**“Studying the Southern Kingdom Prophets”—Habakkuk 1-2**

**Habakkuk 1—Habakkuk and His Burden**

**The prophet Habakkuk (the man with the questions): The name Habakkuk is derived from the Hebrew verb "embrace." His name probably means, "He Who Embraces" or "He Who Clings" or “Clinger, one who clings to God.” It is an appropriate name for both the prophet and the book, because Habakkuk comes to a firm faith through grappling with tough questions. As a prophet to the Southern Kingdom, following Zephaniah and good King Josiah, Habakkuk has been pleading with God for answers to why Judah has turned away from righteousness….TWENTY YEARS!! It was written in the same period of Nahum and Obadiah, sometime between King Josiah and King Jehoiakim. Since he prophesied the coming Babylonian army and its destruction of Judah, he prophesied some time before that invasion. Many think that Habakkuk ministered sometime during the reign of King Johoiakim, perhaps around the year 607 B.C. It's hard to say with certainty when Habakkuk prophesied. Since he speaks of God *rising up* the Babylonians (**[**Habakkuk 1:6**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/Hab/1/6/s_904006)**), we can guess that he wrote in the 25-year period between the time when Babylon conquered Nineveh and the Assyrian Empire (612 B.C.) and the time when Babylon conquered Jerusalem (587 B.C.). We don't know how old Habakkuk was when he gave this prophecy, but it is likely that he lived during the time of godly king Josiah (640 to 609 B.C.) and then gave this prophecy during the reign of one of Josiah's successors--(JOSIAH, JEHOAHAZ, 3 months, JEHOIAKIM, 11 years.) Habakkuk knew what it was like to live during a time of revival, and then to see God's people and the nation slip into lethargy and sin. "Habakkuk had a problem. He had lived through a period of national revival followed by a period of spiritual decline." Habakkuk, in his writings, starts out confused and asking God, “Why?” but ends up in awe of Him! If you are sincere, you can ask God and He will answer! Central to this study becomes—you can ask God anything….anything! Some scholars have called Habakkuk, “The Doubting Thomas of the Old Testament, because he questioned God. This whole book centers on the God of this universe dealing with sin. The First Problem becomes: “Why does God permit evil?” This little book, according to J. Vernon McGee, starts out in gloom and ends up in glory! The final chapter, chapter 3, is a beautiful Song of Psalm and adoration to God. CENTRAL QUESTION: “Why doesn’t God do something about the evil in the world? THEME: Faith, NICKNAME OF HABAKKUK: Prophet of Faith. \*\*Start with Psalm 73:2-3, “But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled; my steps had nearly slipped. 3For I *was* envious of the boastful, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked,” and Ecclesiastes 8:11, “Because the sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.” We don't know much about the prophet Habakkuk from any other book in the Bible. HERE’S ALL WE KNOW, FOR SURE ABOUT HABAKKUK: HE IS A PROPHET, from the very first phrase of this book:** “The burdenwhich the prophet Habakkuk saw,” AND**, the very last phrase of this little book says this: “**To the Chief Musician. With my stringed instruments.” **SO, HE IS PROBABLY a PROPHET/PRIEST (like Jeremiah) IN THE TEMPLE AND A MUSICIAN! I Chronicles IU25:1-3,”Moreover David and the captains of the army separated for the service some of the sons of Asaph, of Heman, and of Jeduthun, who should prophesy with harps, stringed instruments, and cymbals. And the number of the skilled men performing their service was: 2 of the sons of Asaph: Zaccur, Joseph, Nethaniah, and Asharelah; the sons of Asaph were under the direction of Asaph, who prophesied according to the order of the king. 3 Of Jeduthun, the sons of Jeduthun: Gedaliah, Zeri, Jeshaiah, Shimei, Hashabiah, and Mattithiah, six, under the direction of their father Jeduthun, who prophesied with a harp to give thanks and to praise the Lord.” 6, “All these were under the direction of their father for the music in the house of the Lord, with cymbals, stringed instruments, and harps, for the service of the house of God.”**

**1:1, “The burdenwhich the prophet Habakkuk saw.”**

1. **What is a “burden?” “Masah,” or heavy judgment. Habakkuk had a burden - not only in the** sense of a message from God, but also in the sense of a heavy weight**. It was heavy in its *content*, because Habakkuk announced coming judgment on Judah. It was also heavy in its *source*, because Habakkuk deals with tough questions he brings to God and God's answer to those questions.**
2. **What does the term, “the prophet,” imply? The prophet: This title is rare in book headings…is taken by some to indicate that Habakkuk was a professional prophet, one who earned his living serving as a prophet at the Temple or court, unlike Amos.**
   1. **See** [**Haggai 1:1**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/Hag/1/1/s_910001)**-2, “In the second year of King Darius, in the sixth month, on the first day of the month, the word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, saying, 2“Thus speaks the Lord of hosts, saying: ‘This people says, “The time has not come, the time that the Lord’s house should be built,”** **“**[**Zechariah 1:1**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/Zec/1/1/s_912001)**-2, “In the eighth month of the second year of Darius, the word of the Lord came to Zechariah the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet, saying, 2“The Lord has been very angry with your fathers,“ and Amos 7:14, “Then Amos answered, and said to Amaziah: “I *was* no prophet, Nor *was* I a son of a prophet, But I *was* a sheep breeder And a tender of sycamore fruit.”**

