

Habakkuk: From Protest to Praise – God, It Isn't Fair! Part II Habakkuk 1:12-2:5 (cf. Romans 1:16-17)

INTRODUCTION

We have heard it said many times that our choices matter. We know this is true because all of life is shaped by the choices we make. ***We make our choices and our choices turn around and make us.***

As I ponder the situation, I realize that at the age of a fresh 54, I am nothing more than the sum total of all the choices I have made over all the years of my life. ***I am what I am, where I am, doing what I do, as a result of thousands of choices made over a long period of time.***

- **Choices. So important. So crucial. We make our choices and our choices turn around and make us.**

Last time we left **Habakkuk** looking, watching, and waiting for the Lord to give him an answer (2:1). ***Having laid out his complaints before the Lord, Habakkuk now waits for an answer.*** While he's honest about his complaints, he's also wise enough to take them to the Lord and leave them there.

The prophet waits and then God responds. We are not told how long the prophet waited for the response, but we are told what the Lord answered him.

Please note...

II. God's _____: The Babylonians will also be _____ for their sin. Meanwhile the righteous will live by faith, _____ God to act justly in His own time. (Habakkuk 2:2-5)

Three (3) words capture God's answer to **Habakkuk**: **Write, wait and remember.**

Check it out...

**A. Write and wait: God's answer _____
an appointed time (2:2-3)**

**B. Remember: Babylon's actions are not
_____ in God's sight (2:4-5)**

The Lord lays out three charges against the Chaldeans or the Babylonians in 2:5:

1. **Deceived by strong drink**
2. **Devoted to greed and covetousness**
3. **Driven by ambition and lust for conquest**

That's the next truth we need to explore and dig deep...

C. Remember: the righteous will live by _____ (2:4b)

This one phrase right at the end of **verse 4** is one of the most important verses in the whole Bible. It is quoted **three** times in the New Testament, twice by Paul, in **Romans 1:17** and **Galatians 3:11**, and once in **Hebrews 10:38**.

1. Old Testament _____

For **Habakkuk** the verse meant that he should live by faith while he waited for God's righteous judgment to fall on Babylon. For **Habakkuk** it *meant banking your hope on God no matter what.*

Let's explore the...

2. New Testament _____

The full implications of this verse are brought out in the New Testament through the gospel of Jesus Christ. Paul writes in the book of **Romans 1:16-17**: *'For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, (quoting Habakkuk 2:4b) "The righteous shall live by faith."* It is not your righteousness that brings you to heaven. It is the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Christ's righteousness saves you when you put your faith in Jesus Christ even as **Habakkuk** put his faith in God's love and faithfulness rather than in the people of Israel.

Everyone agrees that this is the central verse of **Habakkuk**. It is certainly one of the most crucial verses in the Bible. **Here is a verse so important that it takes three New Testament books to explain it.** The phrase *"the just shall live by faith"* is quoted in **Romans 1:17**, **Galatians 3:11**, and **Hebrews 10:38**.

This is the text that changed the world. *It first changed a man, and that man changed the world.* This is the verse that changed Luther's life: *"For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written, "The righteous will live by faith.""* (**Romans 1:17**). In the previous verse Paul declared that the gospel is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes. Now he explains why the gospel is so powerful.

a. It _____ a righteousness that comes from God

The word *righteousness* comes from the courtrooms of the ancient world. *It means to declare "not guilty."* If you are righteous in God's eyes, you can stand before Him and be declared *"not guilty."* **The gospel of Christ provides for us what we could never provide for ourselves.**

That brings us to the second reason why the gospel is so powerful.

b. The righteousness from God is received only by _____

The key word here is faith. Our text says that righteousness is received *"from faith for faith."* Everyone who is justified is justified the same way: *by faith alone and faith always.* How can I be right with God? The answer is simple: **By receiving the righteousness of God that comes only by faith.**

CONCLUSION

What can we take with us this morning? Here's some truth for you...

- **Habakkuk 2:4 in Romans: Can't rely on _____**
- **Habakkuk 2:4 in Galatians: Can't rely on the _____**
- **Habakkuk 2:4 in Hebrews: Don't _____ back**

You, believer in Christ, you have received Christ's righteousness by faith for salvation so do not shrink back. Live boldly. Change the world. **Be proud to be counted as one of God's people.**