

Daily Bible Study

“The Burden Habakkuk Saw – Chapter 2”

Habakkuk 2

January 8– 14, 2012

THE LORD’S DAY & MONDAY – As we continue our look at the book of the minor prophet Habakkuk we pick up this week at **Habakkuk 2**. We see Habakkuk will receive from God answers to his questions from **chapter 1**; the questions which caused him so much grief and anxiety. In these answers God informs Habakkuk that *“the righteous shall live by his faith”*. God assures the prophet that He is the Just One, all of history will unfold according to His plan, and that He alone will be the One who receives the worship of men. He will bring judgment on wicked men like the Babylonians; men will either be judged and punished or saved according to their response to The Almighty; either obedient faith or rebellious, arrogant rejection. **Habakkuk 2**: *“I will take my stand at my watchpost and station myself on the tower, and look out to see what he will say to me, and what I will answer concerning my complaint. And the LORD answered me: “Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so he may run who reads it. For still the vision awaits its appointed time; it hastens to the end—it will not lie. If it seems low, wait for it; it will surely come; it will not delay. “Behold, his soul is puffed up; it is not upright within him, but the righteous shall live by his faith. “Moreover, wine is a traitor, an arrogant man who is never at rest. His greed is as wide as Sheol; like death he has never enough. He gathers for himself all nations and collects as his own all peoples.” Shall not all these take up their taunt against him, with scoffing and riddles for him, and say, “Woe to him who heaps up what is not his own—for how long?—and loads himself with pledges!” Will not your debtors suddenly arise, and those awake who will make you tremble? Then you will be spoil for them. Because you have plundered many nations, all the remnant of the peoples shall plunder you, for the blood of man and violence to the earth, to cities and all who dwell in them. “Woe to him who gets evil gain for his house, to set his nest on high, to be safe from the reach of harm! You have devised shame for your house by cutting off many peoples; you have forfeited your life. For the stone will cry out from the wall, and the beam from the woodwork respond. “Woe to him who builds a town with blood and founds a city on iniquity! Behold, is it not from the LORD of hosts that peoples labor merely for fire, and nations weary themselves for nothing? For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. “Woe to him who makes his neighbors drink—you pour out your wrath and make them drunk, in order to gaze at their nakedness! You will have your fill of shame instead of glory. Drink, yourself, and show your uncircumcision! The cup in the LORD’s right hand will come around to you, and utter shame will come upon your glory! The violence done to Lebanon will overwhelm you, as will the destruction of the beasts that terrified them, for the blood of man and violence to the earth, to cities and all who dwell in them. “What profit is an idol when its maker has shaped it, a metal image, a teacher of lies? For its maker trusts in his own creation when he makes speechless idols! Woe to him who says to a wooden thing, Awake; to a silent stone, Arise! Can this teach? Behold, it is overlaid with gold and silver, and there is no breath at all in it. But the LORD is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him.”*

(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, teach me from Your Word this week. Help me to live by faith and to remember that You will do Your perfect will and that I am responsible to obey, repent, and believe.

TUESDAY – Habakkuk 2:1-5 *“I will take my stand at my watchpost and station myself on the tower, and look out to see what he will say to me, and what I will answer concerning my complaint. And the LORD answered me: “Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so he may run who reads it. For still the vision awaits its appointed time; it hastens to the end—it will not lie. If it seems low, wait for it; it will surely come; it will not delay. “Behold, his soul is puffed up; it is not upright within him, but the righteous shall live by his faith. “Moreover, wine is a traitor, an arrogant man who is never at rest. His greed is as wide as Sheol; like death he has never enough. He gathers for himself all nations and collects as his own all peoples.”* The passage begins with prophet acting like a soldier on guard duty as he, like a lookout, waited to see more than hear what God would say. True to his profession as a prophet and spokesman for God’s revelation, Habakkuk waited for God’s message, not simply for his own satisfaction but in order to carry God’s message to his people. Habakkuk waited; God spoke (*And the LORD answered me...*) and He does not mumble but speaks with Divine clarity and forthrightness. He told Habakkuk, *Write the vision; make it plain on tablets.* The vision was to be recorded on tablets so God’s Word would be preserved and more importantly, publicized as we see that a herald could run with it (*so he may run who reads it*). In this response from The Almighty, Habakkuk is informed why even the success of the wicked can never tarnish the glory of God. We understand that revelation requires a degree of patience as in this case it *awaits its appointed time*. God’s revelation will always come to pass, although it may seem delayed (**2 Peter 3:9**). The writer of Hebrews refers to this verse in **Hebrews 10:37** as he calls for persecuted believers to persevere. These passages both in Habakkuk and Hebrews remind believers that genuine faith looks forward to the coming of The King, that God’s verdict and plans are perfect and righteous, and that true, saving faith perseveres; it does not *shrink back* in the face of difficulty, fear and suffering.

(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, give me ears to hear and eyes to see Your revelation. Give me a love for Your Word and also courage and perseverance to stay faithful, obedient, and expectant.

