

How could you?



How Could You?

- Habakkuk wonders how God could overlook the evil in Judah.
- Habakkuk 1:2-4, “How long, Lord, must I call for help, but you do not listen? Or cry out to you, ‘Violence!’ but you do not save? Why do you make me look at injustice? Why do you tolerate wrongdoing? Destruction and violence are before me; there is strife, and conflict abounds. Therefore the law is paralyzed, and justice never prevails. The wicked hem in the righteous, so that justice is perverted.

How Could You?

- How could God allow this injustice to go on? Habakkuk couldn't understand how the righteous were persecuted, evil prevailed, and God did nothing. How could you, Lord? (pastor friend; honest business people)
- The Lord's answer surprises Habakkuk.

How Could You?

- Habakkuk 1:5-8, “Look at the nations and watch – and be utterly amazed. For I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe, even if you were told. I am raising up the Babylonians, that ruthless and impetuous people, who sweep across the whole earth to seize dwellings not their own. They are a feared and dreaded people; they are a law to themselves and promote their own honor. Their horses are swifter than leopards, fiercer than wolves at dusk. . . they all come bent on violence.”

How Could You?

- God's answer to the injustice in Judah is to send the Babylonians to conquer the Israelites.
- The Babylonians were known as ruthless conquerors. Historians often consider them the most brutal conquerors of all ancient civilizations.
- This is not the answer Habakkuk is looking for – so he continues his hard conversation.

How Could You?

- Habakkuk 1:12-13, “Lord, are you not from everlasting? My God, my Holy One, you will never die. You, Lord, have appointed them to execute judgment. . . your eyes are too pure to look on evil; you cannot tolerate wrongdoing. Why then do you tolerate the treacherous? Why are you silent while the wicked swallow up those more righteous than themselves?”

How Could You?

- Habakkuk wonders, “How could you, Lord? How could you send these barbarians to mediate divine justice?” (e.g., parallel – Jewish person in the 1930’s praying for purity)
- Habakkuk’s conversation is honest, passionate, faith-filled and respectful. The Lord answers him again . . . He loves to help us on our journey when we struggle.

How Could You?

- Habakkuk 2:3,6-8,12,16, “The revelation awaits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it linger, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay. . . Woe to him who piles up stolen goods and makes himself wealthy by extortion! How long must this go on? Will not your creditors suddenly arise? Will they not wake up and make you tremble? Then you will become their prey.

How Could You?

- Habakkuk 2:3,6-8,12,16, “Because you have plundered many nations, the peoples who are left will plunder you. . . . Woe to him who builds a city with bloodshed and establishes a town by injustice! Has not the Lord Almighty determined that the people’s labor is only fuel for the fire, that the nations exhaust themselves for nothing? . . . Now it is your turn! . . . The cup from the Lord’s right hand is coming around to you, and disgrace will cover your glory.”

How Could You?

- Habakkuk complains that God is using this barbaric nation to mete out divine judgment. God assures him that Babylon will come to a swift & certain end; God has not ignored their evil ways.
- All of history is hastening to a conclusion which is as certain as it is satisfying. Good will triumph over evil. Justice will prevail, and God will have the final word in history.

How Could You?

- Habakkuk now understands that God will not overlook evil. Justice will prevail, and God will have the final word. He ends with a resounding statement of faith.
- Habakkuk 3:2, “Lord, I have heard of your fame; I stand in awe of your deeds, Lord. Renew them in our day, in our time make them known; in wrath remember mercy.”

How Could You?

- Habakkuk 3:16-19, “I will patiently wait for the day of calamity to come on the nation invading us. Though the fig tree does not bud and there are not grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Savior. The Sovereign Lord is my strength; he makes my feet like the feet of a deer, he enables me to tread on the heights.”

How Could You?

- Habakkuk is a great model of a hard conversation with God. He asks hard questions; he has passionate, honest discussion that is rooted in trust and honor.
- History is hastening to a conclusion which is as certain as it is satisfying. Good will triumph over evil. Justice will prevail in the end. And God will have the last word.