

Minor Prophet
Habakkuk
Lesson 3

Text: Habakkuk 2:1-20

Intro: As We have said the concern of Habakkuk was not unique to Habakkuk. It is the same question anyone would ask, or does ask when they fall into or see someone fall into hard times. We live in a world that often appears to reward the wicked, while at the same time punishing the innocent. Asaph the Psalmist wondered at the same thought when He wrote the 73rd psalm, He starts by proclaiming the goodness of God, but quickly turns to the fact that he was like he was loosing his footing. He said I was envious of the wicked because they prospered, they don't have the problems other men have, they are not plagued with them. They have more than they could wish for. Then he speaks of their wickedness. He goes on to say it is painful for him to think of these things. But then he found the answer, do you know where he found it? In the sanctuary, in the presence of God, this is where we need to go to get answers.

Last week we left Habakkuk in the watch tower, so this week let us join back with him and see How God will respond to Him, When God does speak to him, he gives him three responsibilities to do.

I. The Waiting and Watching Prophet, 2:1-20

A. Waiting and Watching does not mean idle,

i. There is Always Something to DO,

- a) As Christians, sometimes we want to stand like the disciples did on the day of ascension of Christ,
 - Looking up to Heaven,
 - it is somewhat of a funny story, the disciples united with Christ, and He gives them the great commission, Go into the world. And then he ascends into heaven.
 - Now don't get me wrong, this would be an amazing sight, but the disciples just stood there waiting to see what would happen next, to the point an angel had to come to them and tell them **Acts 1:10&11** “And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; 11 Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.”
- b) God wants us to be doing something even while we are waiting for an answer,
 - this was true for Habakkuk as well, God was going to respond but had three things He wanted him to do.

B. Write down the Vision, **Vs.1-3**

i. A Watchman,

- a) in the Old testament, the idea of a watchman was a very serious business.
 - He was responsible for the safety of the people in the city,
 - It was his charge to keep an eye to the horizon and alert everyone if there was a danger present.
- b) Ezekiel was appointed by God as a watchman (**Ch.3 & Ch.33**) and was told:
 - if you warn not the people they will die, but their blood will I require at your hands.
 - So Habakkuk is taking on a very serious responsibility here.
- c) For Christians today, we should also assume the responsibilities of a watchman,

- knowing there is danger ever present, and
 - warning people about this danger,
 - this is not just a Christian telling the lost, but also Christians warning other Christians.
 - It is possible that I am engaged in something that is dangerous and am unaware of it, true Christian Love reveals the danger.
- ii. Write God's Words,
- a) Henry Blackaby said “when the God of this universe speaks to you, you really ought to write it down”
 - b) God told Habakkuk to write it down,
 - Write it down
 - Make it plain,
 - Make it so everyone could see it
 - vs.2 is like placing in on a billboard that when someone passes quickly, they still get the message.
 - And make it plain enough that everyone can get it.
 - Bro. Earl McBride use to say, preach it so simple that a 5 year old can get, and maybe some of the adults will too.
 - c) God was telling him of a future event, but it will happen,
 - we can see people going through things, and ask, will it ever be over, I'm here to say it will come to an end, God has said it will.
 - d) Not only did Habakkuk write it down for the people of his time,
 - He wrote it down, and we can read his writings, learn of God, and be encouraged by the things there.
- iii. Trust God's Words, Vs.4&5
- a) The Contrast here is People who “Live by Faith” and prideful people who trust themselves and leave God out.
 - b) Living By Faith,
 - in the introduction we mentioned the three New Testament uses of this verse
 - **Romans 1:17** “For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.”
 - the focus here was justice, doing justly,
 - **Galatians 3:11** “For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to
 - here the context is on living, how we should live,
 - **Hebrews 10:38** “Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.”
 - the point here is faith, this is the introduction to the “faith” chapter.
 - Each verse emphasizes a different aspect of this verse.
 - But it is Clear how God desires his people to be:
 - b) The Proud,/ Babylonians, or sinners
 - the Babylonians were puffed up with pride because of their military power.
 - They were proud of the great empire they built,
 - Nebuchadnezzar shows their pride best when he said
 - **Daniel 4:30** “The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty? ”

- Pride was not unique to Babylon tho,
 - it is a problem in the world today,
 - the bible is clear about what God thinks of pride,
 - God resist the proud but gives grace to the humble, there are 6 things God hates, 7 are an abomination, a proud look.
 - Pride is at the very essence of it, saying I Am Sufficient on My Own.
 - We don't need God....
- Beside puffing them up, pride gives a person a twisted or crooked way of thinking,
 - he begins to delight and dwell on the things that oppose to God,
 - he starts to withdraw himself from God
- Pride also makes people restless, they are never satisfied,
 - what was once done in moderation will be done in abundance.
 - If we can get rid of God, then everything will be tolerable.
- This would be one of the downfalls of Babylon, their never being able to be filled.

