

Habakkuk Chapter 2

V: 1 In the previous chapter Habakkuk kind of challenged or maybe even reproved God. How could God allow this? How could God use the un-righteous to judge the righteous? How could God be so cruel?

- We may all at times done something similar - being guilty of judging or questioning God in a negative way for whatever He was doing in a particular event.
- We're not always going to understand God, He is too big to fully comprehend or to fully understand.
- God operates in ways that we don't understand, and at a level we can't even imagine:

Isaiah 55:8-9 “⁸For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways, says the LORD. ⁹For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.”

- So the prophet knows he is going to be corrected and is more or less waiting for that correction, he's waiting for and expecting an answer from God.
- He'll still be that watchman on the wall, he'll seek to be faithful while he waits.

Proverbs 9:9 “Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser; teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.”

V: 2 Then the Lord answered. I have found personally that most often the Lord speaks to me in answer to a question that I've had in my heart. When I come to church, or go to a conference, or approach a Bible study with a question - that's when the Lord speaks to me the most.

Jeremiah 29:13 “And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.”

- So the Lord responds by telling Habakkuk to write the vision down - thus we have the book of Habakkuk.

2 Peter 1:19-21 “¹⁹And so we have a more sure word / the prophetic Word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawn and the morning star rises in your hearts; ²⁰knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, ²¹for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.”

- As in this case when God says write it down.
- Write it down, and make it plain... it is intended to be understood by those who read it to give them direction - you can't run effectively without direction.

Nehemiah 8:5, 7-8 “⁵And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up.” - “⁷... and the Levites, helped the people to understand the Law; and the people stood in their place. ⁸So they read distinctly from the book, in the Law of God; and they gave the sense, and helped them to understand the reading.”

- Amongst other things God's Word give a sense of direction in life, what we're supposed to be doing, where we are headed, giving us an understanding of the times that we live in.

Proverbs 29:18 “Where there is no vision, the people perish; but happy is he who keeps the law.”

V: 3 The vision is yet for a future time, an appointed time - meaning there is still time to repent! The time of judgment is coming, it will not tarry.

Isaiah 46:9-10 “⁹Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me. ¹⁰Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying, “My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure.”

V: 4 Two parts to this verse:

1st part: “Behold the proud, his soul is not upright in him;”

- The proud reject the wisdom of God. The proud refuse to admit they are wrong, refuse to turn away from their sin, typically exalting themselves in the process.

Psalms 10:4 “The wicked in his proud countenance does not seek God; God is in none of his thoughts.”

Psalms 119:21 “You rebuke the proud that are cursed, who stray from Your Commandments.”

Proverbs 16:5 “Everyone proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD;...”

2nd Part: “But the just shall live by faith.”

- The just will live - eternally - by faith:

Hebrews 11:6 “Without faith it is impossible to please God.”

Hebrews 10:38 “Now the just shall live by faith; but if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him.”

- They will also, as we do at times live practically by faith. There will be those times, when they are besieged by the Babylonians and their food is cut off, their immediate future will be uncertain and all they will have is their faith, and the promises of God.

V: 5 Referring now to the Babylonians who transgress by wine, he is a proud man - “I can handle it...”

Speaking of the immoral woman:

Proverbs 7:26 “For she has cast down many wounded, and all who were slain by her were strong men.” (They thought they were!)

- This is one of many verses in the Bible that reference alcohol consumption, the vast majority of them do so in a negative way.
- There is a comparison here to hell, which enlarges itself to accommodate more victims.

Isaiah 5:11-14 “¹¹Woe to those who rise early in the morning, that they may follow intoxicating drink; who continue until night, till wine inflames them! ¹²The harp and the strings, the tambourine and flute, and wine are in their feasts; but they do not regard the work of the LORD, nor consider the operation of His hands. ¹³Therefore my people have gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge; their honorable men are famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst. ¹⁴Therefore Sheol has enlarged itself and opened its mouth beyond measure; their glory and their multitude and their pomp, and he who is jubilant, shall descend into it. ¹⁵People shall be brought down, each man shall be humbled, and the eyes of the lofty shall be humbled.” (Again a reference to the proud.)

- This is because he enlarges his desire as hell.... and cannot be satisfied...
- Some people pick up the drink and can't put it down - never satisfied.
- Do you remember how the Babylonian Empire ended? A drunken feast for all the nobles, Belshazzar drinking from the Holy vessels of the LORD, and the handwriting on the wall. (Daniel 5)

V: 6 Kind of like “woe to them who get rich off of others, taking advantage of their victims.

- They load themselves down with booty, but it will be a burden to them.

Isaiah 14:4-5 “⁴that you will take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say: “How the oppressor has ceased, the golden city ceased! ⁵The LORD has broken the staff of the wicked, the scepter of the rulers;”

- Isaiah said they would take up a proverb against them, now here in Habakkuk we see it affirmed.

V: 7-9 What goes around will come around. You’ve plundered many nations, and you will in turn be plundered.

