

# Habakkuk 2:2-6

- The Lord’s reply to Habakkuk’s second complaint/question is not a rebuke, but reaffirms the Lord’s plan while at the same time giving a message of hope and ultimate justice. (2:2-3)
- The Lord contrasts those who live in pride with those who live in faith. (2:4-6a)
- The Lord details the ultimate fate of the proud who live for their own will, desires, pride, might and false philosophies/ideologies/religions/worldviews (idols).(2:6b-20)
  - The fruit of the proud is detailed in five woes
  - These are explained categorically

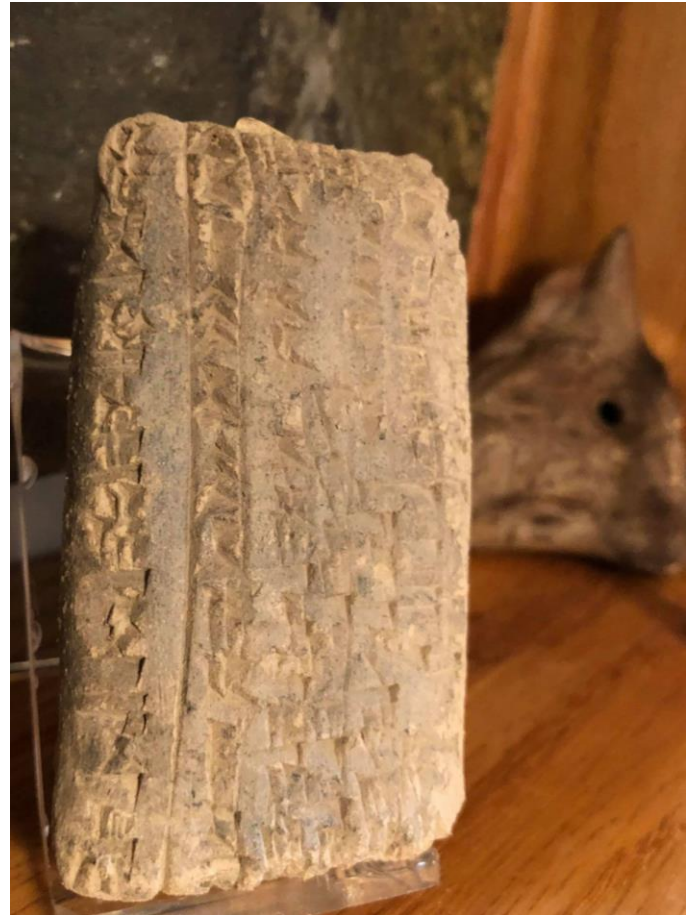
Habakkuk 2:2 – “**And the LORD answered me: “Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so he may run who reads it.”**”

5921 [e]	874 [e]	2377 [e]	3789 [e]	559 [e]	3068 [e]	6030 [e]
‘al-	ū·bā·’êr	ḥā·zō·wn,	kə·tō·wb	way·yō·mer,	Yah·weh	way·ya·’ā·nê·nî
עַל־	וּבָאֵר	חֲזוֹן	כְּתוּב	וַיֹּאמֶר	יְהוָה	וַיַּעֲנֵנִי 2
on	and make [it] plain	the vision	Write	and said	Yahweh	And answered me
Prep	Conj-w   V-Piel-Imp-ms	N-ms	V-Qal-Imp-ms	Conj-w   V-Qal-ConsecImperf-3ms	N-proper-ms	Conj-w   V-Qal-ConsecImperf-3ms   1cs

	7121 [e]	7323 [e]	4616 [e]	3871 [e]
	bōw.	qō·w·rê	yā·rūš	le·ma·’an
	בּוֹ:	קוֹרֵא	יָרוּץ	לְמַעַן
	it	who reads	he may run	that
Prep   3ms	V-Qal-Prtcpl-ms	V-Qal-Imperf-3ms	Conj	Art   N-mp

1. The Lord responds to his faithful prophet (who was doing his job, holding himself responsible and watching at his post) with a vision.
2. This message is not only for the individual curious prophet, but was a message for the people of Habakkuk’s generation, and for all generations. This is a timely message that is applicable even today.
  - a. This is seen by the fact the vision was to be inscribed on tablets





- b. Isaiah instructed to write on a “scroll” and a “tablet” (Is. 8:1; 30:8).  
Jeremiah to to write in a “book”. (Jer. 30:2)
- c. These tablets were not large since someone was to run with them.
- d. The runner would also be the one to read the message inscribed on the tablets when they arrived at their destination(s).
- e. Prophets were considered running to the people for the Lord with a message similar to a king might send a messenger to another dignitary or a general might send a message from the battle. The Lord said to Jeremiah:  
“I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran;  
I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied.” (Jer. 23:21)
  - i. Gehazi ran for Elisha (2 King 4:26)
  - ii. In Zechariah the Lord commanded his messenger (an angel) to “run” and deliver the message (Zech. 2:4)
- f. The word “read” – *qowre* /qo-w-re/ also means “to proclaim” and “to call” as well as “to read”
- g. The message appears to be permanent and inscribed in clay tablets that would endure through the ages, so the messengers would be assumed to be many and for all generations until the vision is fulfilled.
- h. Since the vision awaits an appointed time it would be obvious the message was intended to continue to inspire hope and clarity for generations to come

2:3 – “For still the vision awaits its appointed time; it hastens to the end—it will not lie.  
If it seems slow, wait for it; it will surely come; it will not delay.”

