

—HABAKKUK: LESSON TWO—

Day One

☼ Please read Habakkuk 2:1

Habakkuk was a morally sensitive soul. He was moved to approach God regarding the state of His nation and people. After being spoken to in Chapter 1, Habakkuk has placed himself into a mindset of keeping his eyes purposefully into the distance, ready to trust God to bring answers and watch for signs of His activity.

I often find myself discouraged by the state of the world around me. Why does it seem that so many “Christians” are on the side of evil?

% of religiously affiliated persons in 2017 in support of gay marriage:
White evangelical Protestants 35% White mainline Protestants 68%
Black Protestants 44% Catholics 67%

What does God say about homosexuality? NO
(I Timothy 1:8-11, Romans 1:26-28, Mark 10:6-9, Leviticus 20:13)
What should those percentages be? 0%

% of religiously affiliated persons in 2017 who think abortion is morally wrong:
White evangelical Protestants 76% White mainline Protestants 33%
Black Protestants 46% Catholics 51%

What does God say about life? HE IS PRO-LIFE
(Genesis 1:27, Psalm 22:10, Psalm 139:13-16, Jeremiah1:5, Psalm 127:3-5)
What should those percentages be? 100%

***Statistics found at pewresearch.org**

- "2014 State of Dating in America" report by Christian Mingle & JDate:**
- **61% of Christians said they would have sex before marriage**
 - **56% said that it's appropriate to move in with someone after dating for a time between 6 months and 2 years**
 - **59% said it doesn't matter who the primary breadwinner of the family is**
 - **34% said that while it would be nice to marry someone of the same faith, it's not required**

What does God say about marriage, purity, and marital roles? It is a sacred institution!
(Gen. 2:24, Heb.13:4, Eph. 5:22-23, I Cor. 7:1-5, Matt. 5:28, I Thess. 4:3-5)
What should each of those percentages be? 0%

Those of us who truly desire to follow hard after Christ can look around like Habakkuk did and think, *How can this be? Is there a solution?* The first thing we must do is to stop and say GOD IS IN CONTROL. What does His Word say?

Hebrews 10:30 and Romans 12:19-

Proverbs 28:5-

Psalm 37:27-29-

Psalm 146-

Many times, we expect God to, well, act like God. *Punish wickedness! Lift Your people up!* When we feel like this, we take it to God and meet Him in prayer and seek comfort in His Word. Habakkuk takes God at His word and trusts that God is at work. He positions himself in a position of attention and waits.

 WAIT.....

Many people say that faith fixes things, but you see them in a trial and they are SO fidgety and anxious! It's not that they don't trust the Lord; it's just that the concepts of patience and waiting are not popular in our immediate- gratification culture. "Hey, Siri...", drive-thrus, microwaves... we have faith that we will receive information/nourishment/satisfaction, but it all comes so quickly that it is expected and we get easily frustrated when things don't take place as quickly as we'd like them to.

In the Old Testament, the word associated with "wait" is used as a verb, an action. It means "to serve" and "to minister" in terms of being a servant. You see it used to mean that somebody waited on a king, or to wait upon business that was to commence soon. This sort of service calls for a listening ear when beckoned, a responsive heart to move. You and I are waiting on our King, doing His will on earth, knowing we are already a part of His family and kingdom, safe within the walls of salvation.

The peace, the reassurance, the fulfillment of our faith and hope will all be brought to completion. When? One Day, when every knee will bow and every tongue confesses that Jesus is Lord; one day when we meet Him face to face; one

day when He returns. I'd sure like to see some people get their comeuppance and live in a world that is all about Jesus, but that is not today. IT IS PROMISED.

- What does Paul say in Philippians 3:12? _____

We're pressing on toward the finish line, which is Heaven. There is no earthly date that will give us the amount of glorious celebration as we will have One Day.

- Philippians 1:6 says to be _____ in this: that _____ who _____ will carry it to _____
 - o Until when? _____

This will all be over One Day. Those things we strive for today can only be filled by our Creator, and we must do our part to take God's Word seriously in our own lives (Matthew 5:17-20). Paul tells us in I Thessalonians 5:14 to not be idle. We are always to be about our Father's work while we await that One Day. Our hope in the certain truth that it is coming keeps us going.

