

**#1241 America as Media-Persia – John Philip Sousa, “The March King” of Habakkuk, part 2, The *first* Babylon and the *first* Media-Persia in the Book of Habakkuk**

The Book of Habakkuk contains only three short chapters. The period of the prophecy in the book has been dated anywhere from 650 B.C. to 600 B.C. Some say that the prophet Habakkuk lived in Judah toward the end of Josiah’s reign (640-609 B.C.) or at the beginning of Jehoiakim’s reign (609-598 B.C.), when the balance of power in the region was shifting from the Assyrians to the Babylonians, and that the prophecy in the Book of



Jews in captivity being led into Babylon

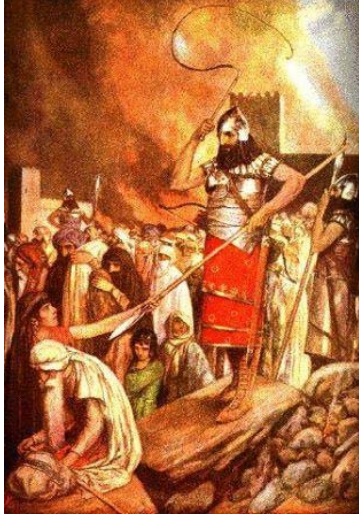
Habakkuk was written a little before or a little after the Battle of Carchemish (605 B.C.), when Egyptian forces were routed by the Babylonians. At any rate, the key to the dating of the book is that it focuses on the upcoming invasion of Judah by Babylon.

**Key Understanding #1: The key theme of the prophecy in Habakkuk surrounds the judgment of Judah by the Lord through the invasion of Judah by the (Joel’s locust army) Babylonians.**

The prophecy is constructed as a dialogue between the prophet Habakkuk and the Lord. It is outlined like this in one commentary:

- I. **Title (1:1)**
- II. **Habakkuk’s First Complaint to God:** Why does the evil in Judah go unpunished (1:2-4)?
- III. **God’s Answer:** God will use **Babylon** to punish Judah (1:5-11).
- IV. **Habakkuk’s Second Complaint:** How can a just God use wicked Babylon to punish a people more righteous than themselves (1:12–2:1)?
- V. **God’s Answer:** Babylon will be punished (by **Media-Persia**), and faith will be rewarded (2:2-20).
- VI. **Habakkuk’s Prayer:** After asking for manifestations of God’s wrath and mercy, he closes with a confession of trust and joy in God (chapter 3).

**Key Understanding #2: *The first Babylon and the first Media-Persia in the book of Habakkuk.* Essentially, both **Babylon** and **Media-Persia** are seen in the Book of Habakkuk in a unique manner, for it is first emphasized and prophesied that Judah will be judged by God through the hand of **Babylon** . . .**



The Lord judged Judah through the hand of Babylon

*Habakkuk 1:6 (KJV) For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans [Babylonians], that bitter and hasty nation, **WHICH SHALL MARCH THROUGH THE BREADTH OF THE LAND** [of Judah], to possess the dwellingplaces that are not theirs. {breadth: Heb. breadths }*

... and then explained that Babylon will be judged by God (a judgment that would come through the hand of **Media-Persia**, though Media-Persia is not stated explicitly). We are using NIV.

*Habakkuk 2:6-8 (NIV) "Will not all of them taunt him with ridicule and scorn, saying, "'Woe to him [Babylon] who piles up stolen goods and makes himself wealthy by extortion! How long must this go on?" [Remember, Daniel chapter 5 – which is about the "writing on the wall" judgment of Babylon at the hand of the Medes and the Persians – begins with King Belshazzar and his*

nobles, his wives, and his concubines drinking wine from the gold and silver vessels that Nebuchadnezzar had taken, or stolen, from the temple in Jerusalem.]

*7 Will not your debtors suddenly arise? Will they not wake up and make you tremble? Then you will become their victim.*

*8 **Because you** [Babylon] **have plundered many nations, the peoples who are left will plunder you.** For you have shed man's blood; you have destroyed lands and cities and everyone in them.*



The Lord then judged Babylon through the hand of Media-Persia

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