


- Jehovah is Absolute - “keep silence.” No one should question (Psalm 46:10; Zechariah 2:13).

Habakkuk’s answer has now been given. This God’s wrath and righteous judgement. Evil may appear to escape punishment but God will compel the proud to drink a double portion of divine wrath (Revelation 14:8; 17:2; 18:3).

Pride may run rampant in our world. But God will confront all who fail to honor Him, who do not respect justice or human dignity, who love darkness more than light, evil more than good, and who have neither pity nor conscience.

There is hope for the future; we can walk by faith and find life (Habakkuk 2:4-8).

Habakkuk 2:20 presents an abiding principle - God is over all. When the earth is filled with knowledge then all of the inexplicables of life will be known. No matter how strong evil may seem, it is not stronger than God. God will triumph over it and righteousness will prevail!



TAKE-HOME LESSONS

1. Pride can be manifested in many ways—diet, recreation, and even religion!
2. Pride ignites all sin in life!
3. Pride will be humbled by the Almighty God!
4. Pride’s singular focus is self’s interests!

Our Next Lesson: “When inequities are balanced”

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LESSON 11 : The Woeful Cost of Pride

A Study of Habakkuk

WHEN GOD SEEMS SILENT

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Pride is exposes one who is foolish (Proverbs 21:24). Pride has historically brought the ruin of great nations. “I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just, that His justice cannot sleep forever” (Thomas Jefferson, 1784). Pride is Satan’s universal temptation which eventually ensnares believers.

Habakkuk 2:6-20 exposes pride. The discussion begin in 2:4 as a contrast of life’s attitudes was given - those who live by “faith” will demonstrate humility and submit to God; those who are “proud” have turned from God to self.

Babylon illustrates those who are “proud.” The nation symbolizes all opposed to God and in Revelation this city is used to show the disdain God has for the proud.

Pride comes with a high cost. Many are unaware of its price until it is too late. Many are subtly tempted to yield to pride without considering its end

(Proverbs 22:3). Study this paragraph and consider the “end” for all who follow pride’s prodding.

Pride’s victims (verse 6a)

Although Babylon appeared invincible, the nation would become the object of ridicule. All oppressed by Babylon’s evil would join in condemning her. Victims may not understand why God did not prevent the evil from happening. But they can know that the evil will be judged by God (Ezekiel 9:10).

When pride controls your life, you will hurt others and they will speak about your evil and God will repay (Jeremiah 51:56b). When we are abused by the proud, we may not be able to explain why the evil has happened to us but we must “walk by faith” knowing that Judgement will come! (Matthew 18:6, 7; 1 Corinthians 8:1, 12).

Pride’s vile traits (verses 6b-19)

Babylon characterized all who are dominated by pride. Notice how each action was seen in Babylon and exists in modern times.

⇒ *Greed and Ambition (verses 6 - 8)*

The woe here is upon selfish ambition - the zeal to “get ahead” and find success, at any price. Babylon was totally occupied with selfish pleasure, happiness, comfort, and convenience. They could not be satisfied - “one more was not enough”!

The image is incurring a great debt by borrowing (verses 6b-7). Babylon was foolishly borrowing and when the collector would call for payment, they would not be able to pay!

Greed offers a promise of gain but only pays with sorrow (Proverbs 22:16; 30:8, 9).

⇒ *Evil Cunning to benefit self (verses 9-11)*

Babylon practiced evil acts to obtain coveted items. Habakkuk describes Babylon as trusting in material gains for security. The nation thought she was above all others and secure (“nest on high”). She had oppressed others thinking it would offer her protection. But she had no security! (Obadiah 1:4).

Many think they can find security in promotions, wealth, and possessions. They treat others with insensitivity (verse 10). Even when they are “successful” their evil cunning testifies against them (verse 11). There is no security (Luke 12:15).

All who are self-serving “ladder climbers” need to remember that nothing escapes the notice of our Holy God (Psalm 121:4). All who trust in their own cunning for success must heed this point. Babylon forgot God! (Daniel 2:21)

Habakkuk tells us that God knows what has happened and the evildoer will be punished!

⇒ *Violence to achieve goals (verses 12-14)*

Babylon was willing to do anything that would achieve her goals. She killed without mercy; exploited without compromise; and destroyed without hesitation. But, all her success would vanish as if it was burned by fire!

Pride controls violent behavior.

- Abuses others who get in the way of self’s goals
- Puts our desires above the welfare of others
- Desensitizes to violence, poor health choices, profanity, and immorality - we want “it” so we go for it!
- Slays the absolutes of God upon the alter of self!

Where is God when violence is running rampant? Why do the wicked seem victorious as they selfishly pursue happiness at other’s expense? Habakkuk echoed these questions. God has now answered him.

In the end, the proud will be humbled as they realize their efforts are all for naught; they have worked for nothing! In the final analysis, their violence is futile.

⇒ *Immorality to satisfy self (verses 15-17)*

The harsh words refer to Babylon’s approval of drinking alcoholic beverages. It was a nation renown for excesses in alcohol. Interpreted literally this section pronounces a curse upon all advocates of social drinking of alcoholic beverages! (Proverbs 20:1; 23:29-35; Isaiah 56:12)

In this woe we see how pride’s selfishness entices and seduces others for personal pleasure and then discards after their usefulness has ended (Galatians 5:16; Luke 9:23).

⇒ *Idolatry (verses 18-19)*

Babylon reveals the inevitable end of pride - one eventually sets himself as “God.” The nation forgot Jehovah’s sovereignty! Idolatry is placing something before God.

Pride’s woeful harvest (verses 6b-19)

The proud will not escape (Ezekiel 9:10). Habakkuk records the tragedy awaiting all who follow pride’s prodding.

- Plunder (verse 7; Galatians 6:7, 8; Numbers 32:23)
- Shame (verse 10; Jeremiah 7:19)
- Futility (13b; Habakkuk 2:18).

Pride’s ultimate realization (verse 20)

Jehovah God is a dramatic contrast to the lifeless gods of Babylon.

- Jehovah is Sovereign - “But Jehovah” is not like the dumb/lifeless idols.
- Jehovah is Righteous - “His holy temple.” He will not abandon the righteous ways.
- Jehovah is Lord - “let all the earth.” No one is beyond His commands.