B. Declare God's Judgment, **Vs.6-20** (God pronounces judgment or woe on five different sins. And not how all five are still prevalent in the world today)

i. Selfish Ambition, vs.6-8

- a) Ambition can be a good thing if it is proper and the way God intends it to be,
 - there have been many very successful people in the world, both in secular jobs as well as Christian Jobs because of Ambition
- b) However if Ambition motivates people to be greedy, selfish, and or abusive, it is a wicked thing.
- c) The Babylonians were consumed with selfish ambition,
 - they would stop at nothing to get what they wanted,
 - this meant destruction, death or what ever it took.
 - All they wanted was to advance their empire.
 - We have seen other empires like that,
 - having stock piles of gold and fine things, over the dead bodies of others
 - The Babylonians would also one day be victims of the same thing, when the Mede-Persian empire comes in, it will treat them the same what they treated others.
 - **See Daniel 5**

ii. Covetousness, vs.9-11

- a) **Ephesians 4:28** "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth."
- this verse points to three ways a person can get wealth: One is to steal it, the second is to earn it, and the third is to have it given to you.
- Of course God is plain in the ten commandments, thou shall not steal (Ex:20:15)
- b) But, this was the way the Babylonians were going to take, and have taken from them,
- c) This would also be a bitter message for some of the Jewish people there,
 - after all they exploited others for their goods. They took with no remorse,
 - they used the "law" to benefit themselves while taking advantage of those weaker, or less fortunate.

- So this message would carry a sting to the Jews as well.

iii. Exploiting People, Vs.12-14

- a) the “great Empire” was built on blood,
 - built with slave labor, and innocent victims.
 - Every person who is wrongfully used, or killed means more to God than the greatest cities, greatest walls of any Nation.
 - And God promises that He will one day make it right.

iv. Drunkenness and Violence, Vs.15-17

- a) I have to say, vs.15 is a powerful verse today.
 - How many business have made their living by doing this,
 - they can justify it by saying “Well I don't make them drink” yet this verse places emphasis on the woe to “him that giveth”
 - we have talked about wither it should be grape juice or wine given at communion.
 - There are people on every side, but the best argument I ever heard was Pat Lawson, when he told me that he didn't want to be the one to give a drink to someone that went back to drinking because of it.
 - Bro. Joe Roberts posted a thing on Face-book the other day which is a good argument for it as well. (Morning Star Missions)
 - The Bible warns against Strong Drink,
 - **See Proverbs 20:1; 21:17; 23:20-21; 23:29-35; Romans 13:13; Galatians 5:21; I Thessalonians 5:7**
- b) this woe is not only to the drunkard, or the one who gives drink, but to the violent.
 - **Vs. 17** suggest the cruelty of the Babylonians went even away form humans, it went to beast, and the land it's self.
 - Wasting crops, trees, and cattle just for violence sake.
 - Some what to destroy just for the sake of destroying.
 - They have no desired outcome other than destruction,
 - we see this when someone breaks into a home, and vandalize it, not taking things, but destruction.
 - There are people on work sights that simply tear up stuff, just because
 - Then there is violence against others,
 - just as in Amos, or Nahum, violence can be physical, Mental, or Spiritual,
 - there are those who do as much violence, without ever touching a person, as those who physically abuse.
 - Mental abuse can be just a severe as physical,
 - this also stings the Jewish people in the land as they would here this,
 - realizing what they have done to others.

v. The Final Woe, it to Idolatry, Vs.19&20

- a) speaking to wood, stone, gold, or silver.
- b) There is no breath in them,
- c) the word breath here is the same word we used last week **Ch. 1 Vs.11** Mind
 - wind, Spirit, Mind
 - there is no power behind idols, they are simple objects.
 - Woe unto those who say “Teach me” to this,
 - like we can derive a moral compass from it.

- More likely we will use it to justify what we are doing.

C. Three Assurances in Habakkuk 2

i. First Assurance, God's Grace Vs.4

- a) it is God's grace that allows us to live by Faith,
- **Ephesians 2:8** “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:”

ii. Second Assurance, God's Glory Vs.14

- a) there is coming a day when the earth shall be filled with the Glory of God,
- instead of the wickedness that is here.
 - God is going to set up his throne and rule,

iii. Third Assurance, God's government, Vs.20

- a) God is on the throne, and nothing is beyond Him,
- incidentally this is exactly where Aspah saw the truth about the righteous and the wicked in the **73rd Psalm**.
- b) Let the earth keep silent before Him,
- **Romans 3:4** “God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.”