

Title: **When God Digs a Ditch: Turning Evil for Good (Part 2)**  
Text: **Habakkuk 1:1-2:3**  
Date: **June 19, 2022**

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



## Big Idea

God is both over and against evil at the same time. Because he's over evil, he can use it for his own purposes in the world and ultimately for the good of his people in the end. Because he's against evil, he will still hold those accountable who commit it and will ultimately do away with all of it in the end.

## One Principle

If God is against evil but not over it, then there's no hope for us in our hardship because though he may want to turn it for good, there's no guarantee that he can.

If God is over evil but not against it, then there's no hope for us in our hardship because though he may be able to turn it for good, there's no guarantee that he will.

If God doesn't exist at all, then there's no hope for us in our hardship because the world is meaningless and good and evil are nonsensical categories. This place is just the outworking of natural processes and that is all. Let the fittest survive.

But if God does exist and he is both over evil and against it at the same time, then, and only then, we can have hope in our hardship because we know that, not only is he able to turn all things for good, he wants to and he will! This is the biblical teaching. This is the medicine. It's a bitter pill that hurts a bit at first, but it heals in the end, and it supplies us with a stable hope that no storm can stagger.

## Two Presuppositions

*Presupposition #1: God's Ways Are Higher (Hab. 1:5)*

To say that God will, in some sense, always be unreasonable to us, in fact, one of the most reasonable things we can say. For how unreasonable is it to think that the infinite, eternal, omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent, holy one could be fully contained within the miniscule compass of a creature's mind? He is the Creator, we are the creature.

Can an ant comprehend the full extent of human complexity? Certainly we would not say so. And yet the distance between man and God is infinitely greater than that between the ant and man. How much more so should we be willing to admit, then, that some mystery will, even must, subsist at the very core of our faith. And so it does!

*Presupposition #2: God's Plans Take Longer (Hab. 2:2-3)*

God's plans take longer to unfold than we are often willing to wait. What at first seems horrible to us ends in something wonderful if we would let it play out as God has designed.

## Three Examples

*Example #1: Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome*

God is ultimately preparing the stage of human history for the arrival of his Son, Jesus. He's preparing for not only the accomplishment of the gospel there in Jerusalem, but for the advance of it throughout the world. Jesus will die and rise. And his people will go and tell.

*Example #2: Joseph*

"As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today" (Gen. 50:20).

*Example #3: The Cross*

Around the cross, these wicked men had a plan—one thing in mind. Oh but God had another (cf. Acts 4:27-28). We spilled Christ's blood to shut him up, to kill him, to get God out of our lives forever. God spilled Christ's blood to wash us, to cleanse us, so that he could come into our lives forever. God dug a ditch and turned evil for good!



## Reflection Questions

- Which of the three reductions mentioned are you most prone to do you think (God is against evil but not over it; God is over evil but not against it; God must not exist at all)? Explain.
- Read Prov. 21:1 again. What do you think this means? How would you make sense of it? How might you relate what God says here to what he says to Habakkuk in our text?
- What trial(s) are you currently facing? How does the idea that God is both over and against evil offer hope?

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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

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

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

the Bride of Christ, created and relationship with him. This value for God.

Neighbor | We are the Family of and brought into covenantal This value presses our one another.

Back to City | We are commissioned by the ambassadors. This church *outwards* 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

### Happy Father's Day!

We just wanted to give a quick shout-out to all the dads among us today. Happy Father's Day to you! We're grateful for all the ways you serve your family and show them Jesus. Keep it up!

**As a special gift to you, be sure to grab a bottle of Dad's root beer after the service. Cheers!**

### All Church Prayer - Cancelled for Father's Day

We normally meet as a church for prayer on the first and third Sundays. This Sunday, seeing that it's Father's Day, we encourage you to instead spend time with your families. Text/call/visit your pops and let him know what he means to you!

### CityTeam's Love Your Neighborhood Day - This Saturday!

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).**

For clickable content and more announcements,



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Or find it online at [mercyhillchurch.org/communications-hub](https://mercyhillchurch.org/communications-hub).