**1:2-4, “O LORD, how long shall I cry, and You will not hear? Even cry out to You, "Violence!" and You will not save. Why do You show me iniquity, and cause *me* to see trouble? For plundering and violence *are* before me; there is strife, and contention arises. Therefore the law is powerless, and justice never goes forth. For the wicked surround the righteous; therefore perverse judgment proceeds.”**

1. **What does the word “cry” indicate? “shavah,” or scream.** 
   1. **What about the word, “violence?” *Literally means “HAMAS,” cruelty, injustice, or oppressor.***
2. **Discuss this: Habakkuk asks God why He seems to delay judgment.** Even cry out to You, "Violence" and You will not save: Habakkuk looked at the violence and injustice around him in the nation of Judah. He wondered where God was, and why God did not set things right.
3. **Verse 3 is an excellent question Habakkuk asks God, “Why do You show me iniquity, and cause me to see trouble?” What is the answer to this inquiry?** Why does God allow us to see iniquity and trouble, in our self or in others?
4. **In verse 4’s, “the law is powerless, slack (KJV),” explain in modern-day terminology.** This literally means, “**Paralyzed” or chilled.** **Among felony defendants whose cases were adjudicated within the one-year tracking period (89% of cases), 68% were convicted. This includes a 59% felony conviction rate with the remainder receiving misdemeanor convictions. Felony conviction rates were highest for defendants originally charged with motor vehicle theft (74%), a driving-related offense (73%), murder (70%), burglary (69%), or drug trafficking (67%). They were lowest for defendants originally charged with assault (45%). A national study counted death penalty case costs through to execution and found that the median death penalty case costs $1.26 million. Non-death penalty cases were counted through to the end of incarceration and were found to have a median cost of $740,000.**
5. **How does Habakkuk view iniquity?** Iniquity … trouble … plundering and violence … strife … contention … the law is powerless … justice never goes forth … perverse judgment proceeds: Habakkuk sees trouble and sin everywhere, from personal relationships to courts of law. This distresses him so much that he cries out to God and asks God why He doesn't set things straight.
6. **Explain this section, using the thought that. Could a modern translation be, “God, why ALL THIS DECEIT –I remember the prior times of real revival under good King Josiah and Zephaniah; so, why are you allowing this?” Elaborate.**

**1:5-6, “Look among the nations and watch; be utterly astounded! For *I will* work a work in your days *which* you would not believe, though it were told *you.* For indeed I am raising up the Chaldeans, a bitter and hasty nation which marches through the breadth of the earth, to possess dwelling places *that are* not theirs."**

1. **In verses 5-6, God seems to answer the first inquiry. How does He do that?** God's astounding work: bringing the Babylonians to judge Judah.
2. **Examine Habakkuk 1:5 in parallel with Acts 13:38-41, “Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through this Man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins; 39and by Him everyone who believes is justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses. 40Beware therefore, lest what has been spoken in the prophets come upon you: 41‘Behold, you despisers, Marvel and perish! For I work a work in your days, A work which you will by no means believe, Though one were to declare it to you.”**
3. **What does the phrase, “Be utterly astounded,” mean?** Don't worry about it. Look at the surrounding nations and from them will come a nation that will be My instrument of judgment on sinful Judah.
4. **Who is God’s instrument of judgment against Judah? THIS VERSE ANTICIPATES THE DISPERSION AMONG THE HEATHENS. The Chaldeans/ Babylon.** 
   1. **See II Kings 20:12-19, “**12At that time Berodach-Baladan the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present to Hezekiah, for he heard that Hezekiah had been sick. 13And Hezekiah was attentive to them, and showed them all the house of his treasures—the silver and gold, the spices and precious ointment, and all[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=II+Kings+20%3A12-19&version=NKJV#fen-NKJV-10112b)] his armory—all that was found among his treasures. There was nothing in his house or in all his dominion that Hezekiah did not show them. 14Then Isaiah the prophet went to King Hezekiah, and said to him, “What did these men say, and from where did they come to you?” So Hezekiah said, “They came from a far country, from Babylon.” 15And he said, “What have they seen in your house?” So Hezekiah answered, “They have seen all that *is* in my house; there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shown them.” 16Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, “Hear the word of the Lord: 17‘Behold, the days are coming when all that *is* in your house, and what your fathers have accumulated until this day, shall be carried to Babylon; nothing shall be left,’ says the Lord. 18‘And they shall take away some of your sons who will descend from you, whom you will beget; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.’”19So Hezekiah said to Isaiah, “The word of the Lord which you have spoken *is* good!” For he said, “Will there not be peace and truth at least in my days?” **Probably at this time, Babylon was still friendly, but Habakkuk sees the near future of Judah’s dispersion, and then the far future of all of Israel’s dispersion among the nations.**
   2. **Reference Deuteronomy 28:64-67,** “Then the Lord will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other, and there you shall serve other gods, which neither you nor your fathers have known—wood and stone. 65And among those nations you shall find no rest, nor shall the sole of your foot have a resting place; but there the Lord will give you a trembling heart, failing eyes, and anguish of soul. 66Your life shall hang in doubt before you; you shall fear day and night, and have no assurance of life. 67In the morning you shall say, ‘OH that it were evening!’ And at evening you shall say, ‘Oh, that it were morning!’ because of the fear which terrifies your heart, and because of the sight which your eyes see.”
   3. **See also Acts 13:37-41, “**but He whom God raised up saw no corruption. 38Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through this Man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins; 39and by Him everyone who believes is justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses. 40Beware therefore, lest what has been spoken in the prophets come upon you:41‘Behold, you despisers, Marvel and perish! For I work a work in your days, A work which you will by no means believe, Though one were to declare it to you.’**where Paul quotes this verse attributing this redemptive work to Jesus Christ.**
   4. **Review the three sieges of Jerusalem by the Babylonians and Philippians 4:7, “**and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus,” **Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah were the three Judah kings involved in these.**
5. **Who are the Chaldeans?** Inhabitants of Babylon, Semitic origin from Kesed (nephew of Abraham), (fourth son of Nahor (grandfather of Abraham), son of Nawaz, brother of Abraham (Genesis 22:22, “Chesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaph, and Bethuel). Nabopolassar came to the throne in 626 B.C.; Nebuchadnezzar defeated Pharaoh Necho in the Battle of Carchemish in 606 B.C., establishing Babylon as the new world empire. If God had not allowed them to do it, they never could have conquered Judah and exiled God's people out of the Promised Land.
   1. **Compare with Isaiah 10:5, ““Woe to Assyria, the rod of My anger  
      and the staff in whose hand is My indignation.”**

