

# HABAKKUK 2

---

## REVIEW...

- **Habakkuk** – the 35<sup>th</sup> book of the Old Testament - 8<sup>th</sup> of what is known as the 12 Minor Prophets
  - o We do not know much about Habakkuk – but he was a prophet to the Southern Kingdom...
  - o He prophesied in the years leading up to the Babylonian captivity: 609–586 B.C.
  - o They were the evil times when the last 4 wicked Kings of Judah ruled!
  - o The book of Habakkuk is broken up into 2 sections...
  - o Chapter 1–2 - Two questions for God – and two answers from God...
  - o Chapter 3 – The final chapter concludes with the prayer of Habakkuk to God!
- Habakkuk opened the book by asking his first question - How long Lord...
  - o Habakkuk was BURDENED by the what he saw in his nation / in the world...
  - o And he was constantly crying out the Lord about it – but God did not seem to answer...
  - o He saw sin and trouble/mischief – that led to destruction and violence everywhere!
  - o God did answer – LOOK to the nations - He was going to do something astounding...
  - o God was going to use the Chaldeans / Babylonians to deal with the sin of Judah!
- Habakkuk then asks his 2<sup>nd</sup> question – should the wicked devour the righteous...
  - o Surely it was not the intention of God for Babylon to completely wipe out Judah...
  - o Habakkuk had fresh in his mind the destruction of the Northern Kingdom in 722 BC
  - o But Judah was not as bad – there was still a Godly remnant there...
  - o There was no way God would allow pagan Babylon to destroy those who were Godly!

## THE 2<sup>ND</sup> ANSWER – WOE TO HIM...

- **WAITING PATIENTLY... vs. 1-4**
  - o 1<sup>st</sup> – Habakkuk went to wait on the Lord... vs. 1
    - He went up to stand his watch on the rampart – waiting to see how God would answer...
      - Prophets often used the imagery of a watchman to describe their ministry...
      - Just like a watchman kept a look out for approaching dangers – sounding the alarm...
      - Prophets were called to protect the people of Israel – from enemies / from themselves...
      - It is hard to watch out for others - confront their sin – it does not tend to go well...
      - But the truth is leaving someone in their sin - is condemning them to hell...
      - So we are called to confront them in spite of how we fear it might hurt them...
      - Not that we can make people turn back to Jesus - but we can warn them - **Hebrews 3:13**
      - In fact God holds us accountable if we do not tell them about the danger of sin!
      - **Ezekiel 33:8** – “If I announce that some wicked people are sure to die and you fail to warn them about changing their ways, then they will die in their sins, but I will hold you responsible for their deaths.”
    - Habakkuk had questions / doubts – and he waited to be corrected by the Lord...
      - There are times when we doubt – perhaps that God can provide for our needs...
      - There may time times when we even doubt if God is even there...
      - It is not wrong to have doubts – everyone has them – but know where to go to get answers!
      - Having Godly answers / making the best choices - can only come from one place...
      - Wisdom is not learned - it is a gift of the Spirit – **I Corinthians 12:8...**
      - The only way to get wisdom – is simply to come to the Lord and ask for it!