God will never disappoint us, even if the waiting seems long. He's already given us a Savior and promised us eternal life! Think about it: what more could we ask for? When we wait in trust, we experience step-by-step alongside Him the fullness of His work.

Waiting is a part of being a believer. Psalm 40:1 celebrates waiting patiently for the Lord, and Isaiah promises that those who wait upon the Lord will renew their strength (40:31). Look up these next few verses and summarize them:

Titus 2:11-14-

I Thessalonians 1:9-10-

Hebrews 9:27-28-

Romans 8:22-23-

You and I are waiting for the ultimate party, for a new heaven and new earth in which righteousness dwells (II Peter 3:11-13). When we feel a longing for that to happen more immediately, we GET to turn to Jesus! We GET to realign our hearts with His heart. We GET to realize our weaknesses and rely on His strength to get us through. This is the heart that Habakkuk is working out of; are you?



Day Two

 Please read Habakkuk 2:2-3

Habakkuk has learned that Babylon- the new world power- will be overtaking his nation soon; Assyria had only recently lost power and then Egypt had troubled them.

As we wait intentionally for the Lord to come, He will give us glimpses into the work He is doing and will do. We just have to trust His plan...and wait.

We learned in Habakkuk 1 that God was opening Habakkuk's spiritual eyes and allowing him to see. God is telling Habakkuk now to write down His response.

- In what matter of writing style does God tell Habakkuk to use in verse 2?

- Why? _____

Habakkuk was instructed to write plainly, clearly, in block letters, easy to read.

I came across two explanations of 2:2b ("He may run/he that runs"):

- Those passing by even in a hurry can easily grasp the message being conveyed
- The message is to be written down so that a courier (messenger) could easily take the message and convey it simply to others

Habakkuk was to see the vision and record the vision. He was also told to make it practical and put it into action. Praise God that he did because here we are over 2,000 years later relating to it and gaining wisdom from God! Isn't that the sweetness of God's Word? It's for even the most simple of men, and it's designed

to be distributed simply; no frills or big speeches are necessary. It's evident enough and available to be absorbed and lived out. We can be the couriers of His Word and are called to be (The Great Commission- Matthew 28:19), regardless of how well educated or well versed in the Bible we think we are. His Word is for the benefit of others.

☸ Please read verse 3 again on your own

As we've learned, God's Word is as appropriate for today as it was for Habakkuk. There may be a trial you are facing or in right now, regardless of how tough it is. God's words here are for you today:

“At the time I have decided, My words will come true.

You can trust what I say about the future.

It may take a long time, but keep on waiting—it will happen!”

One translation states translates that “it pants for the end,” meaning that time may tarry and seem prolonged.

☸ Please read Psalm 42:1-5

- Who does our soul pant for? _____
- What is the question posed in verse 2? _____

- I need to meet with Jesus!
- In the waiting, in the “tears being my food day and night,” we can remember previous times when we found ourselves upset. What did the author do even in those times (v.4b)? _____

- He went to praise God. He went to pour it out in the house of God among fellow believers.
- When we feel downcast and disturbed, we (v.5):
 - Put your _____
 - FOR I WILL _____
 - My _____

Have you even been impatient in the kitchen? Well, you know that a watched pot that seems to never boil will actually boil at the right time, and that cake that you keep peering in at and toothpick-checking will eventually rise. You put forth the time and labor and there will be an end result: you have to trust that all the elements will come in to play. God works it all out for our good; you can

count on it. You have a plan laid out for your life, and God will remain true to His covenant to see that plan worked out. He will take His time, knowing when each turn will come down the road. His words will come true in the time He appointed for you, and you continue to wait intentionally and do His work, getting closer to Him through it all. It will surely happen.

*Blessed Savior, Thou hast promised
Thou wilt all our burdens bear;
May we ever, Lord, be bringing
All to Thee in earnest prayer.
Soon in glory bright, unclouded,
There will be no need for prayer—
Rapture, praise, and endless worship
Will be our sweet portion there.*

What do you need to entrust to Him today?