**1:7-11, “They are terrible and dreadful; their judgment and their dignity proceed from themselves. Their horses also are swifter than leopards, and more fierce than evening wolves. Their chargers charge ahead; their cavalry comes from afar; they fly as the eagle *that* hastens to eat. They all come for violence; their faces are set *like* the east wind. They gather captives like sand. They scoff at kings, and princes are scorned by them. They deride every stronghold, for they heap up earthen *mounds* and seize it. Then *his* mind changes, and he transgresses; he commits offense, *ascribing* this power to his god."**

1. **Explain “terrible” and “dreadful.”** They are terrible and dreadful: Habakkuk wondered where God's judgment was against sinful Judah. The LORD lets him know that the judgment will indeed come, and when it comes through the Babylonians it will be terrible and dreadful.
2. **Talk about the mention of Babylonian horses. THE BABYLONIANS PIONEERED CAVALRY, A QUICK AND DECISIVE WAY TO ADVANCE A BATTLE!**
3. **Compare verse 11’s, “ascribing this power to his god,” as spoken of the Babylonians, with Isaiah 5:26-30,** “He will lift up a banner to the nations from afar,   
   And will whistle to them from the end of the earth; surely they shall come with speed, swiftly.27No one will be weary or stumble among them, No one will slumber or sleep; Nor will the belt on their loins be loosed, Nor the strap of their sandals be broken; 28Whose arrows *are* sharp, And all their bows bent; Their horses’ hooves will seem like flint, And their wheels like a whirlwind. 29Their roaring *will be* like a lion, they will roar like young lions; yes, they will roar and lay hold of the prey; they will carry *it* away safely, and no one will deliver. 30In that day they will roar against them like the roaring of the sea. And if *one* looks to the land, Behold, darkness *and* sorrow; and the light is darkened by the clouds.”…..**a pointing to the Assyrians. Compare and contrast. When the Babylonians overwhelm the land of Judah, they will wrongly give the credit to their false gods. The LORD told** **them they would do this before it ever happened**.
   1. **Discuss the fulfillment of Moses’ warning in Deuteronomy 28:49, “**The Lord will bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, *as swift* as the eagle flies, a nation whose language you will not understand,” **with this passage. How does this imply to the nation that whatever her sin was to be her just punishment? Use Daniel 4:16,** “Let his heart be changed from *that of* a man, Let him be given the heart of a beast, And let seven times pass over him,” **30-34,** “The king spoke, saying, “Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?” 31While the word *was still* in the king’s mouth, a voice fell from heaven: “King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: the kingdom has departed from you! 32And they shall drive you from men, and your dwelling *shall be* with the beasts of the field. They shall make you eat grass like oxen; and seven times shall pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses.” 33That very hour the word was fulfilled concerning Nebuchadnezzar; he was driven from men and ate grass like oxen; his body was wet with the dew of heaven till his hair had grown like eagles’ *feathers* and his nails like birds’ *claws.* 34And at the end of the timeI, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me; and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever: For His dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, And His kingdom *is* from generation to generation.”
4. **Is Habakkuk asking God, “"Why do it this way, O LORD??”**

**1:12-17, “Are You not from everlasting, O LORD my God, my Holy One? We shall not die. O LORD, You have appointed them for judgment; O Rock, You have marked them for correction. *You are* of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on wickedness. Why do You look on those who deal treacherously, *and* hold Your tongue when the wicked devours a *person* more righteous than he? *Why* do You make men like fish of the sea, like creeping things *that have* no ruler over them? They take up all of them with a hook; they catch them in their net, and gather them in their dragnet. Therefore they rejoice and are glad. Therefore they sacrifice to their net, and burn incense to their dragnet; because by them their share *is* sumptuous and their food plentiful. Shall they therefore empty their net, and continue to slay nations without pity?”**