- **James 1:5** – “If you need wisdom - if you want to know what God wants you to do-ask him, and he will gladly tell you. He will not resent your asking.”
- o 2<sup>nd</sup> – Wait a little bit longer... vs. 2-3
  - God answered a 2<sup>nd</sup> time – and told Habakkuk to write down what He said...
    - The prophet was to make it plain – clear – so that other would understand...
    - Because it was good news – they would run and tell others once they received it...
    - God was going to punish Babylon – there would be consequences for their actions!
    - God would give **5 WOES** to the Kingdom of Babylon – signaling their destruction!
  - But what God was about to share with Habakkuk would not come to pass quickly...
    - It was certain – it would certainly happen – but it would take time...
    - Christmas is around the corner – but I do not think we have ever make it to December 25 ...
    - Last year we actually ended up opening presents just after Thanksgiving!
    - Because there is nothing harder to do in life than wait – I hate waiting!
    - It is easy to get tired of waiting on God - and jump in because ‘something needs to be done!’
    - But like a little child who wants to ‘help’ Dad - we do far more harm than good!
    - Better to wait – and remember Gods timing is not our timing - **II Peter 3:8-9**
    - Following Jesus means being patient – willing to wait on the Lord to do the work!
    - **Isaiah 40:31** – “Those who wait on the LORD shall renew *their* strength... they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.”
- o 3<sup>rd</sup> – The just shall live by faith... vs. 4
  - Behold the proud – his soul is not upright...
    - What makes him proud - he puts his trust / faith in something other than the Lord...
    - The result is his soul is crooked – because he is still bound up in his sin...
    - But the key is why was his soul crooked – it was not a lack of faith...
    - The problem is never a lack of faith – it is where our faith is placed!
    - If I have faith I can swim an ocean – or fly to the moon – that does not mean I can
    - If we put our faith in something that does not have the power - it does not work!
    - Which is why people can have all the faith in the world in a religion – Islam / Buddha...
    - People can have all the confidence in the world in their intellect – education...
    - But their soul will still be crooked – because there is no power in those things!
  - The contrast - the Just shall live by faith...
    - A verse quoted twice in the NT – **Romans 1:17 / Galatians 3:11**
      - Habakkuk asked the Lord why the godless were prospering / the righteous suffering...
      - God was asking Habakkuk to – trust Me – things would work out as He intended...
      - Habakkuk was to live by faith – believe what God said – He would also do!
    - Living by faith – means trusting the Lord for today...
      - So often it feels like we are walking through life blind - no idea where we are going...
      - The reason is because we are trusting in what we can see - but we cannot see far...
      - If only we could see tomorrow we might make very different decisions...
      - Making decisions by what we can see – is in truth walking around blind...
      - But Jesus sees it all – and if are willing to trust Him – we will always know where to go...
      - Trusting in the Lord who sees all – that is walking by true sight!
      - **II Corinthians 5:7** – “For we walk by faith, not by sight.”
    - Living by faith – means trusting the Lord for our eternity...
      - We cannot see God – have never been to heaven – have not seen Jesus...
      - It is only through faith we believe the Gospel true – has the power to save us...
      - By faith we believe that life is not only about living here on earth...
      - By faith we believe one day God will take us to be with Him forever in heaven!

- **Hebrews 11:1** - "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

▪ **1<sup>ST</sup> - THE FIRST OF 5 - WOE TO HIM THAT INCREASES WEALTH... VS. 5-8**

o **1<sup>st</sup> - He will never satisfied... vs. 5**

- He – possibly referring to Nebuchadnezzar – transgresses by wine...
  - The thought is likely referring to being fermented / spoiled (*like wine*) – by his sin...
  - What is the first sin of Babylon / Nebby – greed and the desire for wealth!
  - He was too proud to stay at home (*be content*) - his desire for wealth could not be satisfied!
  - Like the grave (*hell*) / death – no matter how many enter – there is always a need for more!
- Nothing in this world will ever be enough for us – we will never find fulfillment...
  - We can try to eat to be happy – but we will only be hungry the next day...
  - We can be pretty to be happy – but the new clothes will wear out and fade...
  - We can try to be rich to be happy – but there will always be something more to buy!
  - Because we were not created by God to be fulfilled by the things of this world...
  - We were created by God to know Him - worship Him - **John 17:3**
  - And only when we use our life for the purpose God intended for it...
  - Worshiping and getting to know our Lord – will we find we are satisfied - **John 4:14**

