

# THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

APRIL 6TH-7TH, 2019 // BOOK OF HABAKKUK

## DOCUMENTATION (2:2-5)

### "IT TESTIFIES...AND WILL NOT LIE"

In v3 God says His vision is "for the appointed time." This means that what God says will play out on His time table. God also says His vision "will certainly come and not be late."

- **God's timing is always perfect even when we don't understand.** Evil does not go unpunished, but we must trust God.

## THE SOURCE OF ALL SIN

God says the source of Babylon's evil comes from their inflated ego. C.S. Lewis called pride the "great sin" because all other sin comes from it.

- **The result of ego is a lack of integrity because we only look out for self. When we look out for self first, we leave a path of destruction in our wake.**

## THE CENTRAL THEME OF THIS BOOK

Habakkuk 2:4b is not only the central theme of this book, but is one of the most important themes of the entire Bible!

- Paul quotes this verse in Romans 1:17. **The faith Habby shows in the middle of troubling times of evil shows us how we are to live in our dark seasons.**

## NEVER SATISFIED (V5)

God tells us that those who live unrighteous lives will never be content or satisfied. God says, "wine betrays" and "arrogant men never rest" because their lifestyles never satisfy.

- **Look at sin in our own lives. When it gets a hold of us, it is never satisfied until we are utterly destroyed! This is Satan's goal!**

## WOE #1: GREED (2:6-8)

### 5 WARNINGS FROM GOD TO BABYLON

V6-19 are "woes," or taunts that the Jews will be able to say about the Babylonians after they fall. Though God is using this evil army to humble His people, their evil will also be dealt with.

- "Woes" are catastrophes that take place when we choose to live outside God's design (Rev. 8).

## WE FACE THE SAME TRAPS TODAY

We often say that humanity hasn't changed much. The 5 warnings God issues through Habakkuk seem to work perfectly in our day as well.

### THE FIRST WOE: GREED

The first warning from God is one that almost all people struggle with, even the people of God. One of the major factors for all major civilizations falling is greed.

- God mentions the "creditors suddenly arise," meaning that the reckless pursuit of more will catch up to greedy people (Pr. 22:7).

## WE WILL ALWAYS REAP WHAT WE SOW

If we create a culture of greed, selfishness, and show no mercy towards the less fortunate, we will eventually be "plundered" as well.

- The Bible talks a lot about money and our grip on it. **God doesn't need your money (tithes), but He knows that benevolence is a heart issue!**

## PRACTICALLY SPEAKING

- **Do we fall into cycles of greed? Have we been good stewards of our finances? Do we trust God with money? Are we benevolent by choice not mandate?**

## WOE #2: EXPLOITATION (2:9-11)

### THE 2ND WOE TARGETS BUSINESS ETHICS

Institutions and individuals that succeed by taking advantage of others or by making money by illegal means will be dealt with by God.

- How many businesses take advantage of people's poor financial decisions or their vices? How many people use and manipulate others for personal gain?

## HABAKKUK PREDICTS A BACKLASH

Habby writes that the "stones will cry out from the wall" showing that a rebellion to the oppressive and crooked institutions and people that take advantage of others is coming.

- **God is telling us that corruption can only stand so long.** Not only will the people rise up against it, but God will ultimately judge it.

## PRACTICALLY SPEAKING

- **Have we been ethical in the workplace? Have we supported industries that have oppressed the weak? How do we combat exploitation?**

## WOE #3: VIOLENCE (2:12-14)

### HABAKKUK WAS SINGLING OUT WAR

V12 is talking about nations that conquer with "bloodshed." The Babylonians were powerful because of war and as a people their culture was violent.

- The Bible says there is a time for war (Ecc. 3:8), but it should come as a defense of the innocent, not the pursuit of domination.

## WHEN GOD IS ABSENT, PEOPLE GET HURT

**Human life becomes cheap in the absence of God** (Vietnam, Nazi Germany, "mercy killings"). We have even seen this in our nation with riots, trafficking, infanticide, assisted suicide, abuse and violent crime.

- **Look at what we watch, listen to, and glorify! We are a people that loves confrontation.**

## PRACTICALLY SPEAKING

- **Is it our job to protect the weak? How do we handle our anger? How do we handle anger towards us? Do we condone and even promote violence? Should we be shocked by where culture is?**

## WOE #4: INTOXICATION (2:15-17)

### THIS WOE HITS ON SEVERAL LEVELS

First, we learn that intoxication is a sin regardless of the means. Secondly, we learn that getting others intoxicated with the intent to take advantage of them sexually is extremely evil. Thirdly, we learn that intoxication often leads to violence.

### THE CONTROVERSIAL TOPIC OF ALCOHOL

It is impossible to biblically teach that drinking is a sin, but we must look at the heart of why some people drink. We must also take into account our sometimes addictive personalities and family histories.

- Drinking is not a sin, but we must be mature. When our sobriety is compromised, Satan gets free reign. - **1 Peter 5:8 (CSB)**

## SO, WE MUST BE ON GUARD

In a very self-indulgent world, we must live disciplined lives. Paul said, "Everything is permissible, but not everything is beneficial" (1Cor. 10:23). This means that we must pray for God's wisdom to know what to engage in.

- **Be careful who you're with! Know your limits and be cautious. - 1 Thess. 5:6-8 (ESV)**

## PRACTICALLY SPEAKING

- **Do we use wisdom and discernment when it comes to drinking? Besides alcohol, what else intoxicates people? Do we lose control to other things? Do we understand why God wants us in our right minds?**

## WOE #5: IDOLATRY (2:18-20)

### WHAT USE IS A CARVED IDOL?

The first commandment is not to have any other gods before God. For clarity, there are no other gods, except for the ones we manufacture in our minds.

- Paul took this a step further when he echoed Deut. 32 and called **all other gods demonic**. This truth is offensive and must be communicated carefully!

### MATERIALISM FALLS UNDER IDOLATRY

In the U.S. we don't see as much worship of "carved idols" as much as we see worship of cars, houses, money, phones, or whatever brings us pleasure and comfort.

- Habakkuk pokes fun at this. He thinks **the idea that a man-made object can bring contentment and salvation is absurd.**

## THE LIVING AND THE DEAD

Habakkuk wanted to balance the idea of dead wood and stone with the living and vibrant God that he served. **Habby's God sat on a throne while the gods of the world collected dust on shelves.**

- There is balance in this last woe. **We can enjoy nice things, but we must be careful to keep things in proper order.**

## LOVING STRAIGHT TO HELL

We often say things like "God is love," "love is love," and "we just need to love on people." But, **do we understand that we can love incorrectly?** Some of us have fallen in love with money, success, violent entertainment, intoxication, and have created idols. God warns us of misguided "love" because improper love leads to destruction and catastrophe. In other words, the products of these "woes" come up short, both here and now, and for eternity!