1. **Habakkuk wonders why God would use a nation more wicked than Judah to bring judgment on Judah. Explain. NOW, IT APPEARS THAT HABAKKUK IS REALLY STRUGGLING WITH THIS PROPHECY. WHY WOULD GOD SEND BABYLONIAN TO PUNISH JUDAH? SOMEONE MORE WICKED THAN JUDAH TO BE THE PUNISHER? Habakkuk was first troubled that there was no judgment against Judah; God answered by telling him judgment was on the way. Now Habakkuk is troubled by the agent of judgment, the Babylonians - who were an even wicked people than the people of Judah.** 
   1. **Compare this with a judgment on America by her modern enemies. Elaborate. MUSLIMS???** It would be like crying out to God about the state of the church in America, and hearing God respond by saying, "I'll fix the problem by a Communist invasion of America." We would say, "Wait a minute LORD - the problem is bad, but your cure is worse than the disease!"
   2. **Explain Habakkuk’s question: ‘Shall they therefore empty their net, and continue to slay nations without pity?’** Habakkuk wonders how long God will allow the Babylonians to continue their cruel conquest of nations.
      1. **Where else do we see the imagery of “fish in a net?” It is as if God's people are conquered as easily as fish in a net.** 
         1. **Compare with Matthew 4:19,** “Then He said to them, “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.” **….fishers of men.”**
         2. **See also a parallel here to Nebuchadnezzar represented as a fisherman, who is constantly casting nets into the sea, and enclosing multitudes of fishes; and being always successful, he sacrifices to his own net." Discuss.**
         3. **In verse 13, Habakkuk says that God cannot look on iniquity. Compare this with Matthew 27:46, “**And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” that is, *“My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”*
2. **Sum-up the central theme of Habakkuk 1. Does its core speak to America today?**

**Habakkuk 2—God Justifies His Judgment**

**2:1, “I will stand my watch and set myself on the rampart, and watch to see what He will say to me, and what I will answer when I am corrected.”**

**Basically, prophet Habakkuk has placed himself to watch and see if God is really going to do what He said and bring the evil Babylonians against Judah. Babylonians were ruthless conquers, destroying everything in its wake, the “scorched Earth” theory. Habakkuk can’t believe that God would use these heathens to inflict judgment. God tells him to “get off the wall” and get among the people, warning them, making signs, and shouting out that they must change their godless ways!**

1. **Habakkuk, verse 1, resolutely waits for God's reply. Can you sense that he is assured God will answer him?**
   1. **Does Habakkuk expect an answer from God?**
   2. **Compare Habakkuk’s faith to Hebrews 11:6, “**But without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him,* for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.
2. **“Rampart” can be translated “tower**.” In this case, this can be translated an “attitude of the mind.”
   1. **Parallel with prophets being called “watchmen.” Use Isaiah 21:6, 8, “**For thus has the Lord said to me: “Go, set a watchman, and Let him declare what he sees.”  
      8Then he cried, “A lion,my Lord! I stand continually on the watchtower in the daytime;   
      I have sat at my post every night,” **and 11, “**The burden against Dumah. He calls to me out of Seir, “Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?”**Jeremiah 6:17, “**Also, I set watchmen over you, *saying,* and ‘Listen to the sound of the trumpet!’  
      But they said, ‘We will not listen.’ **and Ezekiel 3:17, “**Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore hear a word from My mouth, and give them warning from Me,” **33:2-3, “**Son of man, speak to the children of your people, and say to them: ‘When I bring the sword upon a land, and the people of the land take a man from their territory and make him their watchman, 3when he sees the sword coming upon the land, if he blows the trumpet and warns the people.”
3. **Why does Habakkuk assume God will correct him?** And what I will answer when I am corrected: Habakkuk's attitude is also right because he *expects* God to correct him. From this we see that Habakkuk didn't ask God this question because he thought God was wrong and had to explain Himself. He asked it because he knew that

**2:2-3, “Then the Lord answered me and said: Write the vision and make *it* plain on tablets, that he may run who reads it. For the vision *is* yet for an appointed time; but at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.”**

1. **Why does God tell the prophet to publish His decrees?** God told Habakkuk to record this question and answer time for the benefit of others - that he may run who reads it. Habakkuk’s revelation wasn’t just for himself, but also to edify others. Those who read it would make rapid progress (may run).
   1. **Refer to Zechariah 2:4-5, “**who said to him, “Run, speak to this young man, saying: ‘Jerusalem shall be inhabited *as* towns without walls, because of the multitude of men and livestock in it. 5For I,’ says the Lord, ‘will be a wall of fire all around her, and I will be the glory in her midst.’”
   2. **When is this vision destined for? “For the vision is yet for an appointed time.”** Habakkuk spoke to an age beyond his own. The Babylonian conquest would not be evident in his own day, but in the future.
2. **The “vision” seems to have three parts. Elaborate.** 
   1. **The moral judgment of God upon the evils of dispersed Israel. See 5-13, 15-19.**
   2. **The future purpose of God that “the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.” Use verse 14.**
   3. **Meanwhile, “the just shall live by faith.” Examine verse 4.**

**2:4-8 “Behold the proud, his soul is not upright in him; but the just shall live by his faith. 5, indeed, because he transgresses by wine, *he is* a proud man, and he does not stay at home. Because he enlarges his desire as hell, and he *is* like death, and cannot be satisfied, he gathers to himself all nations and heaps up for himself all peoples. 6, Will not all these take up a proverb against him, and a taunting riddle against him, and say, Woe to him who increases *what* is not his; how long? And to him who loads himself with many pledges? 7, Will not your creditors rise up suddenly? Will they not awaken who oppress you? And you will become their booty. 8, because you have plundered many nations, all the remnant of the people shall plunder you, because of men’s blood and the violence of the land *and* the city, and of all who dwell in it.”**

