

35-02-01 The Woes of the Wicked
judgment, Babylon, Satan, lusts
Hab.2:1-20

By faith believers will live; by pride Babylon will fall.

INTRODUCTION: (Text as Scripture reading)

- Chap.1's **title**; **Chap.2's title**; where we left off, **v.1** (watching prayer)
- A **wise man** asks "*why*," watching expectantly for an answer.
- A **seer** has eyes of faith that "*look to see*" the picture God is painting.
- A **prophet** knows God's reply will end up *on his own lips*.
- God's revelations are for more than ourselves, v.2 [sharing time]
- Write it for the future*: OT prophecies (*primary & secondary* purposes:
1st about literal Babylon & the 2nd about future spiritual Babylon)
- the idea of Chap.2: "*What is God's answer?*" Ultimately God will bring the reign of Babylon to an end: **HOM.idea**.

I. Contrasting two kingdoms, v.4 (God's & spiritual Babylon)

- A. The powerful reign of two opposite desires:
 1. The *ungodly seek to rule* in a kingdom where self is sovereign.
 2. The *godly seek to serve* in a Kingdom where God is sovereign.
- B. The determining direction of two different lifestyles:
 1. The righteous live by a faith that brings about spiritual life
(MARTIN LUTHER story of being influenced by Habakkuk's phrase, "*the righteous will live by his faith*," quoted 3x in the NT)
 - a. In **Gal.3:10-11**, where the *OT law* is diagnosed as *inadequate*, and **faith** trusts that the **DX** is *accurate*
 - b. In **Rom.1:16,17**, where the *Gospel* of grace is offered as an *unearned gift of life*, and **faith** trusts that the **RX** is *free*.)
 - c. In **Heb.10:37-38**, where *spiritual life* is preserved by *faithful obedience* to God's will, and **faith** trusts the **TX** is *necessary*.)
 2. While the *righteous live by faith in God's grace*, the *lost live by the ancient fruit that brought death* (Babylon's roots are in Eden)
 - a. The beginning of spiritual Babylon– **Gen 3:6**--When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it.
 - b. 3 insatiable desires, v.5 [Jn 2:15-17; basis of Christ's temptation]
 - (1) *the lust of the flesh* (Drunkness brings loss of inhibitions)
 - (2) *the lust of the eyes* (Hell wants every soul it sees)

- (3) *the pride of life* [**Nebuchadnezzar's boast**– **Dan 4:30**, "Is not this the great Babylon I have built as the royal residence, by my mighty power and for the glory of my majesty?"]

TRANS: Can you hear a voice behind Nebuchadnezzar's words? It's the *voice of the Serpent in the Garden*, the *voice of the Tempter of Christ in the wilderness*, the *voice of the Master of a Hell* where the flames of 3 insatiable desires burn forever without being quenched. "How long?" we ask—just as the prophet Habakkuk did—"How long must the world endure that destructive Satanic voice?" God's answer: **By faith believers will live; by pride Babylon will fall.**

II. The FIVE WOES of BABYLON

- A. Woe to the lust of the eyes (greed for what's seen in other hands)
 1. *Vain wealth* (**v.6-8**) [today's *ladder of success*– who's next tomorrow?]
 2. *Vain health* (**v.9-11**) [*houses built on sand*– Babylon's 135ft.thick walls!]
 3. *Vain stealth* (**v.12-14**) [*life's drama* is short; my mom's "**only one life**"– the fall of the **eschaton curtain**: God clearing the stage of Babylon forever]
- B. Woe to the lust of the flesh (**v.15-17**) [today's **sex and substance** abuse]
- C. Woe for the pride of life (**v.18-19**) [*a worthless trust in fame, technology, or false philosophies for direction & protection*; Babylon's **575 idol** gate failed!]

