

When God Seems Silent: A Study of Habakkuk

Lesson Five: God Never Sleeps! (1:5,6)

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Introduction:

- I. How dreadful is the eye of God upon him who wants to sin! Lafayette, the friend of Washington, once told about being shut up in a little room in a gloomy prison for a long time. In the door of his little cell was a very small hole. At that hole, a soldier was placed day and night to watch him. All he could see was the soldier's eye; but that eye was always there. Day and night, every moment when he looked up, he always saw that eye. Oh! He says it was dreadful! There was no escape, no hiding: when he lay down, and when he rose up, that eye was always watching him. How dreadful will the eye of God be upon the sinner, as it watches him in the eternal world forever! (Foster, 294, #2498).
- II. The ever-present eye of God is undisputed 🕊️ (Psalm 139:7). 🕊️ Omniscience is a divine attribute. Yet Habakkuk seems to have forgotten it! His 🕊️ complaint to God is that God has either ignored or failed to see the perverse injustice in Judah. "Despair" had captured the prophet's hope and blinded his eye of faith.
 1. 🕊️ Now God answers Habakkuk's protest. The Almighty is not an unconcerned spectator. He will vindicate His glory and punish the haughty sinners of Habakkuk 1:1-4.
 2. From Habakkuk's questions (1:2) it seemed that he thought God was indifferent, inactive, and unconcerned. Perhaps he thought God was "asleep". But he was wrong.
 3. Habakkuk is now informed that 🕊️ God knew all about the situation in Judah. The Almighty would not allow the prophet's perplexity to go unanswered. Habakkuk was foundering in the sea of uncertainty without the compass of God's Word. Thus, God sent a message to Habakkuk that would provide direction and hope (1:5,6).
 4. This text provides hope for it stresses that 🕊️ God IS doing something even though it seems He is not.
- III. This affirmation of Jehovah's activity 🕊️ offered Habakkuk hope when all seemed hopeless. Such is designed to 🕊️ instill a resolute faith and trusting confidence in Jehovah God. This steadfastness will 🕊️ encourage all to remain vigilant.
 1. Habakkuk's weakness is similar to that of many today.
 2. It is 🕊️ tempting to think that God is "slumbering" and unaware.
 3. We, like Habakkuk, 🕊️ must keep focused upon the eternal vigilance of Jehovah God! (Psalm 121:3b-4).
 4. Look at how this was stressed to the perplexed prophet so he could regain hope!

Body:

I. Facts regarding God's vigilance (1:5-6).

A. *God never sleeps—🕊️ He is always doing marvelous things! (5)*

1. Unseen to mortal eyes is the activity of God. When life's stresses compound, our vision is often limited – we especially fail to walk by faith. This was Habakkuk's problem. He needed to be reminded about God's "work."
2. The divine announcement came as an exclamation, stirring Habakkuk from "Despair's" dungeon. "Look! Observe! Wonder! I am doing something!"
3. 🕊️ Even as Habakkuk was accusing God of being far away and unconcerned, Jehovah was fashioning events on earth to achieve His will.
 - a. "Work" – "the diligent work of one at a trade." Used to describe skills (carpenter, potter, etc.). KJV: "I will work a work"

- 1) As the tradesman labors the untrained observer sees nothing of design – all looks chaotic. However, the skill soon forms beauty and the design is understood!
 - 2) This is how Habakkuk looked – at the beginning all seemed utter ruin. He needed to wait and allow the divine Craftsman to work His skill.
 - 3) 🕊️ We, too, need to believe in the skill of God to perform wondrous works (Psalm 106:1; 118:1, 29).
- b. 🕊️ “Wondrous” are God’s works. NASB: “Be astonished! Wonder!” The Hebrew phrase is a doubled exclamation (be astounded astounded) and describes the utter amazement at the result of what God was doing (Cooke, p.659).
- 1) The Lord’s work was so unexpected that Habakkuk would be awe struck when he saw the end.
 - 2) Such describes 🕊️ Jehovah’s ability to vindicate injustices! (Jeremiah 21:2).
 - 3) Saints today need to 🕊️ nurture confidence in the wondrous work of God (Job 37:14, 16; Psalm 72:18).

