

The Book of Habakkuk

Chapter 2

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- This chapter is God's response to Habakkuk asking what would happen to the Babylonians, since they were a wicked people that would deserve judgment just as they were going to deliver to Israel (1:12-17).
- vs. 1 – Here is Habakkuk in faith anticipating God's response to his inquiry.
- vs. 2 – God's command is to make the message sure and clear enough to not be misunderstood. What He says will happen and it is not to be a secret.
- vs. 3 – The prophecy is sure that its fulfillment was in their future.
- vs. 4 – This verse is one of the most important in the Bible. The last phrase is quoted in Romans 1:17, Galatians 3:11, and Hebrews 10:38.
 - On its surface, this verse is a contrast against the proud Babylonian and the faithful Jew. Both would be judged by God, but their fates were different: the Babylonian empire would end (see Daniel 5:30-31, 539 B.C.), the Jews would return to their homeland (see Ezra 1-2, 538 B.C.)
 - The eternal truth in this verse is that sin brings for death and doom (Romans 6:23) while faith in and faithfulness to God brings life and blessing.
- vs. 5 – Might we say that Babylon is drunk on power?
 - Note - The Babylonians were well known in history for their addiction to alcohol. Roman historian Curtius wrote "The Babylonians, in particular, poured themselves out into the wine and the drunkenness which follow." We also have the testimony of Daniel 5:1-4.
- Five woes against Babylon (following B.H. Carroll outline)
 - vs. 6-8 – 1st Woe – "The plunder shall in turn be plundered"
 - vs. 6 – "thick clay" – I believe this refers to the Babylonian records kept on clay tablets, likely here as a record of credit or ownership that was pledged or pawned.
 - vs. 7-8 - the tables are turned.
 - vs. 9-11 – 2nd Woe – "A house built by evil gain shall witness against its owner"
 - You cannot gain safety by doing evil.
 - See Nebuchadnezzar's words in Daniel 4:30
 - vs. 12-14 – 3rd Woe – "The capital built by blood shall be as fuel to the fire"
 - vs. 13 – Note the insatiable appetites of the fire and vanity.
 - vs. 14 – Empires come and go, but only God's Kingdom will be eternal.
 - vs. 15-17 – 4th Woe – "The producer of drunkenness and shame shall in turn be put to shame"
 - vs. 15 – If the drunkenness in vs. 5 refers to more than alcohol, then this must be Babylon using wealth and power to exploit other nations.

- vs. 16 – God gives them the same measure that they meted out. Their nakedness (uncircumcision, the greatest of insults from a Jew, see I Samuel 17:36) and shame will be seen by all in their defeat.
- vs. 17 – The crime against Lebanon appears to be that they destroyed the natural resources (the famed forests and the game therein) – See Isaiah 14:8
- vs. 18-20 – 5th Woe – “The gross idolatry of Babylon disappoints the idol maker”
 - vs. 18 – Why trust that something made by the power of men has power greater than man? See Psalm 115.
 - The word used for idol literally means “worthless or nothing”.
 - vs. 19 – no breath = no life
 - vs. 20 – Carroll – “A splendid contrast that is, one of the finest in all the world's literature, between the idols of Babylon and Jehovah, the living God.”