1. **Habakkuk 2:4 is one of the most famous verses in the Bible. Explain its meaning. This brief statement from the prophet Habakkuk is one of the most important, and most quoted Old Testament statements in the New Testament. Paul used it to show that the just live by faith, not by law. Being under the law isn’t the way to be found just before God, only living by faith is.** 
   1. **Explore the New Testament trilogy about this verse in Romans 1:17, “**For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “The just shall live by faith,” **the commentary on the justified man; Galatians 3:11, “**But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God *is* evident, for “the just shall live by faith,” **the commentary on the Christian life; and Hebrews 10:38, “**Now the just shall live by faith; u if *anyone* draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him,” **the commentary on faith, (just before the famous “faith” chapter in Hebrews 11).**
   2. **Who are the two groups highlighted in verse 4? The “not upright”—Babylonian pride; and the “just”—who live by faith. “Lifted up” is equal to “puffed up.” BEHOLD HIS SOUL WHICH IS LIFTED UP IS NOT UPRIGHT IN HIM, KJV. (Hab. 2:4, KJV)**
   3. **Discuss the impact of this verse on Martin Luther. Why?** His bold declaration of the truth of the gospel, Martin Luther was an Augustinian monk. As a monk he went on a pilgrimage to Rome and as he crossed the Alps he fell deathly ill. As he lay sick he felt great turmoil, both physical and spiritual, and a verse that had previously touched him came to mind: *The just will live by his faith*, from

[Habakkuk 2:4](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Habakkuk+2:4&t1=en_nas). When Luther recovered he went on to Rome and did the tourist things that all the pilgrims did. One day he came to the church of Saint John’s Lateran, where there is a staircase said to be from Pilate’s judgment hall. It was the custom of pilgrims to climb this staircase, but never on their feet - they painfully climbed a step at a time on their knees, saying prayers and kissing the steps where is was thought the blood of Jesus fell. Luther came to this place and starting doing just as all the pilgrims, because the pope promised an indulgence to all who climbed the steps on their knees and said the prayers. As he did this, Luther remembered the words from Habakkuk: *The just will live by his faith*. It is said that when he remembered this he stopped, stood up, walked down and went straight home to Germany. Some say the Reformation began on those stairs.

1. **WOE ONE—PRIDE--What does God’s Word say about the proud? See Isaiah 2:12,** for the day of the Lord of hosts *shall come* upon everything proud and lofty, upon everything lifted up—and it shall be brought low, ´ **James 4:6, “**But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: “God resists the proud **and Proverbs 8:13, “**The fear of the Lord *is* to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way and the perverse mouth I hate.” **He enlarges his desire as hell, and he is like death, and cannot be satisfied: God sees the proud man and how the proud man cannot be satisfied. The one who is declared just by faith is satisfied, but the proud man keeps grasping.**
2. **Verses 5-19 demonstrate “The Five-Fold Woe” upon the wicked Chaldeans.**
   1. **Proud Ambition, 2:5-8**
   2. **Covetousness, 2:9-11**
   3. **Ruthlessness and Cruelty, 2:12-14**
   4. **Debauchery, 2:15-17**
   5. **Idolatry, 2:18-19**
3. **Verse 5 suggests that “wine” is a downfall for Babylon. Discuss. \*\*SEE INSERT on ALCOHOL IN AMERICA\*\* WOE ONE—PROUD AMBITION**
4. **In Verse 6, talks about loans. Thick clay tablets were stamped with the peoples’ loans by officials.**

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  5. **Idolatry, 2:18-19**

1. **In verse 8, discuss what happens to nations which come against God?** Because you have plundered many nations, all the remnant of the people shall plunder you: Here, God assures Habakkuk that He knows how to deal with nations like Babylon. He promises the Babylonians that just as they plundered many nations, so one day others would plunder them. The Babylonians were perfect examples of the proud who set themselves against those who are declared just by faith - and Habakkuk could take comfort in the fact that God would deal with them.

**2:9-11, (Woe to the greedy), “Woe to him who covets evil gain for his house, that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of disaster! You give shameful counsel to your house, cutting off many peoples and sin *against* your soul. For the stone will cry out from the wall, and the beam from the timbers will answer it.”**

1. **Discuss—WOE TWO—COVETOUSNESS--“Woe to him who covets evil gain for his house.” God addresses the greedy man, and tells him that he is ripe for judgment. The greedy man does his best to protect himself (set his next on high), yet all his best will come to nothing.**
   1. **Talk about—“You . . . sin against your own soul.” The greedy man thinks in terms of nothing but gain, but ends of losing his own soul. Jesus parable in** [**Luke 12:16-21**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Luke+12:16-21&t1=en_nas)**, “**16Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: “The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. 17And he thought within himself, saying, ‘What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?’ 18So he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. 19And I will say to my soul, “Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, *and* be merry.”’ 20But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?’21“So *is* he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God,” **is the perfect example of the greedy man who sins against his own soul.**
      1. **Refer to Luke 12:16-21.**
   2. **Elaborate on—“For the stone will cry out from the wall.”** Habakkuk pictures a beautiful house built by a greedy man, and the very stones of the house cry out from the wall against the man’s greed.

