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Rice Memorial Missionary Baptist Church

Apostle Walter F. Camp, Presiding Senior Pastor
Pastor David K. Baker III, 2nd Presiding
802 W. 15th, Little Rock, AR 72202, 501-416-5894

www.RiceMemorialBaptistChurch.org

Rejoice Anyway

Definitions in **bold letters** are from **Strong's** Exhaustive Concordance
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or Roget's Thesaurus – **October 5, 2014**

Habakkuk 2:1-5, 3:17-19

Introduction: This chapter records God's answer to the second of Habakkuk's two questions raised in Hab. 1. The first regarded "how long" the well-deserved punishment of the wicked would be delayed. God's answer to the effect that Babylon, the great and wicked world-power soon to arise, would indeed punish wicked Israel for their sins did not fully satisfy Habakkuk. How could the **holy** and **righteous God** use a wicked state like Babylon to **punish** Judea, which with all of their sins were yet better than the Babylonians? Habakkuk took up his watch to await God's answer; and Jehovah promptly answered (Habakkuk 2:1-3).

Apparently, there was a terrible **disappointment** to Habakkuk in the **revelation** that the great new world power (Babylon) would be no better, in any sense, than was Assyria; and God's answer consisted of five terrible woes pronounced against the great wicked state that would destroy Judea...

(Source: *Coffman Commentaries on the Old & New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bcc/*)

Habakkuk 2:1, *I will stand upon my **watch**, and set me upon the **tower**, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall **answer** when I am **reproved**.*

NOTE: These are the words of the prophet: so the Targum introduces them, "the prophet said;" and this he said in character as a **watchman**, as all the prophets were: as a **watchman** takes the proper place he watches IN and looks out, especially in time of danger and distress, if he can **spy** anyone bringing tidings, that he may receive it, and notify it to the people that have appointed him a watchman; so the prophet retired from the world, and gave himself up to meditation and prayer, and put himself in a **waiting posture**; looking up to the Lord, and **expecting** an **answer** to his expostulations (earnest and kindly protest) with him, concerning the success of the enemies of God's people, and the calamities that were like to come upon them, that he might report it to them; see (Isa. 21:8): **and set me upon the tower**; a place of eminence (high place), from which he could behold an object at a distance: it signifies a strait place, in which he was as one besieged; ...the thoughts of his heart troubled him; he had a great many objections that rose up in his **mind** against the **providences** (event ordained by divine direction) that were like to attend his people; he was beset with the temptations of Satan, and surrounded with objectors to what he had delivered, concerning the **Chaldeans** being **raised up** by God to the destruction of the Jewish nation; and, amidst these difficulties, he sets himself to reading the word of God, and meditation on it, to pray to God for **instruction** and **information** in this matter; as Asaph, in a like case, went into the sanctuary of the Lord, where he got satisfaction, Psalm 73:2-3; 16-17) as well as it may be expressive of the **confidence** he had in God, in his **covenant** and **promises**, which were as a fortress and strong tower to him; in short, he kept his place, he was found in the way of his **duty**, in the performance of his **office**, and was **humbly** and **patiently**

waiting on God, to KNOW MORE of HIS MIND and WILL, and acquaint the people with it. **And will watch to see what he will say unto me;** or "in me"; that is, what the Lord would say unto him, either outwardly by an audible voice; or inwardly by impressing things upon his MIND; or in a **vision** by the Spirit of prophecy... **and what I shall answer when I am reproved;** either by the Lord, for using so much freedom and boldness in expostulations and **reasonings** with him, who is under no obligation to give an account of his matters unto the children of men...

(Source: biblestudytools.com/commentaries/gills-exposition-of-the-bible/)

Thought 1. Even though God is not obligated to answer questions about what he does in his oversight and appointment of good to those who do right, or evil in the lives of those who do wrong, he does reply because he wanted them, and us to understand the fact that he is a JUST God and Judge. This was the purpose for having a written Covenant (solemn binding agreement) so everyone could KNOW (understand) WHY he did whatever.