o **2<sup>nd</sup> - He will end up a debtor... vs. 6-8**

- People will taunt him with the proverb – woe to him who increases wealth with loans (*pledges*)
  - The day is coming when all the creditors will demand payment – payday (*booty*)!
  - Because Babylon plundered many nations – Babylon would be plundered...
  - Likely referring to the conquest of Cyrus of Babylon in 539 B.C.
  - 40% of all American households carry a balance month to month on their credit cards...
  - IN 2016 the total credit card debt in the US climbed to almost 1 trillion dollars!
  - Yes 85% of people will not talk credit debt - more taboo than religion / politics / salary!
  - Because - **Proverbs 22:7** – "...the borrower [is] a slave to the lender."
  - The ideal of instant gratification is rampant in our society – we deserve more...
  - The concept that we can have something today – and pay for it tomorrow is short sighted...
  - If we do not have something – and cannot afford it – we must not need it!
  - **Romans 13:8** – "Owe no one anything except to love one another..."
- Rather than covet things and be brought into bondage – be content...
  - The greater blessing is to learn to live off our income / live within our means!
  - Be content with food and clothing - **I Timothy 6:8** / our wages - **Luke 3:14**...
  - Learn to be content as we experience that nothing in life satisfies us but Jesus!
  - **Philippians 4:11** – "I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content..."

▪ **2<sup>ND</sup> - WOE TO HIM THAT TEACHES OTHERS TO COVET... VS. 9-11**

o **1<sup>st</sup> - The man who covets 'evil gain' for his house... vs. 9**

- The one who desires to set the nest is set up high – so the family is save from disaster...
  - On the surface this does not seem like such a bad thing – provide for the family...
  - In fact it is an expectation in our culture – our duty to provide – bring home the bacon!
  - But while we are required to work – it is the result of the curse - **Genesis 3:17**...
  - We are not called to provide – God is our provider – **Luke 12:32**

o **2<sup>nd</sup> - Shameful counsel... vs. 10-11**

- Those who teach their families to live for wealth – give shameful counsel...
- It is a sin against their soul – because it will potentially cost their children eternity!
- I had have seen it so many times – Dads who prepare their kids to be successful in life...
- Pushing their kids to do well in school – so they can get a good education / job...
- Wanting their kids to have the best this life can offer – but at what cost...

- What does it matter our kids are successful – if they do not make it to heaven!
- It is the number one responsibility of Dads to teach their kids about Jesus!
- Too often fathers forget that they are to be the spiritual leaders of their homes
- We need to take the time to read the Bible with our children / pray with them...
- If we do not teach our kids to have a relationship with Jesus - who will!
- **3<sup>RD</sup> - WOE TO HIM THAT SEEKS A WORDLY LEGACY... vs. 12-14**
  - o 1<sup>st</sup> – The man that builds a town on bloodshed... vs. 12
    - Speaking of the slavery used to construct the mighty Babylonian empire...
    - Nations were built on the backs of slaves – and have been throughout history...
    - As many as 1/3 of the inhabitants of Rome were slaves...
    - It is estimated that 1 million slaves died in the building of the Great wall...
    - In 1860 – start of the civil war – there were almost 4 million slaves in the US!
  - o 2<sup>nd</sup> – For all their efforts they just feeding the fire... vs. 13
    - All of these nations thought they were building something that would last forever...
    - But the Roman Empire is gone / the Great wall is in ruins / and the US is scarred by its past...
    - All their efforts were in vain – no lasting legacy - because nothing in this world is meant to last!
    - **II Peter 3:12-13** - “God will set the heavens on fire and the [earth] will melt away in the flames...”
    - Everything in this life is destined burn – we cannot take any of it with us...
    - People strive their whole lives to find success – but what it success worth apart from God...
    - You might end up rich – but all you really get is a lot of NICE FIREWOOD!
  - o 3<sup>rd</sup> – The earth will be filled with knowledge of the LORD – as water covers the sea... vs. 14
    - A statement that has been fulfilled in the past – and will be in the future...
    - In the days of Babylon – when Daniel showed Cyrus it was God who called him – **Isaiah 45:1**
    - In the days of Jesus – as the Gospel was dispersed throughout the world – **Acts 17:6**
    - At the end coming of Jesus Christ – when He establishes His Kingdom – **Daniel 2:44**
    - The one ‘empire’ that will never pass away – the only one that matters!
    - Therefore do not miss the purpose of life by devoting time to something that is doomed...
    - How much better to invest our time and efforts into a Kingdom that will never fade!
    - Invest is something that we can take with us to heaven – people we share Jesus with!
- **4<sup>TH</sup> – WOE TO HIM THAT MOCKS... vs. 15-16**
  - o The first 3 woes all focused on the desire for earthly wealth...
    - Increasing wealth / teaching others to cover / seeking a worldly legacy
    - The last 2 woes will focus on trying to escape the judgment that results from the first 3 woes!
  - o 1<sup>st</sup> – The man who gives a drink to his neighbor just to get him drunk... vs. 15
    - Pressing the bottle – so that he gets drunk enough – he can mock him as get gets naked!
    - Speaking of Babylon forcing the nations around them to join in their wickedness...
    - If they could get others to drink in and expose in sin – then Babylon did not look so bad!
    - Many people today enjoy pointing out the failures of others – so they do not look so bad...
    - Looking for people who make more / greater mistakes - so they look better!
    - Assuming because they are more ‘Godly’ than others - they are a good person...
    - But God does not grade on a curve - He has only one standard - His Word...
    - And compared to the standard of God - all of us are in desperate need of Jesus!
  - o 2<sup>nd</sup> – God would force Babylon to drink... vs. 16
    - Then THEY would be exposed as the uncircumcised – pagan – nation they were ...
    - They would drink the cup of the right hand of God – the judgment of God!
    - Interesting imagery considering Babylon / Belshazzar fell during a drunken party – **Daniel 6**
    - The truth is we will all stand before Jesus – and be accountable for our lives...

