

## Habakkuk – Notes 2

**Chapter 1 recap:** [1] **Why** do you allow injustice in Judah (1:2-4)? Eventual answer (1:6) ‘I’m raising up the Babylonians’ in judgement (v 12). [2] **How** can a holy God (v 12) use an unholy people (v 13). [3] Habakkuk on the watchtower awaiting a reply (2:1)

### [A] THE REVELATION OF THE PROPHETIC WORD (v 2)

- (i) **Revelation is given by God** – and clarifies what’s going to happen.
- (ii) **Revelation is to recorded permanently** (v 2) ‘write down’ – inscripturated; ‘tablets’ – see stone tablets at Sinai (Exod 31:18). Isaiah 30:2 – the prophetic word.
- (iii) **Revelation is to be relayed to others**

### [B] THE FULFILMENT OF THE PROPHETIC REVELATION (v 3)

(a) **There is an ‘appointed time’ for the fulfilment** – appointed by God

- Ps 102:13. **Life of Jesus** - Gal 4:4; Mk 1:15; John 2:4; 7:6, 8, 30 and 8:20 – ‘not yet’; then John 12:23: ‘hour has come’; (12:27); John 17:1 (for glorifying). Hour for Last Supper (Lk 22:14); Gethsemane agony (Mk 14:35); betrayal (Mk 14:41).

(b) **We can be certain of the fulfilment of the prophetic revelation**

- ‘It will not prove false/ a lie’ (Num 23:19); ‘It will certainly come’ - ‘coming it will come’ – nothing will stop it. ‘It will not delay’ or come ‘after’; not late.
- ‘it speaks of the end’, the moment of fulfilment. Hebrew word behind ‘speak’ has basic sense of blowing/ puffing (balmy breeze - Song of Songs 4:16); of woman puffing and panting in labour (Jer 4:31). Here, like a long-distance runner panting towards the finishing line. God’s word always accomplishes his purposes (Is 55:10-11).

(c) **Yet, the fulfilment needs to be waited for** - ‘though it linger, wait for it’: (i) in faith (v 4); (ii) in prayer (ch 1 and 3); (iii) with expectancy; (iv) with on-going proclamation (v 2)

### [C] THE SPECIFIC CONTENT OF THE PROPHETIC REVELATION

**V 4 and five Woe oracles** (see ‘woe’ in vv 6, 9, 12 15 and 19).

- judgement is coming on proud, self-sufficient Babylon (v 16)
- many would not live long enough to see Babylon’s judgement but with Abraham (Heb 11:13): ‘living by faith ... they only saw/ welcomed them from a distance.’ **Ourselves?**

- the various 'isms' will experience judgement; righteous must 'live by faith'
- (i) **God's judgement [of Babylon] is to be a just judgement**
- *lex talionis*/ law of talion in operation, i.e., the punishment is fits the crime. See Ex 21:24f: 'eye for an eye ...'. Not negative, 'tit for tat' retaliation. But, to ensure that punishment was proportionate. Scornful Babylon (1:10) will be scorned (2:6); the victimizer will be victimized (2:7); the plunderer will be plundered (2:8); and 2:15-16.
- **The glory that the Babylonians sought for themselves and their gods (made in their own image) would end in shame, dishonour and disgrace**

**Their Arrogance** – (v 4) 'puffed up'/'big-headed. Sense of their own importance!

**Their Destructive Greed** – growing appetite for more territory and wealth from the nations. v 5 - 'never satisfied. Nations and wealth acquired through bloodshed, violence and destructiveness (2:8, 12, 17; see also 1:6-11, 13-17).

(ii) **Their Quest for Glory (1:7) ends in Shame (2:16)**

- basic idea of Hebrew for 'shame' and 'disgrace' - **lightness/ nothingness.**

**The Demise of the City of Man** - recurring pattern

- **Babylon = the counterfeit city/ human society** over against **true City of God**
- '**City of Man**'. See Genesis 11 - tower and city of Babel = Babylon. Gen 11:4 – for their name/ renown/ reputation; protection/ security. Ziggurats - man-made mountain, with temple at summit 'reaching into the heavens'. Babel = 'gate of god' - entrance to the divine realm, for idolatrous worship, or for self- divinization - Judged
- Instead, (Gen 12) God redeemed (Is 29:22) Abram, promised a 'great name' (Gen 12:2), and led him towards the City of God.
- **Abraham's story – a paradigm/ pattern for every Christian.** Redeemed from the City of Man, now on the journey to the City of God. We 'live by faith' (v 4)
- **Biblical story of humanity - conflict between Zion and Babylon**
- **The City of God often almost completely liquidated!** But will prevail, be glorified (v 14); City of Man brought low and filled with shame (v 16).
- **Rev 21-22: City of God** - glory; **Ch 18:5, 19f** City of Man - final judgement

(iii) **The Lord remains forever enthroned in his holy temple (v 20)**