

Habakkuk: From Protest to Praise – When God says, ‘Woe’ Habakkuk 2:6-20

INTRODUCTION

Please turn in your Bible to **Habakkuk 2:6-20**. (Read) From **Protest to Praise**...that’s the title of our study of this minor prophet with a major message. We are accompanying **Habakkuk** on his journey from doubt to trust, from confusion to confidence, from worry to worship.

Let’s review...**Habakkuk’s first question was prompted by all of the violence and injustice among the people of Judah. Habakkuk** saw all this and wondered why God did not do something about it. He began to wonder did God even notice or care. God answered **Habakkuk** by saying, yes He did notice, He did care, and He was going to do something about it. He was going to send the Babylonians to judge the people of Judah for their sin.

That answered **Habakkuk’s** first question, but it immediately raised a second question. The Babylonians were worse than the people of Judah, so how could God use those who were more wicked to judge those who were less wicked? **Was God fair?** God answered **Habakkuk** a second time explaining that Babylon would also be judged for their sin, but all in God’s timing. Meanwhile the righteous will live by faith, trusting God to act justly in His own time.

Last time, we saw that God made a general promise that He would judge Babylon. **Today, we get down to specifics...highlighting Babylon’s specific sins and God’s corresponding judgments.** But even more importantly, this passage highlights the various ways in life that people seek to advance themselves to their own ruin. If you ever wanted to know how to lose it all, this is the passage to read.

What is going on in this passage? God raised up the Babylonians to bring judgment to the surrounding nations (including Judah) for their sins. **However, Babylon was not motivated by concerns for justice or service to God.** Babylon was motivated purely by greed (2:5b) The Babylonians were driven by their greed. They weren’t thinking about God at

all. They conquered the surrounding nations in order to build an empire for themselves. The Babylonians thought that they had it all. But in reality, they were about to lose it all. God would judge the nation of Babylon for its all-consuming greed.

That coming judgment is described in great detail in our passage this morning. The passage starts off in **verse 6** with these words: *“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!” (Habakkuk 2:6)*, and then follows with what is called a **“taunt song,”** that is, a song or a poem designed to mock or scorn another.

These verses describe how God is going to one day cut Babylon down. The mighty empire will be brought down and utterly destroyed. God conveys that message through **5 woes** found in **verses 6, 9, 12, 15, and 19**. Taken together, they serve as a formal indictment against Babylon.

In this particular song, Babylon is mocked by the very nations it conquered. And although the song is obviously directed against Babylon, Babylon is never even mentioned by name. **The words are generalized in such a way that the song could apply to anyone who acts in the way Babylon acted.**

Let’s dig in and feed our souls...the first ‘woe’...

I. Woe to the _____ (2:6-8)

**A. What is the sin? _____:
stealing from others to gain wealth for yourself (2:6)**

**B. What is God’s judgment: you will _____
all that you have _____ (2:7-8)**

The second woe...

II. Woe to the _____ (2:9-11)

**A. What is the sin? _____:
treating others unjustly to gain security for yourself (2:9)**

**B. What is God's judgment: you will _____
your life (2:10-11)**

The third woe...

III. Woe to the _____ of violence (2:12-14)

**A. What is the sin? _____:
hurting others to gain power for yourself (2:12)**

**B. What is God's judgment: all your _____
will come to nothing (2:13-14)**

The fourth woe...

IV. Woe to the _____ (2:15-17)

A. What is the sin? _____:
taking advantage of others to gain pleasure for yourself
(2:15)

B. What is God's judgment: you will be _____
with shame and disgrace (2:16-17)

The fifth and final woe...

V. Woe to the _____ (2:18-20)

A. What is the sin? _____
something other than God to direct your life (2:19)

What profit is an idol? This is the fundamental question and should be asked by everyone tempted to worship that which is false. **Habakkuk** saw a number of problems with idolatry.

- *First*, an idol is only something made by _____.
- *Second*, idols teach nothing but _____.
- *Third*, making an idol means that the worshiper has made a god in his own _____.
- *Fourth*, the idol cannot _____ or give _____.

B. What is God's judgment: you will be
_____ and _____ (2:18, 20)

CONCLUSION

What can we take with us this **morning**? We hear a lot these days about being "*on the wrong side of history*." No one wants to be on the "*wrong side of history*." Tell you what...**those who line up with the cultural forces of today will find themselves out of step with God tomorrow**. That's the whole point of **Habakkuk 2**. You can side with Babylon and win in the short run, or you can take sides with God and win eternally.