- So rather than focusing on what others are doing right or wrong...
- We need to make sure we are walking pure and holy before the Lord!
- **5<sup>TH</sup> – WOE TO HIM THAT TRUSTS... vs. 17-20**
  - o 1<sup>st</sup> – The violence of Lebanon will cover you... vs. 17
    - Lebanon is likely a reference to Judah – and the violence Babylon perpetrated against them...
      - They treated them like beasts – spreading fear - slaughtering in cities and countryside...
      - As a result they would share the same fate – terror would fall on Babylon!
      - Rather than repent and turn to the Lord – Babylon would run to their idols to save them!
    - In **Judges 10:14** – the people of Ammon oppressed the Israel...
      - Israel was not having problems because God was not able to save them...
      - God had already saved Israel from Egypt / the Amorites / and the Philistines...
      - The problem was Israel kept going back to the other gods rather than the Lord...
      - How many times did God have to God teach Israel the same lesson - He was done!
      - God told Israel to cry **INSTEAD** to the gods they had trusted in!
      - The problem with living for something other than the Lord...
      - Is when life begins to fall apart – we tend to depend on them rather than the Lord!
  - o 2<sup>nd</sup> – What profit is the image... vs. 18-19
    - But in that day of terror what good would all of the idols of Babylon do...
      - Those who carved / molded them / taught others to trust them – were teachers of lies!
      - They created dumb idols – then called from them to Awake!
      - Asked silent stone to – Arise and teach us – but they were not alive!
      - How foolish to trust in them – rather than the LORD in His Holy Temple!
      - Before whom whole earth will one day one day be silent – no excuses!
      - **Isaiah 44:19-20** - “The person who made the idol never stops to reflect, ‘Why, it’s just a block of wood! Should I bow down to worship a chunk of wood?’”
      - How foolish to trust in idols to answer prayers / help in hard times!
      - We might argue that we are far beyond that – we are far more educated today...
      - But we forget what our money is made of – paper is a wood product...
      - Many still trust in George - \$1 / Abe - \$5 / and our favorite – Ben - \$100 to save them!
    - The contrast could not be more dynamic...
      - Because life is not about the 70+/- year we have here on this earth...
      - Life is about where we will spend eternity – what happens after we die...
      - Therefore woe to those that are proud – that seeking after the things of this life...
      - The misery of riches – the destruction of family – the loss of a legacy...
      - Who try to influence other to justify themselves – trusting in things that cannot save!
      - How much better to LIVE BY FAITH – justified / forgiven – with the hope of heaven!