518 [e]	3576 [e]	3808 [e]	7093 [e]	6315 [e]	4150 [e]	2377 [e]	5750 [e]	3588 [e]
'im-	yə·kaz·zêḇ;	wə·lō	laq·qêṣ	wə·yā·pê·aḥ	lam·mō·w·'êḏ,	ḥā·zō·wn	'ō·wḏ	kî
אִם	יִכְזֵב	וְלֹא	לְקֵץ	וַיִּפְתָּ	לְמוֹעֵד	חֲזוֹן	עוֹד	כִּי
Though	it will lie	and not	at the end	but it will speak	for an appointed time	the vision [is]	yet	For
Conj	V-Piel-Imperf-3ms	Conj-w   Adv-NegPrt	Prep-l, Art   N-ms	Conj-w   V-Hifil-ConjImperf.Jus-3ms	Prep-l, Art   N-ms	N-ms	Adv	Conj

309 [e]	3808 [e]	935 [e]	935 [e]	3588 [e]	2442 [e]	4102 [e]
yə·'a·hêr.	lō	yā·bō	bō	kî-	lōw,	ḥak·kêh-
יֵאָחֵר:	לֹא	יָבֹא	בֹּא	כִּי-	לוֹ	חַכֵּה
it will tarry	not	it will come	surely	because	for it	wait
V-Piel-Imperf-3ms	Adv-NegPrt	V-Qal-Imperf-3ms	V-Qal-InfAbs	Conj	Prep   3ms	V-Piel-Imp-ms

1. Habakkuk would inscribe the vision, but would not see the vision fulfilled. The fulfillment awaits an appointed time.
  - a. The vision fulfillment is not for now... “for the appointed time”
  - b. The vision is eschatological... “it hastens for the end”
  - c. The vision is significant in its theological consequences... “if it seems slow, wait for it”
  - d. The vision is applicable to the believer’s daily faith... “it is sure to come”
  - e. The vision is absolute... “it cannot lie”, “it will not delay”
2. “but it will speak” *weyapeah* from *puach* meaning to “breathe”, “pants”, “blow”
  - a. The idea is it is yearning, striving, hastening
  - b. The vision is the Word of God and it has the creative force and inspiration of God within it so the vision itself has the drive, the impulse and the very creative nature of God to fulfill itself.
3. “to the end” is *laqqes* is from *qets* meaning “end”
  - a. This word “end” means the termination.
  - b. This word “end” (*qets*) does NOT mean things like “later on”, “after a few days” or “in a little while”. It means THE END.
  - c. Only other use of *laqqes* is Daniel 12:13 – where Daniel is told by the angel to | “go your way till the end (*laqqes*). And you shall rest and shall stand in your allotted place at the end (*leqes*) of the days.”
4. Habakkuk’s question had demanded an eschatological answer from God if Habakkuk was going to be able to trust God and understand the current affairs that were about to unfold.
5. Notice the conditional statement “IF” in “if it seems slow, wait for it”. This indicates the unknowability of the “end”. It may happen sooner than later, but IF it happens later, “wait for it.”
6. “It will not delay” means history is on schedule. God’s plan is under control. The times and seasons are set. This end will “not delay”. Obviously “it will not delay” is not a contradiction with “an appointed time” or “wait for it” for several reasons:
  - a. It is in the Word of God
  - b. It is in the same sentence as “if it seems slow”
  - c. If it means the vision is coming soon for Habakkuk to see it, then this verse and this answer from the Lord is nonsensical. In fact, the book of Habakkuk would make no sense and have no meaning.

2:4 – “Behold, his soul is puffed up; it is not upright within him,  
but the righteous shall live by his faith.”

2421 [e]	530 [e]	6662 [e]	5315 [e]	3474 [e]	3808 [e]	6075 [e]	2009 [e]
yih·yeh.	be·'ē·mū·nā·tōw	wə·ṣad·dīq	bōw;	naḫ·šōw	yā·šə·rāh	lō- 'up·pə·lāh,	hin·nēh
יְהִי־הַיָּשׁוּ׃	בְּאֵמוּנָתוֹ	וְצַדִּיק	בּוֹ	נַפְשׁוֹ	יֵשֶׁרָה	לֹא- עֲפֹלָה	וְהִנֵּה 4
shall live	by his faith	but the just	in him	His soul	is upright	not the proud	Behold
V-Qal-Imperf-3ms	Prep-b   N-fsc   3ms	Conj-w   Adj-ms	Prep   3ms	N-fsc   3ms	V-Qal-Perf-3fs	Adv-NegPrt V-Pual-Perf-3fs	Interjection

2:5 – “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.”