Day Three

 Please read Habakkuk 2:4-19

God gives us two options: You are either for Him, or you are against Him. He instructs the righteous to carefully continue to obey, and He instructs the self-sufficient to get their acts together.

- Who does God point out *right away* in verse 4? _____

There is pride in a job well done, or being proud of your kids. Webster's dictionary states that pride is "a noble self-esteem springing up from a consciousness of worth." I realize the value and importance of what is going on in my life, and it blesses me. Where do we get our worth from? God. This is a satisfaction in skills and qualities that are admirable and were intentionally nurtured and worked on. This pride includes a humble spirit: that warm grin, the shrugging of the shoulders, the shake of the head that indicates that I really don't know why it all worked together for me, but it did and I appreciate it. It's giving honor to The One who made it possible: God.

The pride spoken of here is when pride doesn't touch the heart and get sent back to God in praise. Sin distorts the source of worth, and we don't give praise to Whom it belongs. This pride promotes the self, focuses on the self, and makes the self want more and more of this source of pride (job, looks, money, kids). Sadly, this kind of pride is empty and will never satisfy.

Proverbs 16:18-19: _____

God lets us know very clearly what He thinks about pride, and He also lets Habakkuk know that He sees this going on. God says that the prideful man is soul-empty, trusting in themselves and their crooked ways. Where a person's soul is concerned: if a soul is not "upright" in God's sight, it's dead.

There are 5 "woes" in Habakkuk 2. As God speaks throughout the rest of the chapter, we get a sense of what giving in to self-pride and an abandonment of righteous living gets you; a soul that is dead profits nothing.

 **Woe One: Money and Lust for Control (v. 5-8)**

- How would you summarize verse 5? _____

Habakkuk is trying to come to terms with an enemy nation taking over Judah. God is informing him that the intimidation, the stealing, the dominance of Babylon may seem to spread their territory, but it is as empty as the grave and there is no life or satisfaction in the end. This message is truth towards Babylon AND a warning to Judah to be humble and repentant; this can happen to anybody.

- What will happen to a power that is money hungry and fights dirty for control (v. 6-8)? _____

It never ends well for them. It may seem like they are getting their way, but woe to them, how sad and despairing, that their actions were in vain and their souls are far from God. NOT a place I want to ever be in.

☼ Woe Two: Greed and Ruin of Others for Your Profit (v. 9-11)

- Who is being spoken of in verse 9? _____

Those who build a tower to retreat up to, who store all their selfish, stolen possessions out of reach.... hmmm... I wonder what their foundation is? It sure isn't Jesus Christ! Christ sure isn't the cornerstone of this home!

- What does the foolish man build his house on (Matthew 7:24-27)? What happens to his house? _____

These acts of greed and ruin bring shame upon the house up so high. The very stones and crossbeams of this tower this nest on high will testify to the unrighteous acts (verses 10-11).

☼ Woe Three: Violence (v. 12-14)

- Who is God addressing in verse 12? _____

Babylon's warfare and gain was based on bloodshed. Crime was the backbone of their prosperity. God says in verse 13, "Don't you know that the God of Angel Armies makes sure that nothing comes of that but ashes?" The harder they work, the less they are.

- Is God idle in all of this (verse 14)? _____

Despite all of this, creation is still finely tuned to God's glory, His hand in all things, and His plan of redemption. The earth is bursting forth with knowledge of things to come, and is expectant of God's plan for His most glorious day.

Woe Four: Drinking, Lust, and Corrupting Others (v. 15-17)

- Who is God addressing in verse 15? _____
-
-

I think that you and I see this sort of sin happening a lot more than warlords and greed. This hits home more often and breaks relationships apart. It saddens the heart when our family, neighbors, friends unashamedly indulge in drunkenness, sexual immorality, and abuses. We see others follow them down this destructive path, either to stay friends or to be popular, or to cover up the deeper feelings with temporary happiness. There doesn't seem to be shame in feeding your flesh cravings anymore, but sadly, everybody ends up hurt in these situations. So many end up broken, and this brokenness becomes a generational curse.

Babylon brought these perversions with them wherever they went. The church today seems to be in a struggle with the world's perversions because we are inundated with them: TV, internet, books, billboards, magazines at the checkout at the grocery store. Where do we turn our eyes? How do we keep from letting our ears be tickled and our eyes drawn to what is destructive? We look to God's Word.