WEDNESDAY – Habakkuk 2:4-14 *“Behold, his soul is puffed up; it is not upright within him, but the righteous shall live by his faith. “Moreover, wine is a traitor, an arrogant man who is never at rest. His greed is as wide as Sheol; like death he has never enough. He gathers for himself all*

nations and collects as his own all peoples.” Shall not all these take up their taunt against him, with scoffing and riddles for him, and say, “Woe to him who heaps up what is not his own—for how long?—and loads himself with pledges!” Will not your debtors suddenly arise, and those awake who will make you tremble? Then you will be spoil for them. Because you have plundered many nations, all the remnant of the peoples shall plunder you, for the blood of man and violence to the earth, to cities and all who dwell in them. “Woe to him who gets evil gain for his house, to set his nest on high, to be safe from the reach of harm! You have devised shame for your house by cutting off many peoples; you have forfeited your life. For the stone will cry out from the wall, and the beam from the woodwork respond. “Woe to him who builds a town with blood and founds a city on iniquity! Behold, is it not from the LORD of hosts that peoples labor merely for fire, and nations weary themselves for nothing? For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.” As the Lord answers Habakkuk He begins to now describe the wicked Babylonians. We find in the very opening verse of this description (**verse 4**) the contrast between the believing, godly righteous and the unbelieving, ungodly wicked. We see contrasted rebellious, arrogant, haughty pride against humility and trust in God. God’s blessing is upon the humble, trusting man while the proud man will experience God’s judgment. One who trusts in the Lord is one who relies on Him and is faithful to Him. This wonderful “gem” *the righteous shall live by his faith*, sparkles like a diamond in this dark chapter. In the middle of revelation concerning God’s coming judgment of the wicked Babylon we find this bright revelation of God’s favor. This phrase is quoted three times in the New Testament (**Romans 1:17, Galatians 3:11, Hebrews 10:38**). We come to see the words “*shall live*” have a broader meaning than just physical death in judgment. They speak of enjoying salvation and eternal life. In contrast with the proud, self-reliant, boastful ways of the unrighteous which lead to death, we find the righteous are trusting in God, faithful to Him and will experience the joys of real life. The following verses go on to describe the character of the wicked and the series of “woes” that we read are God, mocking the wicked which culminates with the beautiful guarantee of **verse 14**. Although the proud man will attempt to spread his name and fame, it will be a futile exercise; yet God’s name and fame will dominate; *For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.*

(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, thank You that You keep Your people and teach us humility. We are undeserving yet You have called us out of the darkness and we find real life and joy in knowing You.

THURSDAY – **Habakkuk 2:15-17** *“Woe to him who makes his neighbors drink—you pour out your wrath and make them drunk, in order to gaze at their nakedness! You will have your fill of shame instead of glory. Drink, yourself, and show your uncircumcision! The cup in the LORD's right hand will come around to you, and utter shame will come upon your glory! The violence done to Lebanon will overwhelm you, as will the destruction of the beasts that terrified them, for the blood of*

man and violence to the earth, to cities and all who dwell in them. As the “woes” continue against God’s enemies they describe another aspect of a selfish proud person. These Babylonians humiliated others. **Verse 15** speaks of making a neighbor drunk in order to lead them to foolish, shameful behavior, exposing their nakedness. It is God who will expose the nakedness and shame of the wicked as read in **verse 16**. **Verse 17** continues with the recalling of the violence done against not only people but all of God’s creation. We understand that *the earth is the Lord’s (Psalms 24:1)* and He can do with it as He pleases, but we should take note that He has complaint against men who devastate the earth with violence and *destruction*. In **Isaiah 14:8** we hear the trees speak of their gladness in being spared from the woodcutters axe or loggers saw.

(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?

Suggestion for Prayer: Lord, thank You for concern and genuinely caring for all Your creation.

FRIDAY & SATURDAY – Habakkuk 2:18-20 “*What profit is an idol when its maker has shaped it, a metal image, a teacher of lies? For its maker trusts in his own creation when he makes speechless idols! Woe to him who says to a wooden thing, Awake; to a silent stone, Arise! Can this teach? Behold, it is overlaid with gold and silver, and there is no breath at all in it. But the LORD is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him.*” As The Lord winds down His response to Habakkuk, bringing to a close His list of *woes*, He speaks to the issue of idolatry in **verses 18-19**. Again by way of comparison to Himself God illustrates the foolishness of idolatry and the making of or erecting of material idols or gods. Don’t limit this to statues Beloved as we can make idols out of anything. What we worship, desire and venerate is our idol. The Lord culminates His response by saying in contrast to the foolish idols of man which are merely created things, He the eternal Creator is *in his holy temple*, the heavenly place from which He rules the world and He calls for a universal silence of all His creation before Him. End this week by reading the words to “Behold Our God”: *Who has held the oceans in His hands? Who has numbered every grain of sand? Kings and nations tremble at His voice, All creation rises to rejoice. Who has given counsel to the Lord? Who can question any of His words? Who can teach the One who knows all things? Who can fathom all His wondrous deeds? Who has felt the nails upon His hands? Bearing all the guilt of sinful man, God eternal, humbled to the grave, Jesus, Savior, risen now to reign. Behold our God seated on His throne, Come, let us adore Him. Behold our King—nothing can compare, Come, let us adore Him. You will reign forever, Let Your glory fill the earth.*

(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, help me only to love and worship You. Praise You Holy Trinity!