**2:12-14, (Woe to the violent), “Woe to him who builds a town with bloodshed, who establishes a city by iniquity! Behold, *is it* not of the Lord of hosts that the peoples labor to feed the fire, and nations weary themselves in vain? For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.”**

1. **Verse 12 is the “WOE THREE,” RUTHLESSNESS AND CRUELTY, which are murder, pillage, slaughter and violence. Elaborate on this verse.** Woe to him who builds a town with bloodshed: The Lord is not only displeased with the greedy; He also pronounces a woe against the *violent*.
2. **Can verses 13-14 be pointing to the Millennium?**

**2:15-17, (Woe to the drunk), “Woe to him who gives drink to his neighbor, pressing *him to* your bottle, even to make *him* drunk, that you may look on his nakedness! You are filled with shame instead of glory. You also; drink! And be exposed as uncircumcised! The cup of the Lords right hand *will be* turned against you, and utter shame will be on your glory. For the violence *done to* Lebanon will cover you, and the plunder of beasts *which* made them afraid, because of men’s blood and the violence of the land *and* the city, and of all who dwell in it.”**

1. **WOE FOUR—DEBAUCHERY--Habakkuk warns against drinking. See also Ephesians 5:18, “And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,” and Galatians 5:21, “envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told *you* in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”** Woe to him who gives drink to his neighbor . . . You also; drink! Through the prophet Habakkuk, the Lord rebukes both the drunk and those who promote drunkenness. Though they think that alcohol makes them feel good, God rightly says they are filled with shame instead of glory. In [Ephesians 5:18](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Ephesians+5:18&t1=en_nas) Paul calls drunkenness *dissipation*; drunkenness is a *waste* of

Resources that should be submitted to Jesus. John Trapp writes of drinking all the three outs that is, ale out of the pot, money out of the purse, and wit out of the head. [Galatians 5:21](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Galatians+5:21&t1=en_nas)**. Yearly in the United States alcohol is responsible for almost 100,000 deaths (25,000 by drunk drivers alone), 6 million non-fatal injuries, and more than $100 billion in economic losses such as unemployment and loss of productivity.**

* 1. **Where else do we see the “cup” of God’s wrath? Jeremiah 25: 15-17, “**For thus says the Lord God of Israel to me: “Take this wine cup of fury from My hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send you, to drink it. 16And they will drink and stagger and go mad because of the sword that I will send among them.”17Then I took the cup from the Lord’s hand, and made all the nations drink, to whom the Lord had sent me.” **28, “**And it shall be, if they refuse to take the cup from your hand to drink, then you shall say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord of hosts: “You shall certainly drink,” **Psalm 75:8, “**For in the hand of the Lord *there is* a cup, And the wine is red; It is fully mixed, and He pours it out;Surely its dregs shall all the wicked of the earth Drain *and* drink down,”  **Jeremiah 51:7, “**Babylon *was* a golden cup in the Lord’s hand, That made all the earth drunk. The nations drank her wine; Therefore the nations are deranged,” **and Luke 22:42, “**saying, “Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done.”  **The cup of the Lord’s right hand will be turned against you: The drunk and those who promote drunkenness loved their own cup full of drink; now God promises a cup for them, a cup of judgment and just recompense for their sin.**
     1. **See also Obadiah 1:16, “**For as you drank on My holy mountain,   
        *so* shall all the nations drink continually; Yes, they shall drink, and swallow, and they shall be as though they had never been,” **and Revelation 15-18.**

**2:18-20, (Woe to the idolater), “What profit is the image, that its maker should carve it, the molded image, a teacher of lies, that the maker of its mold should trust in it, to make mute idols? Woe to him who says to wood, Awake! To silent stone, Arise! It shall teach! Behold, it is overlaid with gold and silver, yet in it there is no breath at all. But the Lord is in His holy temple. Let all the earth keep silence before Him.”**

1. **THE FIFTH WOE, IDOLATRY, verses 18-19, is the greatest sin of all. Talk about idolatry.** Through it all, the point is proven. Habakkuk couldn’t understand why God would judge a sinful nation (Judah) by an even *more* sinful nation (Babylon). Yet God reminds Habakkuk of His own wisdom and strength and of His ultimate triumph over the wicked. God knew that Babylon was filled with the proud, the greedy, the violent, the drunk, and the idolater - and the Lord knew how to deal with them all.
   1. **God promises that we will become like the god we worship; refer to Psalm 115:8, 135:18.** 
      1. **Spiritual apostasy**
      2. **Immorality**
      3. **Political anarchy**
         1. **Roe v Wade, 1973**
         2. **Removing Prayer from School, Engel vs. Vitale, June 25, 1962**
         3. **Legalizing Gay Marriage, Federal Marriage Amendment, June 26, 2015**
2. **Compare the warnings in Habakkuk 2 to modern-day America.**
3. **Re-visit the two “big questions” Habakkuk issues: 1. If you kill every one of your people, will there be anyone left? 2. How can you use someone even more evil than us to punish us so harshly?**
4. **What is the “central theme” of this chapter?**

**And, here are the promises…**

**Habakkuk 1:2, “O Lord, how long shall I cry, And You will not hear?  
Even cry out to You, “Violence!” And You will not save,”**

**Habakkuk 1:4, “Therefore the law is powerless, and justice never goes forth.  
For the wicked surround the righteous; therefore perverse judgment proceeds.”**

**Habakkuk 2:4, “Behold the proud, His soul is not upright in him; But the just shall live by his faith.”**

**Habakkuk 2:5, “Indeed, because he transgresses by wine, *He is* a proud man,   
and he does not stay at home. Because he enlarges his desire as hell, and he *is* like death, and cannot be satisfied, He gathers to himself all nations and heaps up for himself all peoples.”**

**TERAH, ABRAHAM’S FATHER**

**Terah, Abraham’s father, From the Midrash,**   n Judaism, the Midrash (/ˈmɪdrɑːʃ/; Hebrew: מדרש‎; plural Midrashim) is the body of exegesis of Torah texts along with homiletic stories as taught by Chazal (Rabbinical Jewish sages of the post-Temple era) that provide an intrinsic analysis to passages in the Tanakh.Most of what is told about Terah is recorded in [Genesis 11:26–28](http://tools.wmflabs.org/bibleversefinder/?book=Genesis&verse=11:26–28&src=NIV), Terah's father was [Nahor](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nahor,_son_of_Serug), son of [Serug](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Serug), descendants of Shem. . They and many of their ancestors were [polytheistic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polytheism).]