5115 [e]	3808 [e]	3093 [e]	1397 [e]	898 [e]	3196 [e]	3588 [e]	637 [e]
yin·weh;	wə·lō	yā·hîr	ge·ber	bō·w·ḡēḏ,	hay·ya·yin	kî-	wə·'aḇ
יִנָּה	וְלֹא	יְהִיר	גִּבּוֹר	בּוֹגֵד	הַיַּיִן	כִּי-	וְאַף 5
he does stay at home	and not	proud	[He is] a man	he transgresses	by wine	because	And indeed
V-Qal-Imperf-3ms	Conj-w   Adv-NegPrt	Adj-ms	N-ms	V-Qal-Prtcpl-ms	Art   N-ms	Conj	Conj-w   Conj

7646 [e]	3808 [e]	4194 [e]	1931 [e]	5315 [e]	7585 [e]	7337 [e]	834 [e]
yis·bā',	wə·lō	kam·mā·weṭ	wə·hū	naḫ·šōw,	kiš·'ō·wl	hir·hîb	'ā·šer
יִשְׁבַּע	וְלֹא	כְּמוֹת	וְהוּא	נַפְשׁוֹ	כְּשֵׂאוֹל	הִרְחִיב	אֲשֶׁר 5
be satisfied	and cannot	like death	and he [is]	his desire	as hell	he enlarges	because
V-Qal-Imperf-3ms	Conj-w   Adv-NegPrt	Prep-k, Art   N-ms	Conj-w   Pro-3ms	N-fsc   3ms	Prep-k   N-cs	V-Hifil-Perf-3ms	Pro-r

5971 [e]	3605 [e]	413 [e]	6908 [e]	1471 [e]	3605 [e]	413 [e]	622 [e]
hā·'am·mîm.	kāl-	'ē·lāw	way·yiq·bōṣ	hag·gō·w·yim,	kāl-	'ē·lāw	way·ye·'ē·sōḇ
הָעַמִּים:	כָּל-	אֵלָיו	וַיִּקְבֹּץ	הַגּוֹיִם	כָּל-	אֵלָיו	וַיִּאַסֵּף 5
peoples	all	for himself	and heaps up	nations	all	to himself	and He gathers
Art   N-mp	N-msc	Prep   3ms	Conj-w   V-Qal-ConsecImperf-3ms	Art   N-mp	N-msc	Prep   3ms	Conj-w   V-Qal-ConsecImperf-3ms

2:6 – “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!’ ”

559 [e]	2420 [e]	4426 [e]	5375 [e]	4912 [e]	5921 [e]	3605 [e]	428 [e]	3808 [e]	
wə-yō-mar,	lōw; ḥî-dō-wṭ	ū-mə-lî-šāh	yîs-šā-’ū,	mā-šāl	’ā-lāw	kul-lām,	’ēl-leh	hā-lō-w-	
וַיֹּאמֶר	לְ	חִידוֹת	וּמְלִיצָה	יִשְׂאוּ	מִשָּׁל	עָלָיו	כֻּלָּם	אֵלֶּה	הַלֹּא־ 6
and say	against him	a riddle	and taunting	take up	a proverb	against him	all	these	Will not
Conj-w   V-Qal-ConjImperf-3ms	Prep   3ms	N-fp	Conj-w   N-fs	V-Qal-Imperf-3mp	N-ms	Prep   3ms	N-msc   3mp	Pro-cp	Adv-NegPrt

5671 [e]	5921 [e]	3513 [e]	4970 [e]	5704 [e]	3808 [e]	7235 [e]	1945 [e]	
’ab-tîṭ.	’ā-lāw	ū-mak-bîḏ	mā-tay	’ad-	lōw,	lō-	ham-mar-beh	hō-w
!	עֲבָטִיט:	עָלָיו	וּמְכַבֵּד	מְתִי	עַד-	וְ	הַמַּרְבֵּה	הוּא
with many pledges	to him	and who loads himself	long	how	[What] is his	not	to him who increases	Woe
N-ms	Prep   3ms	Conj-w   V-Hifil-Prtcpl-ms	Interrog	Prep	Prep   3ms	Adv-NegPrt	Art   V-Hifil-Prtcpl-ms	Interjection

## FIVE WOES:

### Woe #1 – 2:6b-8 –

“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 #2 – 2:9-11 –

“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 #3 – 2:12-14 –

“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 #4 – 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.

Woe #5 – **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.”