

Habakkuk 1, 2, 3

Habakkuk's Woes!

Habakkuk, a prophet who predicted the coming Babylonian invasion of Judah, was distressed that wickedness and strife were rampant in Judah, yet Habakkuk complained that God was doing nothing, allowing sin to go unpunished. The Lord replied to Habakkuk's frustration with the following "woes": Woe to the dishonest, woe to the covetous, woe to the violent, woe to those who inebriate with drugs and alcohol, woe to false religions. God's judgement IS coming, in this case through the "ruthless" Babylonians!

Chapter 1: 2-11

Habakkuk's Complaint

"The prophecy that Habakkuk the prophet receive. How long, Lord, must I call for help, but you do not listen? Or cry out to you, "Violence!" but you do not save? Why do you make me look at injustice? Why do you tolerate wrongdoing? Destruction and violence are before me; there is strife, and conflict abounds. Therefore the law is paralyzed, and justice never prevails. The wicked hem in the righteous, so that justice is perverted.

The LORD's Answer

“Look at the nations and watch— and be utterly amazed. For I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe, even if you were told. I am raising up the Babylonians, that ruthless and impetuous people, who sweep across the whole earth to seize dwellings not their own. They are a feared and dreaded people; they are a law to themselves and promote their own honor. Their horses are swifter than leopards, fiercer than wolves at dusk. Their cavalry gallops headlong; their horsemen come from afar. They fly like an eagle swooping to devour; they all come intent on violence. Their hordes advance like a desert wind and gather prisoners like sand.

They mock kings and scoff at rulers. They laugh at all fortified cities; by building earthen ramps they capture them. Then they sweep past like the wind and go on—guilty people, whose own strength is their god.”

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Chapter 2: 2-20

“Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets so that a herald may run with it. For the revelation awaits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it linger, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not

delay. See, the enemy is puffed up; his desires are not upright—but the righteous person will live by his faithfulness—indeed, wine betrays him; he is arrogant and never at rest. Because he is as greedy as the grave and like death is never satisfied, he gathers to himself all the nations and takes captive all the peoples. Will not all of them taunt him with ridicule and scorn, saying,

‘Woe to him who piles up stolen goods and makes himself wealthy by extortion!’ . . .

‘Woe to him who builds his house by unjust gain, setting his nest on high’ . . .

‘Woe to him who builds a city with bloodshed and establishes a town by injustice!’ . . .

‘Woe to him who gives drink to his neighbors, pouring it from the wineskin till they are drunk, so that he can gaze on their naked bodies!’ You will be filled with shame instead of glory.

. . .

‘Woe to him who [practices false religion!]’ . . .

The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth be silent before him.”

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Chapter 3: 2-6, 17-19

Habakkuk's Prayer

“Lord, I have heard of your fame; I stand in awe of your deeds, Lord. Repeat them in our day, in our time make them known; in wrath remember mercy. His glory covered the heavens and his praise filled the earth. His splendor was like the sunrise; rays flashed from his hand, where his power was hidden. Plague went before him; pestilence followed his steps. He stood, and shook the earth; he looked, and made the nations tremble. The ancient mountains crumbled and the age-old hills collapsed—but he marches on forever.

Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Savior. The Sovereign Lord is my strength; he makes my feet like the feet of a deer, he enables me to tread on the heights.”

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The following are notes that I took from a message “Habakkuk’s Woes” given by Dr. Mark Rutland in about 1994.

Habakkuk’s Woes

Today modern Americans do not believe that this nation and individuals will be held accountable for sins. Appeal, parole, pardon, etc., we do not believe there will come a day of reckoning and judgment. Although there seems to be a delay (Hab 2:3-4 “though time will wait, . . . “), this delay is only due to the love and grace of God. **God is saying, “Don’t make me do this!!!”** We are not without our prophets. When it comes, the Judgment of God will be swift, with no parole, no pardons other than Jesus, and no escape. It is inevitable! We know that it’s coming like the 2nd blast of Mt. St. Helens.

In Chap 1:6-9, God raised up the Babylonians and Chaldeans, wicked people to bring judgment against HIS chosen people. George Washington saw a cloud of people from 3 continents invading, burning the cities of USA. We can’t believe or comprehend this. God can cause our missiles to rust in the ground, bring in 3rd rate armies from South and Central America to invade us. The people of Holland didn’t believe Germany would invade Holland. But they DID! God is loosening the “evening wolves.” We have diseases and plagues in sinful humanity that are just beginning.

In Chapter 2 are the “woes”: **Woe to those who increase by means not their own!** In America, dishonesty is the rule, not the exception. As a nation we have lost our soul. We are a dishonest nation! **Woe to the covetous!** We are about money. We lust for things. **Woe to the violent!** We have 27,000 murders per year in USA (Only 55,000 in Viet Nam!), plus 1.5 million abortions each year. We live in a violent nation! You can’t go next door to say “Turn down the music!” Think of the problems in Nevada with gambling, so what do Central Florida leaders want to do? Introduce casino gambling to Central Florida. **Woe those who use drugs and alcohol to inebriate and take advantage of people!** **Woe to those who embrace and practice false religions!**

BAD NEWS: We have sinned. God will judge. God lifts and lowers kings. There has never been as much domestic violence as in the USA today.

GOOD NEWS: There is Glory of God in the midst of His wrath. There is revival in the midst of judgment. The fear of God, there is mercy in the midst of wrath!

Day of terrible judgment for some will be a day of wonderful joy for others. "Sam" lived away from God all his life. On his deathbed he said, "This is how I lived, this is how I'll die." His face contorted in fear, he died a terrible death. Contrast to Charlie Wheeler, who sat up in bed, looked at a blank wall, raised his arms, and said, "Oh, beautiful!!", and died. One says to the mountains, "Cover me!" The other says, "Wonderful, merciful Jesus!" With humility and grace, we will rise and be received by our beautiful Savior!

Are you ready to stand before God? Church membership does NOT count! Are you ready to meet the Lord in the air or in the veil of death? Jesus said, "I stand at the door and knock." Be reconciled to God! Rise above this doomed land! Allow Christ to enter, to live in your life, to forgive all your sins. If you are not walking with God, then replace the "Woe" with "Peace of God in Jesus Christ." Jesus is the answer! He is the Way—the ONLY way!! (by Dr. Mark Rutland)

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