B. *God never sleeps →🕊️ He is in control of all! (6)*

1. Frustration had captured faith and faithless Habakkuk questioned God’s control – all seemed out of control. 🕊️ God confidently responded – “I Am!” This absolute control has always characterized God (Amos 6:14; Jeremiah 5:15; Isaiah 10:5-6a).
2. “I” is emphatic and stresses the 🕊️ absoluteness of God’s control. Just as the craftsman carefully pays attention to all details, so God works – all details will be considered so the work will be complete (Romans 8:28). With deliberate diligence God controls all things!
3. God promised Habakkuk that the Chaldeans would come. This was made prior to their emergence as a world power. How could this be? Because God is in control of all things (Isaiah 40:15).
4. Struggling saints must remember this point! 🕊️ God is in control and thus divine Providence will achieve its end!
 - a. 🕊️ Luke 22:31-33 – Satan had to get permission to “sift” Peter! (Job 2:6).
 - b. 🕊️ 1 Corinthians 10:13 – Whatever comes into our lives will be bearable.
 - c. 🕊️ Romans 8:35-39 – Believers can be more than conquerors if they hold fast to faith.
 - d. 🕊️ Genesis 50:20 – A text all should memorize for it sustains souls when trials oppress.

C. *God never sleeps →🕊️ His goals will be accomplished (6b)*

1. God is working constantly to 🕊️ achieve a planned objective. Those who work with Him will find rest and reward.
2. The deliberate working of God to achieve His goals 🕊️ is historically verifiable – an undeniable fact. The prediction of Chaldea proves this point. God has utilized evil nations as instruments by which His will would be realized. God does not force these instruments but He allows them to choose and then works with those choices (Judges 14:4; Isaiah 14:24-27).
3. How can this be? Because Jehovah is the “Sovereign Lord” whose purposes will be achieved (Jeremiah 4:28). What God purposes 🕊️ will come to pass—no one can thwart Him!
4. When your faith is about to be overcome by frustration – remember that Jehovah God is the Sovereign Lord of all! (Isaiah 14:27a).

D. *God never sleeps →🕊️ He is aware! (6)*

1. Habakkuk needed to remember that ☞ God knew the evil of Judah and Chaldea. Their character and motives were visible to the Almighty. ☞ No one could "fool" Him with pretense.
2. The Chaldeans were ruthless and impetuous. NASB: "fierce." "Bitter" – savage and merciless in treatment of others. The Babylonians would be completely victorious. Even though they were used by God, their ☞ injustice would never escape God's vigilant eye!
3. Because God is in control, even those who are violent, rash and rough will be accountable (Ps 7:9).

II. Lessons highlighted by God's vigilance. Since God never sleeps...

- A. ☞ Man cannot escape the divine wrath for his disobedience. The Jews did not believe that Babylon would come (Jeremiah 5:12; 7:4, 8). The Jews were blinded by sin, despised God's Word, and continued in rebellion until the Destroyer came. Such happened with those in Noah's day (Matthew 24:39) and will be so when Christ returns (2 Peter 3:1-10). What should be your view of God's lordship over your life? (Colossians 1:15-17).
- B. ☞ Divine sovereignty is a basic principle. "God is the God of the whole world. He is not an absentee Creator who has gone away and left us... Jehovah of Judah is the God of all nations (Gill, 174). This being true—
 1. Acts 17:26-31 – Divine justice will come to all! (Malachi 3:5).
 2. Romans 8:28 – Saints share a perfect guarantee!
- C. ☞ Nothing can thwart God's will! (Isaiah 14:27a). This fact should bring great comfort (1 Thessalonians 5:11, 18).
- D. ☞ Even the advances/oppression of evil are being used by God to accomplish the Divine purposes (Isaiah 10:5). Such will be judged and righteousness vindicated.

Conclusion:

- I. ☞ Isaiah 50:8-10 – God is ever vigilant. Wrong doing is closely observed by Him. Sin is the source of displeasure to Him who is perfect in purity, and the punishment deserved will surely come. It may tarry, but rest assured it will come! (Deane, 12).
 - II. A certain farmhouse is situated on the slope of a hill and its windows are so fashioned that it offers a complete view of every nook of the expansive farm. No laborer knows but that at any given moment the master's eye may be upon him. So it is with us. Our great Master commands a view, not only of our outward actions but of the very thoughts of our hearts. And not only so, we know that our Master is constantly watching us, not to blame merely, but to prompt, to help, and to encourage us. What an incentive to diligence! (Foster, #4227, 482)
 - III. A man went to steal corn from his neighbor's field. He took his little boy with him as a lookout to give warning in case anyone should come along the path. Before going into the field, he looked all around, first one way and then another. Not seeing anyone he was about to start filling his sack when his son cried out, "Father, there is one way you haven't yet looked." The father supposed that someone was coming and asked his son what he meant. The lad answered, ☞ "You haven't looked up!" The father was conscience – stricken. He took his son by the hand and hurried home without the corn which he had planned to steal. (Foster, #4233, 483). God's vigilance is an incentive to avoid evil!
- ☞ Our next lesson: "The perverted justice of immorality"