

Hab. 2:1 I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved.

Habakkuk has spoken boldly to the Lord and expects to be reproved / chastened for his words. He is sincere in his desire to know God's heart and positions himself to be patient and listen as he waits for an answer from God.

Hab. 2:2 And the LORD answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it.

Hab. 2:3 For the vision *is* yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.

It would seem that Habakkuk didn't have to wait so long this time for God's answer. God instructs Habakkuk to write down his vision, his message from God. He is to be very clear in explaining the prophecy. God wants the prophecy to inspire a response from the people. Although the prophesied events won't happen right away, they will happen. What God purposes will come to pass.

Is. 14:24 The LORD of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand:

Hab. 2:4 Behold, his soul *which* is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.

The verse that made such an impact on Martin Luther.

The soul that is lifted up, swelled with pride, is not pleasing before God. The soul in right standing before God will live according to his faith in God. We know that relationship to God is being referenced, because of the grounds on which Habakkuk approached God in His response to God's plan for punishing and correcting His people.

Hab. 2:5 Yea also, because he transgresseth by wine, *he is a proud man, neither keepeth at home, who enlargeth his desire as hell, and is as death, and cannot be satisfied, but gathereth unto him all nations, and heapeth unto him all people:*

The "he" being referenced here is continuing the thoughts about the man of pride. It seems to be referencing the king/leader of the Babylonians in particular. He is being described as a man who is emboldened in his actions by the influence of wine—a restless man. His desire to grow his kingdom is compared to Hades/Sheol/Hell, the place of departed spirits, a place that never gets full—there's always room for more. This man wants to rule the world.

Hab. 2:6 Shall not all these take up a parable against him, and a taunting proverb against him, and say, Woe to him that increaseth *that which is not his!* how long? and to him that ladeth himself with thick clay!

Hab. 2:7 Shall they not rise up suddenly that shall bite thee, and awake that shall vex thee, and thou shalt be for booties unto them?

Hab. 2:8 Because thou hast spoiled many nations, all the remnant of the people shall spoil thee; because of men's blood, and *for* the violence of the land, of the city, and of all that dwell therein.

Because of his reputation, the prideful king of Babylon will become the subject of taunts and stories—much as we think of Nero, Hitler, Saddam Hussein, Osama Bin Laden, etc. They are not described in heroic and admiring terms by those who are not their followers.

Even as these stories emerge, those who have been conquered and made a part of his kingdom wonder how long he will be able to stay in power. How long will it be before there shall rise up one or more of those whom he has conquered to strike back and take back what is theirs—and more. From the nations that have fallen victim to his enormous desire to expand his kingdom and been robbed by him will arise a “remnant” who will be bent on revenge.

Hab. 2:9 Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house, that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil!

Hab. 2:10 Thou hast consulted shame to thy house by cutting off many people, and hast sinned *against* thy soul.

This king has been deceived into thinking that he can protect himself from evil by making sure he rules from a well-protected position. He has taken what belonged to others for himself and his family not realizing that he was assuring his own destruction.

There is a verse in Job that applies here—

Job 4:8 Even as I have seen, they that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same.

Hab. 2:11 For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it.

Hab. 2:12 Woe to him that buildeth a town with blood, and stablisheth a city by iniquity!

This verse seems to be saying that the stones and timber that make up the walls are witnesses to the king’s actions. What do they testify? Woe/Alas (This is not a term of good things to come.)—Woe to the king that builds his empire through the shedding of blood and through his own wicked/evil schemes.

Hab. 2:13 Behold, *is it* not of the LORD of hosts that the people shall labour in the very fire, and the people shall weary themselves for very vanity?

I’m having a hard time with this verse. It seems to be reminding us that God is the One working through this people (the Babylonians) who are eventually going to see their kingdom destroyed. God in His sovereignty allows men to “prosper” in their sin according to His greater purpose (in this case the punishment and humbling of His people), but He will also see that they reap what they sow. The sin was still their choice; they will suffer the consequences.

Truly that is one of the most amazing things to me about God. He created man with a will of his own, with the ability to choose. Even before the first man was created, His plan was in place; He wasn’t “surprised” when man chose to sin. His plan included those who reject Him as well as the man who follows Him in faith. His plan included the utilization of man’s choices in accomplishing His purpose. Only Almighty God, the One Who knows all, could create such a plan

in advance, allow man to function with the power of choice, and foretell the future through the ministry of the prophets to affirm that He has been in control all along.

I've always struggled with an upcoming verse in my study of Isaiah, but I begin to get a glimmer of what God is saying when I think about the happenings on earth in view of His sovereignty.

Is. 45:7 I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these *things*.

Hab. 2:14 For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

One day the earth will be full of the knowledge of God. All people will recognize His hand, His purpose, at work in and through all that happens on planet earth.

Hab. 2:15 Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and maketh *him* drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness!

Hab. 2:16 Thou art filled with shame for glory: drink thou also, and let thy foreskin be uncovered: the cup of the LORD'S right hand shall be turned unto thee, and shameful spewing *shall be* on thy glory.

It seems that from the very earliest times, man has had a problem with wine. I immediately think of Noah getting drunk and leaving himself exposed in a shameful position at some point after the flood (Genesis 9:20-21). The Babylonians were different in that they not only shamed themselves, they encouraged others to partake with them. Why did they encourage others? For their own selfish purposes--to put others in a position of shame in order to satisfy their own lustful desires. In spite of the fact that they seem powerful and invincible, God's right hand of judgment will fall.

When Babylon was conquered by the Medes and Persians, they came in without opposition while Belshazzar and his princes were having a drunken celebration. Their pride had not allowed them to conceive that an enemy could penetrate their defenses (Daniel 5).

Hab. 2:17 For the violence of Lebanon shall cover thee, and the spoil of beasts, *which* made them afraid, because of men's blood, and for the violence of the land, of the city, and of all that dwell therein.

I just don't get this verse. The only thing I'm pretty sure of is that it is repeating the "you will reap what you sow" principle.

Hab. 2:18 What profiteth the graven image that the maker thereof hath graven it; the molten image, and a teacher of lies, that the maker of his work trusteth therein, to make dumb idols?

Hab. 2:19 Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake; to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach! Behold, it *is* laid over with gold and silver, and *there is* no breath at all in the midst of it.

These two verses are speaking of the uselessness of idols. These lifeless statues are made by men, and then men presume to look to them for help and guidance. An idol is just a piece of wood, a piece of stone; sometimes it is covered with gold and silver. It can't breathe; it can't speak. How stupid can you get!

Psalm 135 expresses the truth quite clearly:

Psa. 135:15-18 The idols of the heathen *are* silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not; They have ears, but they hear not; neither is there *any* breath in their mouths. They that make them are like unto them: *so is* every one that trusteth in them.

Hab. 2:20 But the LORD *is* in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him.

YHWH, on the other hand, is a living, breathing being that dwells in His holy temple in the heavens.

Psa. 11:4 The LORD *is* in his holy temple, the LORD'S throne *is* in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men.

He is YHWH, the self-existent, eternal God. He has the power to act on behalf of those who trust Him. He can provide truth and guidance for those who seek Him. He is deserving of our awe, fear and respect.

Psa. 76:6-8 At thy rebuke, O God of Jacob, both the chariot and horse are cast into a dead sleep. Thou, *even* thou, *art* to be feared: and who may stand in thy sight when once thou art angry? Thou didst cause judgment to be heard from heaven; the earth feared, and was still....