

## God Rules

Habakkuk Chapter 1

### God Rules The Universe From Beginning To End

- He is lord of heaven and earth. Acts 17:22-31
- *“Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people” (Proverbs 14:34).*
- *“It is an abomination to kings to commit wickedness: for the throne is established by righteousness” (Proverbs 16:12).*

### God’s Rule Includes Chastening And Judgment Of Nations

1. In Genesis 6-9 God judged the world through a universal flood. (*Genesis 6:5-7*)
2. God chastened those who tried to build *“a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven.”* by diversifying their languages and scattering them *“upon the face of all the earth” (Genesis 11:1-9).*

### God’s Rule Includes Chastening And Judgment Of Nations

3. Sodom and Gomorrah were utterly destroyed for their homosexual sins by fire and brimstone which God rained down upon them (*Genesis 18-19*).
4. Isaiah revealed that God would *“stir up the Medes against them ... And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah” (Isaiah 13:1, 17-22).* City would not be inhabited.

### God’s Rule Includes Chastening And Judgment Of Nations

- NOTE: God’s chastening and judgments reflect His patience and love as He seeks to save men.
1. When God promised the land of Canaan to Abram, He delayed the fulfillment of the promise for four generations because *“the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full” (Genesis 15:16).*
  2. The great cities of Sodom and Gomorrah would have been spared if God could have found only ten righteous people (*Genesis 18:23-33*).
  3. God sent chastisements and judgments upon Israel, the Northern kingdom, which were not taken to heart (*Isaiah 9:8-10:4; cf. Amos 4:6-13*).

### God Uses Nature, Nations, & Individuals in His Rule

- Joel 1:1-7 Locust invasion.
- Isaiah 44:24-45:1 Cyrus to conquer Babylon.
- *“the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men” (Daniel 4:17; cf. Daniel 2).*

- All the world should see in us the reverence expressed by Habakkuk, *"The Lord is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him"* (2:20).

## God Overrules the Wicked to Fulfill His Purpose

God is not the author of wickedness in any form or in any man, but He overrules the wicked intentions and deeds of men to accomplish His own purposes.

1. The King of Assyria is identified by God as *"the rod of mine anger"* against sinful nations, *"howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so; but it is in his heart to destroy and cut off nations not a few"* (Isaiah 10:5-7).
2. God said that after using Assyria to chastise and destroy sinful nations, *"I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks"* (verse 12).

## God Overrules the Wicked to Fulfill His Purpose

Habakkuk wrestled with the question, how can God let a nation so wicked as Babylon punish one *"more righteous"* than itself?

1. First, the prophet protested, wondering how long God would allow wickedness to persist in Judah without chastisement (1:2-4). When God revealed that He would use Babylon to chastise Judah,
2. Habakkuk protested, how can God allow the wicked to devour *"the man that is more righteous than he?"* (1:6, 12-13)

## God Overrules the Wicked to Fulfill His Purpose

3. The prophet learned that we must *"wait"* for God to fulfill His purposes in His own time and way, for *"the just shall live by his faith"* (2:1-4).
4. Yes, God saw the sins of Babylon and announced woes against it, and woes against all who seek answers and solutions except by trusting in God (2:5-20). *"But the Lord is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him"* (verse 20).
5. In chapter 3, Habakkuk extolled the greatness of God and affirmed his trust in Him in the face of every tragedy and dilemma of life.

## Human Power Cannot Overrule or Defeat God

The stubbornness and arrogance of man causes him to imagine that he can escape the hand of God. (Pharaoh asked, *"Who is Jehovah that I should obey his voice?"*) (Exodus 5:2) In fact, man often ignores altogether the hand of God and imagines that he himself is in control of the course of events.

When God announced he would *"stir up the Medes"* to destroy Babylon, God said they could not be bribed or bought off (Isaiah 13:17). Material prosperity cannot deliver a nation from temporary chastisements or from final destruction at the hand of God.

## Human Power Cannot Overrule or Defeat God

- Military might cannot deliver a nation from God's hand. *"He delighteth not in the strength of the horse: he taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man. The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy"* (Psalms 147:10-11).

## Human Power Cannot Overrule or Defeat God

- Edom thought itself impregnable, nestled and protected in the high mountains like an eagle's nest. God said through Obadiah, *"The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground? Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord"* (Obadiah verses 3-4).

## What Can We Do?

- A. *"In the day of adversity consider"* (Ecclesiastes 7:14).
- B. Pray for our nation! (1 Timothy 2:1-6).
- C. Examine ourselves! (2 Corinthians 13:5)
- D. Help others to seek and find God! (Acts 8:4).

## Conclusion: God Holds the Future.

We do not know WHAT the future holds, but we know WHO holds the future.

- 1. In these uncertain times, people should see our unshakeable faith in God as we patiently wait for Him to fulfill His purposes.
- 2. All the world should see in us the reverence expressed by Habakkuk, *"The Lord is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him"* (2:20).

People who are not serving God must be told that the future holds a final judgment, when we all will stand in His presence, followed by eternity in heaven or hell.

1. Chastisement is a call to repentance and a reminder that sin brings destruction.
2. Let the erring Christian confess his sins, repent, and pray God's forgiveness (Acts 8:22-24).
3. Let those who have never obeyed the gospel put their faith in Christ, repent, confess his name, and be immersed in water for the remission of sins (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; Romans 10:10).