TRANS: What's for sale in Babylon? The *lust of the flesh*, the *lust of the eyes*, the *pride of life*! What's the cost? The soul itself. But God has just told Habakkuk that His people are going away captive to Babylon. How can this be? What's God's answer to Habakkuk's complaint? "**By faith believers will live; by pride Babylon will fall.**"

III. The Ultimate Sovereign Reign of God Almighty (v.20)

- A. What happens to Babylon (not just Nebuchadnezzar but *spiritual Babylon* that has tried to infest all nations, all institutions, every human relationship since the beginning of time)– see **Rev.17-19** in light of **v.2-3**) [the song "**Babylon**" by Bob Ayala,

There sits the King of Babylon Upon his ancient throne There's blood stains on his priestly robe He's made the earth his home	There sits the King of Babylon Who can make the image speak Like the serpent in the garden Yes he's older than you think
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Won't someone please carry me away
from Babylon Far away, far away

There sits the King of Babylon
On his silver and his gold
And he sends his armies like a flood
Upon his enemy of old
There sits the King of Babylon
With many crowns upon his head
And he's built his house upon the gates
Of the fires of the dead

Lie, lie, lie, lie, lie, lie, lie, lie, lie,
lie, lie The father of lies

Weep all ye merchants upon your ships
Your city has fallen She's losing her grip

B. (v.20) What is the believer's place in this coming fall of spiritual
Babylon? It's a posture of *silence*, waiting *by faith*, not *by sight*,
not *by reason*, not *by speculation*, just by trusting the true King.

CONCLUSION:

–Hold on firmly to your faith in God's promise to finally bring Satan's
kingdom of darkness and oppression to an end. *Ancient Babylon* fell,
and so will *spiritual Babylon*. Each day we move one step closer to the
last day of earthly history.

–**By faith believers will live; by pride Babylon will fall**. Let's keep
eyes of faith focused on what Habakkuk saw: *the Lord seated in His*
Holy Temple. **Heb.12:2** says, "Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and
perfector of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its
shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." **With quiet, listening**
hearts, let's never flag in faith, as we await God's coming *eschaton!*

There sits the King of Heaven
There's fire in His eyes
And He's come to take possession
Of the world for which He died
There sits the Lord of Glory
Upon a horse He rides
And He's come to bind the fallen one
Who fell upon his pride

Hosannah, Hosannah in the highest
Even so come quickly Lord Jesus
Even so come quickly Lord God
Praise His Name Yeshua Ha Machiah
Praise His Name Jesus the Messiah

Habakkuk 2:1-20 (NIV)

1 I will stand at my watch and station myself on the ramparts; I will look to see what
he will say to me, and what answer I am to give to this complaint.

2 Then the LORD replied: "Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets so
that a herald may run with it.

3 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.

4 "See, he is puffed up; his desires are not upright— but the righteous will live by his
faith—

5 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.

6 "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! How long must this go
on?"

7 Will not your debtors suddenly arise? Will they not wake up and make you
tremble? Then you will become their victim.

8 Because you have plundered many nations, the peoples who are left will plunder
you. For you have shed man's blood; you have destroyed lands and cities and
everyone in them.

9 "Woe to him who builds his realm by unjust gain to set his nest on high, to escape
the clutches of ruin!

10 You have plotted the ruin of many peoples, shaming your own house and
forfeiting your life.

11 The stones of the wall will cry out, and the beams of the woodwork will echo it.

12 "Woe to him who builds a city with bloodshed and establishes a town by crime!

13 Has not the LORD Almighty determined that the people's labor is only fuel for the
fire, that the nations exhaust themselves for nothing?

14 For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the
waters cover the sea.

15 "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.

16 You will be filled with shame instead of glory. Now it is your turn! Drink and be
exposed! The cup from the LORD'S right hand is coming around to you, and
disgrace will cover your glory.

17 The violence you have done to Lebanon will overwhelm you, and your destruction
of animals will terrify you. For you have shed man's blood; you have destroyed lands
and cities and everyone in them.

18 "Of what value is an idol, since a man has carved it? Or an image that teaches lies?
For he who makes it trusts in his own creation; he makes idols that cannot speak.

19 Woe to him who says to wood, 'Come to life!' Or to lifeless stone, 'Wake up!'
Can it give guidance? It is covered with gold and silver; there is no breath in it.

20 But the LORD is in his holy temple; let all the earth be silent before him."