

## THE BOOK OF HABAKKUK

“Woe to the Abusers”

Habakkuk 2:15-19

### Introduction

1. Habakkuk is a pre-exilic prophet. He was a contemporary of Jeremiah.
2. Following the death of Josiah, the politics in Judah were terrible. The power of Assyria and Egypt waned as that of the Babylonians increased. The “times of the Gentiles” was immanent (Luke 21:24).
3. The sin of Judah was a burden to Habakkuk (1:1). The people were unresponsive to God (1:2), unrelenting in sin (1:3), and uncontrollable as a society (1:4).
4. Because of the sin of the people, God subjected them to the cruelty of the Assyrians (1:5-10). The Assyrians attributed their success to foreign gods (1:11). Although Habakkuk was sure Israel would live (1:12) he was baffled at the situation because he knew how God sees (1:13) and what God does (1:14, 15). He was told to believe God and quietly wait upon Him (2:1-4).
5. Assyria was addicted to wine and pride (2:5). God promised divine intervention (2:6) which is recorded in the prophecy of Habakkuk with five woes: 1) To the Oppressor. 2) To the Covetous. 3) To the Builders with Blood. 4. To the Abusers. 5) To the Idolaters.
6. The Chaldeans demonstrated incredible violence and corruption against the nations whom they conquered. True, God allowed it all, but the Chaldean’s sinfulness would also be punished by the Lord. The truth of Galatians 6:7 is irrevocably true. Consider, therefore, these three ways in which God upholds this dictum:

#### 1. The ACTION of the Chaldeans v. 15.

##### a. Stated

The basic declaration is the “woe” against Chaldeans for giving their neighbors (plural) drink. Scripture teaches they were themselves addicted to drink (2:5). So evil is this action that two subordinate clauses are added and addressed directly to the Chaldeans:

- 1) You put the bottle
- 2) You make drunken

What a horrible indictment against the Chaldeans.

##### b. Purposed

The goal of the action recorded is to look on the nakedness of the nations. Drink, therefore, is linked with sexual abandonment. Shame becomes a part of the picture.

#### 2. The REACTION against the Chaldeans v. 16.

Here is the law of recompense.

##### a. Shame and not glory.

The disgraceful living of the Chaldeans will be “filled” rather than glory for them. The Hebrew states they will be “far from glory.”

##### b. Nakedness and not glory.

The imperatival form “drink” resulting in exposure--so far from glory. The mention of “foreskin” point to one being uncircumcised, hence a Gentile. This is bitter scoff and ridicule.

##### c. Wrath and not glory

The “right hand” of the LORD will be turned upon the Chaldeans. What Chaldeans had done to others will now be turned toward them. The Lord is in total control!

##### d. Vomiting and not glory.

Shameful vomiting (usually accompanying drunkenness) will actually cover over the Chaldean’s glory and honor. This is the utmost and extreme contempt.

#### 3. The DEVASTATION of the Chaldeans v. 17.

##### a. Illustrated

There is no need to allegorize the words of this verse. What the Chaldeans did against Lebanon will be meted out to them. What was done to others has come home to roost!

##### b. Explained

The destruction in Lebanon affected wild life (beasts), humanity (man’s blood), environment (the land) and its dwellers. This is the bottom line accusation against the Chaldeans and gives the rationale for the woe.

Conclusion: The affairs of the nation all lie in the hands of the Lord. While Chaldeans served His purpose, their wickedness would not go unpunished.

NOTE: Scripture teaches sobriety for the believer (Ro. 13:13, 14; 1 Thess. 5:6-8; 1 Pet. 1:13, 14). 2) Warns against drink (Prov. 20:1; 23:31, 32). 3) Rejects social drinking (1 Tim. 3:8, 9; Titus 2:3; Eph. 5:18). 4. Upholds non-fermented wine (O.T. = “tirosh” Deut. 11:14; Judges 9:13; Prov. 3:10; Isa. 65:8; Zech. 9:17; “yayin” in Gen. 49:11; Isa. 16:10; Jer. 40:10, 12; Jer. 48:33. N.T. = “oinos” -- determined by context, but reference to boiled grape juice.