Regarding his children, Terah had three sons: [Abram](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abraham) (better known by his later name Abraham), [Haran](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haran), and [Nahor II](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nahor,_son_of_Terah). His daughter [Sarai](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sarah), by a second wife, was also his daughter-in-law, wife of Abram. The entire family, including grandchildren, lived in [Ur](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ur) of the [Chaldees](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chaldea).One of his grandchildren was [Lot](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lot_(biblical)), whose father, [Haran](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haran), had died before the family left Ur. Terah's son Abram had an encounter with [God](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Names_of_God_in_Judaism), who directed him to take the entire family, leave Ur, and move to the land of [Canaan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canaan).Terah coordinated the journey, intending to go to this new land, but stopped in the city of [Haran](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haran_(biblical_place))along the way, where he died at the age of 205.[**Genesis 11:26**](http://tools.wmflabs.org/bibleversefinder/?book=Genesis&verse=11:26&src=NIV) **states that Terah lived 70 years, and he begot Abram, Nachor, and Haran.** [Rashi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rashi) comments on the subsequent elaboration on the story of Abraham that Abraham was the gem of the chronology of Genesis 11 which the Torah wanted to focus on. In the Jewish tradition, Genesis (11:26) teaches that Terah was 70 years old when he begot Abram. The Talmud [[10]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terah#cite_note-10) says that Abraham was 52 years old at year 2000 AM ([Anno Mundi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anno_Mundi)), which means that he was born in the year 1948 AM. Rashi [[11]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terah#cite_note-11) explains this based on Abram being born when Terah was 70. While it is a given in Jewish tradition that Genesis (11:26) relates that Abram was born when Terach was 70, upon which the current Jewish year is based on, there is yet a question whether Abram was born first as listed, or perhaps last, and is listed first as the wisest similar to Shem, Ham, and Jafeth where Shem was the youngest but wisest. [Seder Olam Rabbah](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seder_Olam_Rabbah) holds that Abram was the eldest, but the Talmud leaves the above question open.

**According to rabbinical tradition Terah was a wicked (**[***Numbers Rabbah***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Numbers_Rabbah) **19:1; 19:33), idolatrous priest (**[**Midrash HaGadol**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Midrash_HaGadol) **on Genesis 11:28--** In Judaism, the Midrash (/ˈmɪdrɑːʃ/; Hebrew: מדרש‎; plural midrashim) is the body of exegesis of Torah texts along with homiletic stories as taught by Chazal (Rabbinical Jewish sages of the post-Temple era) that provide an intrinsic analysis to passages in the Tanakh.**)** who manufactured idols ([*Eliyahu Rabbah*](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Eliyahu_Rabbah&action=edit&redlink=1) 6, and [*Eliyahu Zuta*](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Eliyahu_Zuta&action=edit&redlink=1) 25). Abram, in opposition to his father’s idol shop, smashed his father’s idols and chased customers away. Terah then brought his unruly son before Nimrod, who threw him into a fiery furnace, yet Abram miraculously escaped. ([Genesis Rabba](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genesis_Rabba) 38:13). The [Zohar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zohar) says that when God saved Abram from the furnace, Terah repented ([Zohar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zohar) Genesis 1:77b) and Rabbi Abba B. Kahana said that God assured Abram that his father Terah had a portion in the *World to Come* ([Genesis Rabbah](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genesis_Rabbah) 30:4; 30:12).

**Terah left Abram to mind the store while he departed. A woman came with a plateful of flour and asked Abram to offer it to the idols. Abram then took a stick, broke the idols, and put the stick in the largest idol’s hand. When Terah returned, he demanded that Abram explain what he'd done. Abram told his father that the idols fought among themselves and the largest broke the others with the stick. “Why do you make sport of me?” Terah cried, “Do they have any knowledge?” Abram replied, “Listen to what you are saying!”**

Terah is identified as the person who arranged and led the family to embark on a mysterious journey to Canaan. It is shrouded in mystery to Jewish scholars as to why Terah began the journey and as to why the journey ended prematurely. It is suggested that he was a man in search of a greater truth that could possibly be found in the familiar land of Canaan, and that it was Abram who picked up the torch to continue his father's quest, that Terah himself was unable to achieve. In Jewish tradition Abram left [Haran](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haran_(biblical_place)) before Terah died as an expression that he would not be remiss in the [Mitzvah](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mitzvah), of honoring a parent, by leaving his aging father behind.[[16]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terah#cite_note-16) The significance of Terah not reaching Canaan was a reflection of his character, a man who was unable to go “all the way”. Though on a journey in the right direction, Terah fell short at arriving to the divine destination — in contrast to Abram, who did follow through and achieved the divine goal, and was not bound by his father’s idolatrous past. Abram's following God’s command to leave his father, thus absolved him from the Mitzvah of honoring parents, and as Abraham, he would go on to create a new lineage distinct from his ancestors.[[17]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terah#cite_note-17) However, in Christian tradition Abram left Haran after Terah died, see below. According to Genesis Rabbah 38.13 [R. Hiyya](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/R._Hiyya), a first generation Jewish sage tells the following story:

**Abraham cast into the fire**--Terah was an idol manufacturer who once went away and left Abraham in charge of the store. A man walked in and wished to buy an idol. Abraham asked him how old he was and the man responded “fifty years old.” Abraham then said, “You are fifty years old and would worship a day old statue!” At this point the man left ashamed. Later, a woman walked in to the store and wanted to make an offering to the idols. So Abraham took a stick, smashed the idols and placed the stick in the hand of the largest idol. When Terah returned he asked Abraham what happened to all the idols. Abraham told him that a woman came in to make an offering to the idols. Then the idols argued about which one should eat the offering first. Then the largest idol took the stick and smashed the other idols. Terah responded by saying that they are only statues and have no knowledge. Whereupon Abraham responded by saying that you deny their knowledge, yet you worship them! At which point Terah took Abraham to Nimrod. Nimrod proclaims to Abraham that we should worship fire. Abraham responds that water puts out fire. So Nimrod declares they worship water. Abraham responds that clouds hold water. So Nimrod declares they worship clouds. Abraham responds that wind pushes clouds. So Nimrod declares they worship wind. Abraham responds that people withstand wind. Nimrod becomes angry with Abraham and declares that Abraham shall be cast into the fire, and if Abraham is correct that there is a real God, that God will save him. Then Abraham is cast into the fire and is saved by God. **Abraham’s brother Haran sees what happened and says that he believes in the God of Abraham, is thrown into the fire,** and is not saved by God. **Hence the verse in Genesis 11:28** “And Haran died in the presence of his father Terah in the land of his nativity, in Ur of the Chaldees.” The Midrash is not the only mention of this story - the Quran discusses the story in great depth.

The Midrash is also used by [James Kugel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Kugel), the chair of the Institute for the History of the Jewish Bible at Bar Ilan University in Israel. His analysis deals with how in modern day, Abraham became seen as the only monotheist] Kugel's interpretation continues in the tradition of looking at this Midrash as part of the analysis of monotheism. [Nimrod](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nimrod) is a descendant of Noah and is considered to be a “mighty one on the earth” **There is no description of a biblical interaction between Nimrod and Abraham, but according to many Jewish and Islamic sources the two met, and their meeting was a symbol of the confrontation between either good (Abraham) and evil (Nimrod) or monotheism (Abraham) and polytheism (Nimrod).**

## ALCOHOL-- Use in the United States:

* **Prevalence of Drinking:** In 2013, 86.8 percent of people ages 18 or older reported that they drank alcohol at some point in their lifetime; 70.7 percent reported that they drank in the past year; 56.4 percent reported that they drank in the past month.1
* **Prevalence of Binge Drinking and Heavy Drinking:** In 2013, 24.6 percent of people ages 18 or older reported that they engaged in binge drinking in the past month; 6.8 percent reported that they engaged in heavy drinking in the past month.2
* **Adults (ages 18+):**16.6 million adults ages 18 and older3 (7.0 percent of this age group4) had an AUD in 2013. This includes 10.8 million men3 (9.4 percent of men in this age group4) and 5.8 million women3 (4.7 percent of women in this age group4).
  + About 1.3 million adults received treatment for an AUD at a specialized facility in 2013 (7.8 percent of adults who needed treatment). This included 904,000 million men (8.0 percent of men in need) and 444,000 women (7.3 percent of women who needed treatment).5
* **Youth (ages 12–17):** In 2013 an estimated 697,000 adolescents ages 12–176 (2.8 percent of this age group7) had an AUD. This number includes 385,000 females6 (3.2 percent of females in this age group7) and 311,000 males6 (2.5 percent of males in this age group7).

An estimated 73,000 adolescents (44,000 males and 29,000 females) received treatment for an alcohol problem in a specialized facility in 2013.8

* Nearly 88,0009 people (approximately 62,000 men and 26,000 women10) die from alcohol-related causes annually, making it the third leading preventable cause of death in the United States.9
* In 2013, alcohol-impaired driving fatalities accounted for 10,076 deaths (30.8 percent of overall driving fatalities).11
* In 2006, alcohol misuse problems cost the United States $223.5 billion.12
* Almost three-quarters of the total cost of alcohol misuse is related to binge drinking.12
* In 2012, 3.3 million deaths, or 5.9 percent of all global deaths (7.6 percent for men and 4.0 percent for women), were attributable to alcohol consumption.13
* Alcohol contributes to over 200 diseases and injury-related health conditions, most notably alcohol dependence, liver cirrhosis, cancers, and injuries.14 In 2012, 5.1 percent of the burden of disease and injury worldwide (139 million disability-adjusted life years) was attributable to alcohol consumption.13
* Globally, alcohol misuse is the fifth leading risk factor for premature death and disability; among people between the ages of 15 and 49, it is the first.15
* More than 10 percent of U.S. children live with a parent with alcohol problems, according to a 2012 study.
* **Prevalence of Underage Alcohol Use:**
  + **Prevalence of Drinking:**According to the 2013 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), 35.1 percent of 15-year-olds report that they have had at least 1 drink in their lives.17 About 8.7 million people ages 12–20 (22.7 percent of this age group) reported drinking alcohol in the past month (23 percent of males and 22.5 percent of females).18
  + **Prevalence of Binge Drinking:** According to the 2013 NSDUH, approximately 5.4 million people (about 14.2 percent) ages 12–20 were binge drinkers (15.8 percent of males and 12.4 percent of females).
  + **Prevalence of Heavy Drinking:**According to the 2013 NSDUH, approximately 1.4 million people (about 3.7 percent) ages 12–20 were heavy drinkers (4.6 percent of males and 2.7 percent of females).18