

FAITH UNDER FIRE: The Righteous Shall Live by Faith (Habakkuk 2:2-20) 10.26.08

QUICK REVIEW FROM LAST WEEK:

Background on the book:

The Babylonians were the world-powerhouse of the day. Nineveh (Assyrians) fell in 612 BC.

Date of book: around 609-598 BC or around 626-590 BC; about the same time as Jeremiah

Considered one of the twelve “Minor Prophets” (Hebrew Bible-“The Twelve”)

Unique features: --Habakkuk confronts God on behalf of the people
--Contains one of the most influential verses in the Bible (2:4)
--Other important passages (2:14, 20; 3:17-18)
--Church History Fact: Radically changed Martin Luther’s life; influenced the Protestant Reformation

What this book teaches us about salvation-history: God is in control of the world around us and remains true to His promises. Though Jerusalem would be invaded because of their unfaithfulness to Him (Invasion-598BC; Fall of Jerusalem-587 BC), God was still working through His people (remnant) to provide the promised Savior of the world (Messiah) who would overcome all injustices and wickedness.

Habakkuk tells us that when we don’t understand God’s plan and when we can’t see His hand at work in our lives, we are to trust His heart.

Habakkuk 2:2-20 teaches us that God will bring judgment to the Babylonians for their actions, but the people of God are to live by their faith and trust in His timing.

2 And the LORD answered me: Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so he may run who reads it. 3 For still the vision awaits its appointed time; it hastens to the end—it will not lie. If it seems slow, wait for it; it will surely come; it will not delay. 4 “Behold, his soul is puffed up; it is not upright within him, but the righteous shall live by his faith. 5 “Moreover, wine is a traitor, an arrogant man who is never at rest. His greed is as wide as Sheol; like death he has never enough. He gathers for himself all nations and collects as his own all peoples. 6 Shall not all these take up their taunt against him, with scoffing and riddles for him, and say, “Woe to him who heaps up what is not his own—for how long?— and loads himself with pledges!” 7 Will not your debtors suddenly arise, and those awake who will make you tremble? Then you will be spoil for them. 8 Because you have plundered many nations, all the remnant of the peoples shall plunder you, for the blood of man and violence to the earth, to cities and all who dwell in them. 9 Woe to him who gets evil gain for his house, to set his

nest on high, to be safe from the reach of harm! 10 You have devised shame for your house by cutting off many peoples; you have forfeited your life. 11 For the stone will cry out from the wall, and the beam from the woodwork respond. 12 “Woe to him who builds a town with blood and founds a city on iniquity! 13 Behold, is it not from the LORD of hosts that peoples labor merely for fire, and nations weary 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 makes his neighbors drink—you pour out your wrath and make them drunk, in order to gaze at their nakedness! 16 You will have your fill of shame instead of glory. Drink, yourself, and show your uncircumcision! The cup in the LORD's right hand will come around to you, and utter shame will come upon your glory! 17 The violence done to Lebanon will overwhelm you, as will the destruction of the beasts that terrified them, for the blood of man and violence to the earth, to cities and all who dwell in them. 18 “What profit is an idol when its maker has shaped it, a metal image, a teacher of lies? For its maker trusts in his own creation when he makes speechless idols! 19 Woe to him who says to a wooden thing, Awake; to a silent stone, Arise! Can this teach? Behold, it is overlaid with gold and silver, and there is no breath at all in it. 20 But the LORD is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him” (Hab 2:2-20).

Explanation: When Our Faith is Under Fire. . .

- We Must Remember That God is Working On His Time Table (2:2-3)
- We Are to Live By Faith (2:4)
(see also Rom 1:17; Gal 3:11; Heb 10:38)
- We Must Recognize that God is Working to Spread His Name and Fame (2:14)
- We Must Remain Confident Knowing He is in Control (2:20)

Application from Habakkuk 2:2-20:

1. Trust in the Lord (live by faith-v.4) during difficult times.
2. Recognize that God is sovereign over not only the nations but our lives as well.
3. Be patient (pray for patience if necessary) and trust that a day of judgment will come upon those doing injustice in the world.
4. Be patient (pray for patience if necessary), trust, and know that the Lord loves you and that He is in control of your life—especially during the difficult times.
5. Remain in awe of Him and that the world is not out of His control.
6. Repent of that which is preventing you from living life by faith.

Works Consulted : *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary*; David W. Baker, *Nabum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah*; Kenneth L. Barker and Waylon Bailey, *Micah, Nabum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah*.