- What does God say about the consequences of these acts in verse 16?
-
-

Lord, keep us drinking from the Living Water and give us a gag reflex to the platters of indulgence that the world sets before us! Let us live a life to reflect your glory.

Woe Five: Idols (v. 18-19)

What profit to anybody is an image that the maker itself carved out? The maker would trust it and worship it, when it is empty and full of lies the maker projects onto it? What is this god that cannot even talk? Who do YOU think you are that you could tell a stick to "Wake up" or a dumb stone to "Get up?" Can they teach you anything about anything? They are only surface and hollow inside.

The woes seemed to have worked their way here from global impact to intimate, secret sin. Once there is a tempted appetite for selfish indulgences, the flesh can fall in to sin and crave satisfaction at any cost. The heart becomes a throne of Self-Love and Worship. Gain was the idol of the enemy, and there is a

warning to God's people here to be careful in life because we may end up realizing that God has been replaced by those things that the pagan, worldly, unbelieving [dead] souls store in their hearts. Woe to those of us who have eternal life claimed in our hearts, but easily succumb to the whispers of sin's temptations.

We need God's Word because His Law teaches us that we need boundaries and a Master. You and I wouldn't know right from wrong if it weren't for rules. However, just because we have rules doesn't mean that we file them away in our mind and automatically choose Right in every situation. We must choose daily to serve the Law of God and NOT in our flesh serve the law of sin. We may know right, but, God help us, sin can seem so easy and profitable. Praise God for Jesus, who, upon our repentance and declaration of Him as Savior and Lord, justifies our souls to be upright and provides the Holy Spirit as a helper to speak to us and for us in tough situations.

As we close out this day, please read Romans 7:7-25. Paul is speaking to the church about law and flesh, and it is a really humbling passage.

Lord, please help us to realize that our soul is alive and we have Your power in us to resist the devil and make Him flee (James 4:7). We may stray and we may face the enemy, but a humble heart and a deep appetite from your truth are the powerful weapons.



Day Four

 Please read Habakkuk 2:20

—silence—

Silence allows for a processing of information, for considering what you have heard and what it means. For how stationary silence can seem, it has a powerful, healing, strengthening quality to it. But silence has to be intentional; you have to make time for the quiet, heart-steadying act. Silence can bring it to focus on what is embedded deep down. Look up the following verses and write down your thoughts about them:

Psalm 37:7-

Psalm 62:5-6-

Zephaniah 1:7-


Zechariah 2:13-

God had just laid down the “Who Do You Think You Are” speech against the actions of the enemy. God identified each “woe” and He made it very clear that the outcome would not be good.

Verse 20 begins with “BUT THE LORD...,” indicating that these selfish, prideful, unrighteous acts would be standing before His judgement soon, and He would set it all straight under His sovereignty and power.

God is in His place in heaven, and He is the God to be worshipped. He does not dwell in temples made of hands (Acts 17:24), so we don’t have to fear that His reign will be taken down by hands. God is always in His place most deserving and worthy, in His holy temple, and yet He hears our voice (Psalm 18:6). He is our heart’s compass, and He makes His position very clear to us in order that all may follow Him and find worth in the goodness that His plan for our lives affords us.

He is worthy! He is TO BE PRAISED! There is NO OTHER NAME, and the power of that Name is our Victory! Though life presses, persecutes, strikes down- we are not destroyed. Let the enemy come, and in that time, let our hearts reevaluate what we’ve held as gain, and let our grip on His Eternal Name be strengthened, and allow us to call on the only One who directs our steps and calls us His own.

 Please do a word study for the following words. You can Google their definition, look in your Bible’s concordance, look up “verses about _____.” Write down what reaction the Holy Spirit prompts in you:

Silence: _____

Reverence: _____

Awe: _____

What is shaking you? What have you brought before God, and you seem to be waiting for a response?

He sees. He knows. He cares.

Be intentionally silent and allow a renewed awe and reverence to wash over you, to reassure you and to restore hope in who He is in your life today.

Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire.

Hebrew 12:28-29

