

Title: **When God Digs a Ditch: Turning Evil for Good (Part 1)**  
Text: **Habakkuk 1:1-2:3**  
Date: **June 12, 2022**

Find the sermon manuscript to follow along with online at [mercyhillchurch.org](http://mercyhillchurch.org).



## Big Idea

We lament to God and he responds. But his response is not always what we anticipate nor what we desire. Sometimes it comes to us like a bitter pill. It's uncomfortable going down, but it brings healing in the end.

Have you struggled with the problem of evil? Have you ever been troubled by the fact that injustice and oppression abound in our world and, on the surface at least, God seems to be doing so little about it? Have you ever been confused about the will and ways of God and how he's working in human history? Have you ever wrestled personally in the place of trial and tribulation, wondering why God would permit such a thing in your life and how he could still be good if so? Have you ever felt like God is distant, like he's abandoned you, like you are left to fend for yourself? Have you ever spent a night crying in your bed, confused about the way your story is playing out, heartbroken in the face of it all? Isn't that all of us? Bottom line: *this book has a lot more to say to you than you may have first realized.*

### 1. It Hurts

#### 1. *Habakkuk Laments (1:1-4)*

In the dark night of your soul, when you feel most alone, God is most present. He hears you. He loves you. He will respond.

#### 2. *God Responds (1:5-11)*

To Habakkuk's lament, God responds surprisingly: "So you want me to deal with the wickedness in Judah? Here's how I'm going to do it. I'm going to raise up and use a nation even more wicked than them!"

#### 3. *Habakkuk Laments . . . Again! (1:12-2:1)*

At this point Habakkuk just throws up his hands. Here now his lament transitions from "God, why in the world aren't you doing anything?" to "God, why in the world are you doing *this*!?"

We can imagine his objections: "You call this an answer?! You're going to right the evil and injustice in Judah by using a nation even more evil and unjust? This just aggravates the problem. That's like saying you're going to put out the fire with gasoline, you're going to heal the headache with a hammer, you're going to cushion the fall with a bed of nails. The solution is worse than the problem, the cure more troubling than the disease. You're aggravating my dilemma, not relieving it. You're piling more evil and injustice upon evil and injustice. If this is the medicine I'd rather keep the cough." It's a bitter pill. It hurts going down.

#### 4. *God Responds . . . Again! (2:2-3)*

God goes on in the verses that follow and reassures Habakkuk that he's not siding with Babylon here. He's going to judge them in the end for their sin as well. He's going to make all that wrong right also. He issues five "woes" in Habakkuk 2:6-20 where he describes what he's going to do about all this. He's going to mock the mockers and taunt the taunters. He's going to reverse the fortunes of the Babylonians. He's going to save his people from their enemies and preserve a faithful remnant. He's going to bring them back into the land. He's going to work all of this for good in the end.

But how exactly do we get on the right side of things? How can we be sure he is going to actually work stuff for our good? How can we be sure we're not going to be swept away in his righteous judgment . . . as we truly deserve?

Answer: *Jesus*. Everything described here, coming for Judah and Babylon, Jesus will ultimately take in place of his people on the cross.



## Reflection Questions

- Read Isaiah 40:25-28. How do these words speak to you? When's the last time you looked up at the stars (I mean *really* looked)? What do you think would happen to your soul, and your faith, if you did?
- We'll look more at this next week, but what do you think it means that God is "raising up the Chaldeans" (aka the Babylonians)? How does this idea immediately strike you? In what ways are you confused or troubled by it? In what ways might such a thing actually be encouraging? What might this mean for your own personal trials and hardships?

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## Our Mission & Values

*Mercy Hill Church exists to help restore us to God, neighbor, and city through the good news of Jesus Christ.*

**FAITH:** The Way Back to God | We are redeemed to enjoy intimate relationship with him. This value presses our church *upwards* in love for God.

**COMMUNITY:** The Way Back to Christ, adopted in the Beloved relationship with his people. This value presses our church *inwards* in love for one another.

**MISSION:** The Way the Embassy of Christ, Savior to be his value presses our church *outwards* in love for the unbelieving.

## Your Next Steps

When approaching the Christian faith and life, it can be confusing to know where to even begin. Come find us at the Next Steps Table after the service—it would be our joy to help you along in the journey! And if you're a visitor, we have a special gift bag for you. Don't miss it!



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Welcome to Mercy Hill Church.  
We are so glad you've joined us today!

## Announcement Spotlight

### CityTeam's Love Your Neighborhood Day - June 25th!

Mercy Hill is participating in CityTeam's Love Your Neighborhood Day on June 25th from 1:00 to 4:00pm. There are three stations - craft table for children, prayer station, and helping people as they shop. Volunteers must register for one of the stations listed on the calendar on June 25th.

Find a link to sign up by scanning the QR code below and heading to our online Communications Hub.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Becky Durstenfeld at [beckydurstenfeld@gmail.com](mailto:beckydurstenfeld@gmail.com).

### Mercy Hill Youth Hangout - Today!

All Mercy Hill Youth (6th thru 12th grade) are invited to join us after service today at 12:30pm. We'll have time for fellowship, prayer, and getting in God's Word. And we even plan to provide some pizza! Weather permitting, we'll meet at the picnic tables in the pavilion around the back of Allen at Steinbeck Elementary. See ya there!

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to us at [info@mercyhillchurch.org](mailto:info@mercyhillchurch.org).

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