays the arrogant man so that he won't rest.
His appetite becomes like the cemetery—always wanting more,
and like death which is never satisfied.
The invader takes over all the nations,
and captures every people group.
6 Won't all those peoples create a saying to ridicule the invader and a taunting song and riddles about him? They'll say
'It won't end well for those who take what doesn't belong to them. As you take more and more, it will become heavier and heavier for you.'
7 Won't those you've taken from suddenly organise themselves—
won't you tremble when they wake up?
Then you'll become spoil for *them*
8 because you've plundered many nations.
All the remnants of the nations will plunder you because you've taken lives
and acted with violence against the land and cities, and everyone who lives in them.

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1 RV 1:5 · Cross-ref. Acts 13:41.

2 RV 1:6 · Cross-ref. 2Ki 24:2.

3 RV 2:3 · Cross-ref. Heb 10:37.

4 RV 2:4 · Cross-ref. Rom 1:17; Gal 3:11; Heb 10:38.

Readers' Version

9 It won't end well for anyone who's used evil gains to furnish his house.
He wanted to set his nest on high to keep himself safe from the hand of evil,
10 but because you've destroyed many nations,
you've brought guilt onto yourself.
11 The stones in the wall will cry out,
and the timber rafters will answer them.
12 It won't end well for anyone who builds a city with blood,
or who establishes a town with wickedness.
13 Listen, isn't it Commander-in-chief Yahweh who ensures that
those peoples are just playing with fire
and those nations will just get exhausted from their efforts?
14 The world will be filled with the knowledge of Yahweh's splendour
as surely as the oceans are filled with water.[5]
15 It won't end well for anyone (nation) who forces their neighbour to drink—
you'll pour your anger out on them to make them drunk
so that their nakedness becomes exposed.
16 You'll be filled with shame instead of honour.
Now it's your turn—drink and then your uncircumcision will be exposed.
The cup in Yahweh's powerful right hand is coming around to you,
and your honour will be covered over with disgrace.
17 The violence done to Levanon will bounce back and overwhelm you,
and the destruction of animals will terrify you,
because you've taken lives
and you've acted with violence against the land and the cities, and everyone who lives in them.
18 How can an idol profit you when it was just formed and shaped by its human maker?
It's a teacher of lies because its maker uses his own imagination when he makes these speechless 'gods'.
19 It won't end well for anyone who tells the piece of wood to wake up,
or for the one who tells that speechless stone to stand up.
Can these things teach?
Yes, it might be plated with valuable gold and silver,
but there's absolutely no life in it.
20 In contrast, Yahweh is in his sacred temple.
Let everyone in the world be silent in his presence.

Havakuk's prayerful song · Southern kingdom

3:1 A prayer of the prophet Havakuk (Habakkuk) designed to be sung:[6]
2 Yahweh, I've heard the report about what you've done,
and I'm in awe of your work, Yahweh.
Do it again in our times—
show us again in this age.
Despite your severe anger, remember to have compassion.
3 God came in from Teyman in Edom,
and the sinless one from Mt. Paran. (Instrumental break.)
His splendour blanketed the skies,
and the earth was full of his praise.
4 His brightness was like the light—
rays flashed from his hand
where he kept his power.
5 Deadly disease went ahead of him,
then the plague followed along behind.
6 He stood and measured the earth.
He looked and made the nations tremble.
Even the ancient mountains were shattered,
and the everlasting hills bowed down.
His ways are everlasting.
7 I saw the people in tents in Kushan in trouble.
The tent curtains in the Midyan region were trembling.
8 Was your rage against the rivers, Yahweh?
Was your anger against the rivers,
or your fury against the ocean,
when you rode in on your horses and your victorious chariots?
9 You got your bow out ready to use.
Each arrow was a promise you'd made. (Instrumental break.)
You split the earth open with rivers.
10 The mountains saw you and twisted in pain.
A storm brought heavy rain down on them.
The deep sea raised its voice—
it sent up high waves.
11 The sun and moon have stopped in their places
with the light from your arrows as they fly by,
yes, with the gleam of your flashing spear.
12 You have marched over the world in your fury.
You've trampled down the nations in anger.
13 You went out to rescue your people—
to save your anointed one.
You crush the leader of the house of wicked people
to strip him from the thigh up to the neck. (Instrumental break.)
14 You have pierced the head of his warriors with his own arrows,

5 RV 2:14 · Cross-ref. Isa 11:9.

6 RV 3:1 · Note The meaning of the Hebrew word transliterated 'shigyonot' is unknown, but assumed to be some kind of musical directive. (Also in Song/Psalm 7:0.)

Readers' Version

since they came like a storm to scatter us—
their gloating was like someone who destroys weak people in secret.
15 You trod on top of the sea with your horses—
churning the many waters.
16 I heard, and my insides turned to jelly.
My lips quivered at the sound.
My bones start aching, and my legs tremble beneath me.
However, I will wait quietly for the day of distress to hit the people who invaded us.
17 Even if the fig tree doesn't produce buds
and there is no fruit on the grapevines,
and although the olive tree stops producing,
and the fields yield no food,
and although the sheep and goats can't return to their pens,
and there are no cattle in their stalls,
18 I'll still praise Yahweh.
I'll celebrate because God saves me.
19 I trust my master Yahweh for my strength,
and he makes my feet agile like a deer's feet.
He helps me climb up to my high places.[7]
For the musical director, on my stringed instruments.

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7 RV 3:19 · Cross-ref. 2Sam 22:34; Psa 18:33.