

GOD'S PERSPECTIVE

Habakkuk 2:1-20; 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 / Psalm 73:1-28

I. God Has Something to Say

A. Until the Lord makes Himself clear, the best thing is to wait quietly. *"I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reprov'd."* (HABAKKUK 2:1)

B. Apart from God's revelation, life is too big a challenge for most people. *"When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me; Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end."* (PSALM 73:16-17)

C. God appointed Habakkuk to be a writing and teaching prophet for the good of believers. *"And the LORD answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it."* (HABAKKUK 2:2)

D. The Scriptures principally teach what man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man. *"Take thee a roll of a book, and write therein all the words that I have spoken unto thee against Israel, and against Judah, and against all the nations, from the day I spake unto thee, from the days of Josiah, even unto this day. It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them; that they may return every man from his evil way; that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin."* (JEREMIAH 36:2-3)

E. Do not become distracted when God does things according to His own schedule. *"For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry."* (HABAKKUK 2:3)

F. God's people live by faith not pride or accomplishment. *"Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith."* (HABAKKUK 2:4)

G. The only options are belief and wrath. *"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."* (JOHN 3:36)

II. Doom – Some Triumphs Are Failures

A. Resources gained unrighteously will ruin. *"Yea also, because he transgresseth by wine, he is a proud man, neither keepeth at home, who enlargeth his desire as hell, and is as death, and cannot be satisfied, but gathereth unto him all nations, and heapeth unto him all people: Shall not all these take up a parable against him, and a taunting proverb against him, and say, Woe to him that increaseth*

that which is not his! how long? and to him that ladeth himself with thick clay!"
(HABAKKUK 2:5-6)

B. Plunderers set themselves up to be plundered. ***“Shall they not rise up suddenly that shall bite thee,*** and awake that shall vex thee, and thou shalt be for booties unto them? Because thou hast spoiled many nations, all ***the remnant of the people shall spoil thee;*** because of men’s blood, and *for* the violence of the land, of the city, and of all that dwell therein.” (HABAKKUK 2:7-8)

C. Even material reality cries out against advantage gained by violence. ***“Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house,*** that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil! ***Thou hast consulted shame to thy house by cutting off many people, and hast sinned against thy soul.*** For ***the stone shall cry out of the wall,*** and the beam out of the timber shall answer it.” (HABAKKUK 2:9-11)

D. Ultimately, institutions founded on crime will pass away because God will prevail everywhere. ***“Woe to him that buildeth a town with blood, and stablisheth a city by iniquity!*** Behold, *is it* not of the LORD of hosts that the people shall labour in the very fire, and the people shall weary themselves for very vanity? For ***the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.***” (HABAKKUK 2:12-14)

III. Ignoring Reality Is Supremely Expensive

A. Corruption corrupts. ***“Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink,*** that putteth thy bottle to *him,* and makest *him* drunken also, ***that thou mayest look on their nakedness!*** Thou art filled with shame for glory: drink thou also, and let thy foreskin be uncovered: the cup of ***the LORD’S right hand shall be turned unto thee,*** and shameful spewing *shall be* on thy glory.” (HABAKKUK 2:15-16)

B. Gods invented in the minds of people cannot be big enough to provide for themselves, much less for their own creators. ***“What profiteth the graven image that the maker thereof hath graven it,*** the molten image, and ***a teacher of lies,*** that the maker of his work trusteth therein, to make dumb idols? ***Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake;*** to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach! Behold, it ***is laid over with gold and silver, and there is no breath at all in the midst of it.***” (HABAKKUK 2:18-19)

C. When God enters life nothing remains to be said. “But *the LORD is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence* before him.” (HABAKKUK 2:20)

D. The shouting stops, the captains and the kings depart, but the word of God remains certain and His gracious promises unchanging. “*Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.*” (PSALM 46:10)

+ Dr. Edwin P. Elliott, Jr.