- Woe to those who increase by taking what is not theirs. Call it the spoils of war, or whatever but it comes down to stealing, taking what is not theirs.

Psalms 137:8 “O daughter of Babylon, who are to be destroyed, happy the one who repays you as you have served us!”

- They are feathering their nest on high, but that will end.

Obadiah 4 “though you ascend as high as the eagle, and though you set your nest among the stars from there I will bring you down, says the LORD.”

V: 10 They have given wicked counsel to their house - essentially come let us plunder!

Proverbs 1:10-14 “¹⁰My son, if sinners entice you, do not consent. ¹¹If they say, come with us, let us lie in wait to shed blood; let us lurk secretly for the innocent without cause; ¹²let us swallow them alive like Sheol, and whole, like those who go down to the Pit; ¹³We shall find all kinds of precious possessions, we shall fill our houses with spoil; ¹⁴cast in your lot among us, let us all have one purse.”

- They have sinned against their own souls, bringing these woe’s, these curses upon themselves.

Proverbs 1:18-19 “¹⁸But they lie in wait for their own blood, they lurk secretly for their own lives. ¹⁹So are the ways of everyone who is greedy for gain; it takes away the life of its owners.”

V: 11-12 There are witnesses to this wickedness! The stones will cry out from the walls and the beams from the timbers.

Deuteronomy 30:19 “I call heaven and earth as witness today against you...”

Luke 19:40 “But He answered and said to them, “I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out.”

- Woe #3 - to those who build their community on bloodshed, who’s foundation is iniquity.

- On the opposite end of things:

Psalm 33:12 “Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD.”

Proverbs 14:34 “Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.”

V: 13 This is the fulfillment of what the Lord had prophesied - this people, the Babylonians are working to feed the fires of hell. They are the architects of their own demise.

Proverbs 21:30 “There is no wisdom or understanding or counsel against the LORD.”

Proverbs 24:3 “Do not overwork to be rich; because of your own understanding, cease!”

V: 14 This is an awesome promise of a bright future where God’s Word is exalted and held in high regard.

Isaiah 6:3 “... Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory!”

Isaiah 11:9 “They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.”

- The glory of Babylon lasted for a season, but the Word of God is still being read and glorified all over the world.
- When God’s Word covers the world, the world will be a better place!
- That’s the blessing; time for another woe!

V: 15 Woe #4 to him that gives drink to his neighbor... causing him to be drunk.

- Plying your neighbor to gain some advantage.
- Remember in **2 Samuel 11** when David sought to get Uriah the Hittite drunk so he’d go home to his wife in an attempt to cover David’s adultery with Bathsheba.

2 Samuel 13 - Absalom got his brother Amnon drunk and off his guard just before having him killed in revenge for the rape of his sister Tamar.

V: 16 Here this more or less states that those who drink will be filled with shame instead of glory.

- The Lord’s hand will be against you...

Proverbs 23:29-30 “²⁹Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaints? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? ³⁰Those who linger long at the wine, those who go in search of mixed wine.”

- The Bible does not require total abstinence from alcohol, but it never speaks against it neither.
- Like I said, most of the Bible’s references to drinking are negative in nature.

V: 17 The violence that Babylon brought upon Lebanon will be brought back upon themselves.

- Blood and violence are displeasing to the LORD.

Psalm 5:6 “... the LORD abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man.”

Psalm 55:23 “But You, O God, shall bring them down to the pit of destruction; bloodthirsty and deceitful men shall not live out half their days; but I will trust in You.”

V: 18-19 The foolishness of idols and idolatry! Woe #5

Isaiah 42:17 “They shall be turned back, they shall be greatly ashamed, who trust in carved images, who say to the molded images, you are our gods.”

Isaiah 44:9-10 “⁹Those who make an image, all of them are useless, and their precious things shall not profit; they are their own witnesses; they neither see nor know, that they may be ashamed. ¹⁰Who would form a god or mold an image that profits him nothing?”

Psalm 115:3-8 “³But our God is in heaven; He does whatever He pleases. ⁴Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men’s hands. ⁵They have mouths, but they do not speak; eyes they have, but they do not see; ⁶They have ears, but they do not hear; noses they have, but they do not smell; ⁷They have hands, but they do not handle; feet they have, but they do not walk; nor do they mutter through their throat. ⁸Those who make them are like them; so is everyone who trusts in them.”

- We do in fact become like that which we worship - I want to be more like my God!

V: 20 “But the LORD...” on the contrary - God is in His Holy Temple, He’s alive, and He is high and lifted up - worthy of all praise, honor and glory.

Psalm 46:10 “Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!

Psalm 92:1 “It is good to give thanks to the LORD, and to sing praises to Your name, O Most High.”

Ecclesiastes 5:2 “Do not be rash with your mouth, and let not your heart utter anything hastily before God. For God is in heaven, and you on earth; therefore let your words be few.”

- Let all the earth keep silence before Him - let us dare not to speak... listen yes, speak not so much.