

PROPHET AVVAKOUM

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The people of God, were living in apostasy and the prophet Avvakoum was troubled because God was doing nothing to punish them. How can a just God leave his People in this situation?

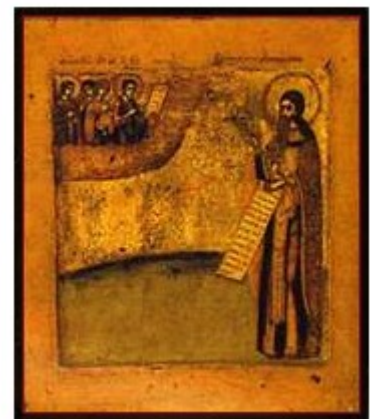
We know very little about the prophet Avvakoum. He was a contemporary of the prophet Jeremias and was born into the tribe of Juda, towards the end of the reign of king Osee (640-609 B.C.) or at the beginning of the reign of king Joakin (609-598 B.C.). It is certain that he lived to see the fulfilment of his prophecy, according to which, the Babylonians would invade Jerusalem the 597. The book of Avvakoum is exceptional, because it is composed mainly of dialogues between Avvakoum and God. Avvakoum asks God and God answers. His questions express the voice of all the faithful of the tribe of Juda, who are unable to follow the ways of God. Avvakoum observes that the spiritual state of the people of God is deplorable.

Thus, he goes on to complain with sadness to God, about the injustice, the wickedness, and the violence that dominates, without God intervening. Very often a Christian going through difficulties does not understand how God acts in their life, but also in the life of others. Already from the time of the apostle Peter, the Christians wondered why Jesus Christ delayed to realize the promise of His return. However, Avvakoum, in his despair, does not forget that the Lord is Holy and that he is his God and his Rock. When God tells Avvakoum of the coming judgement of the tribe of Juda, and that this judgement will be imposed on them through their enemies, the Babylonians, his distress grows even greater, "How can a holy God use a savage and idolatrous people to implement his judgement against the people of God? "

In God's continuing silence, the prophet keeps watch, waiting for the heavenly answer. And the answer comes. God assures the prophet that he controls the situation and that his plan reveals that those who cause the destruction will also be judged in their turn. Avvakoum begins to understand God's plan and learns to wait on God, who knows how and when to intervene to put his plan into effect.

In the same chapter we find one from the most beautiful sayings in Bible, "The just will live by my faith". The book of Avvakoum ends with a splendid confession of faith and absolute confidence in God of his salvation. In a spirit of adoration and praise, Avvakoum declares his total confidence in God.

The prophet has understood God's message and praises him for what he is and for what he does. Avvakoum is moved by the idea that God will intervene to judge the people and is prepared for the period of ordeal and grief that is to come. In chapter 3, verses 17-19, we find an amazing passage, where the prophet portrays a devastating situation and declares that for all that he finds joy in God, because God is his power and it is God that helps him to triumph in adversities. In our contemporary world without hope, the message of the book of Avvakoum encourages us to trust more than ever in the God of our salvation, because he controls the world, and keeps our lives and our destiny in his hands. The feast of the Prophet Avvakoum is celebrated on **2 December**.



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