



# Gaines Chapel

AMEC  
*Grounded, Growing and Glorifying God*

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## **Bible Study**

January 17, 2023

### **A STUDY OF PRAYER**

**BACKGROUND: HABAKKUK 3:1-19**

## **LESSON 1**

**2024: THE YEAR OF MOVING FORWARD IN FAITH AND FLOWING IN THE FAVOR OF GOD**

### **Why Habakkuk?**

#### **Who He is:**

A prophet of the Old Testament, Jeremiah's contemporary. One explanation of his name means to embrace. Tradition makes him a priest of the tribe of Levi. The Book of Habakkuk gives the best picture of the prophet. He is known as a minor prophet, but his words have a major influence on those who read them with a desire to embrace the Lord!

#### **His BOOK:**

Has three sections:

- I. Prophet's Questions and Lord's answer
- II. Five Woes Against Tyrants
- III. His Prayer

### **Part I: Questions and Answers**

- a. Fits the traditional pattern of prophets.
- b. Great prophets saw themselves as spokespeople for the Lord.
- c. Habakkuk spoke to the Lord for the people (Intercessor)
- d. Two questions:

Q1: Why does violence rule where there should be justice?

1. Prophet's sense of dismay
2. Internal injustice or oppression were possible explanations.

*A1: Lord stated He was using Chaldeans (Babylonians, led by Nebuchadnezzar) as instruments of His judgment.*

Q2: How can you use someone more sinful than we are to punish us?

A2: *He waited to hear and subsequently heard—Habakkuk 2:4 “Behold the proud, His soul is not upright in him; But the just shall live by his faith.”*

The term “faith” has more of a sense of faithfulness or conviction than results in action.

## Part II: The Woes

Habakkuk’s woes are not unlike those of the other prophets who denounce the various kinds of tyranny (2:6-20):

- A. Plunder
- B. Becoming rich and famous by unjust means
- C. Building town with blood
- D. Degrading one’s neighbor
- E. Idol worship

This part ends by declaring the sovereignty of the Lord.

## Part III: The Prayer

This is a psalm. It is a hymn that extols the Lord’s triumph over His people and their foes.

This book influenced the Apostle Paul and Habakkuk 2:4 became a central theme of his theology, and even influenced Martin Luther, leading to the Protestant Reformation, one of history’s greatest religious upheavals.

## PRAYER

- Involves the dialogue between God and people, especially his covenant partners.
- Dialogue: conversation, discussion, chat, talk, discourse, negotiation
- Pervasive throughout the bible.

### Old Testament:

- Israel is a nation born of prayer.
  - Abraham heard God’s call – Genesis 12:1-3
  - God heard the cries of the Hebrew children – Exodus 3:7
  - Moses conversed with God – Exodus 3:1-4:17
  - Moses interceded for Israel – Exodus 32:11-12; Numbers 11:11-15
  - Joshua via prayer discerned sin in the conquest community – Josh. 7:6-9; but was tricked when he did not discern God’s opinion by prayer – Joshua 9.
  - God spoke to the Judges to deliver His people when the people called out to Him for deliverance.
  - David’s spiritual acumen seen in prayers of confession – 2 Sam 2:13; Psalm 51

## Bible Study: A Study of Prayer

- Solomon fulfilled the promises made to David after praying for wisdom – 1 Kings 3:5-9 and dedicated Temple in prayer – 1 Kings 8
- God worked miracles through the prayers of Elijah and Elisha (1 Kings 17:19-22: 18:20-40)

### Lessons from prayer about praying

What we learn by studying Old Testament Prayers

- The writing prophets noted that genuine prayer calls for accompanying moral and social accountability. (Hosea 7:14; Amos 4:4-5)
- Isaiah's call reflected the intense cleansing and commitment involved in prayer (Isaiah 6)
- Jeremiah's dialogue and intercession frequently voiced reservation and frustration (Jeremiah 1; 20:7-18), teaching honesty in prayer.
- The Psalms teach variety and honesty in prayer are permissible:
  - proclaim praise
  - ask pardon
  - seek communion (Psalm 63)
  - protection (Psalm 57)
  - vindication (Psalm 107)
  - healing (Psalm 6)
- Daily patterned prayer became important to Exiles denied access to the Temple (Dan. 6:10)

### Patterns of Prayer

#### ACTS

- Adoration (Hallowing His Name)
- Confession (Asking forgiveness)
- Thanksgiving (Expressing gratitude)
- Supplication (Presenting petitions)

Psalm 86 provides an excellent example of prayer.