Deuteronomy 28:1-2, And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt **hearken** diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe and to **DO** all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the LORD thy God will set thee ON HIGH above all nations of the earth: And all these **blessings** shall **come on** thee, and **overtake** thee..

Deuteronomy 28:15-25, But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt **not hearken** unto the voice of the LORD (Yahweh) thy God, to observe to **DO** all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these **curses** shall come upon thee, and **overtake thee...** ...The LORD (Yahweh) shall cause thee to **be smitten** before thine enemies: thou shalt go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them: and shalt be **removed** into all the kingdoms of the earth.

Thought 2. Even today with our New Covenant, God wants us to UNDERSTAND him. This is why the Holy Spirit REVEALS unto apostles and prophets even more than what was revealed under the Old Covenant.

Jeremiah 9:23-24, Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he **UNDERSTANDETH** and **KNOWETH me**, that I am **the LORD (the self-Existent, Jehovah [Yahweh])** which exercise **lovingkindness, judgment (JUSTICE),** and **righteousness,** in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.

Ephesians 3:3-6, How that by **revelation** he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my **knowledge** in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now **REVEALED** unto his holy **apostles** and **prophets** by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his **promise** in Christ by the gospel...

Ephesians 1:17-18, That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may GIVE unto you the spirit of **wisdom** and **revelation** in the KNOWLEDGE of him: The **eyes** of your understanding being ENLIGHTENED; that ye may **KNOW** what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints...

Habakkuk 2:2, And **the LORD (Yahweh) answered me,** and said, **Write the vision (sight, a DREAM, revelation),** and make it PLAIN upon tables, that he may RUN that readeth it.

NOTE: Thus, when St. John had a vision of the New Jerusalem, he was ordered to **write**, Rev. 21:5. He must write it, that he might imprint it on his **own mind**, and make it more clear to himself, but especially that it might be notified to those in distant places

and **transmitted** to those in future ages. What is handed down **by tradition** is easily mistaken and liable to corruption; but what is written is reduced to a certainty, and preserved SAFE and PURE. We have reason to bless God for written visions, that God has written to us the great things of his prophets as well as of his law. He must write the vision, and make it **plain** upon tables, must write it **legibly**, in **large characters**, so that he who runs may read it, that those who will not allow themselves leisure to read it deliberately may not avoid a cursory view of it. Probably, the prophets were wont (accustomed) to write some of the most remarkable of their predictions in tables, and to hang them up in the temple, Isa. 8:1. Now the prophet is told to write this very plain. Note, Those who are employed in **preaching** the **word** of God should study **PLAINNESS** as much as may be, so as to make themselves intelligible to the meanest (low in rank or birth) capacities. (Source: *The Matthew Henry Commentary on the whole Bible classic.studylight.org/com/mhc*)

Thought 1. What comes to mind is the vision that God gave to Peter when the men from Cornelius were coming to him. It was given to reveal a truth about who was to be preached to and saved by faith that he had missed when Jesus spoke of preaching the gospel.

Acts 10:9-20, On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the **sixth hour**: And he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a **trance**, And **SAW** heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: Wherein were all manner of **fourfooted beasts** of the earth, and **wild beasts**, and **creeping things**, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or **unclean**. And the voice spake unto him again the second time, **What God hath CLEANSED**, that call NOT thou **common(UNCLEAN)**. This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven. Now while Peter doubted in himself what this **vision** which he had SEEN **should mean**, behold, the men which were sent from Cornelius had made enquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate, And called, and asked whether Simon, which was surnamed Peter, were lodged there. While Peter **thought** on the **vision**, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee. Arise therefore, and get thee down, and **go** with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them.

Acts 10:24, 33, And the morrow after they entered into Caesarea. And **Cornelius** waited for them, and had called together his kinsmen and near friends...
...Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of (FROM) God.

Acts 10:44-47, While Peter yet **spake** these **words**, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the **Gentiles (non-Jewish one, heathen)** also was poured out the **gift** of the Holy Ghost. For they HEARD them SPEAK with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?

Habakkuk 2:3, For the **VISION** is yet for an **appointed time**, but at the end it shall **speak**, and not lie: though it **tarry (delay, linger)**, **WAIT** for it; because it will surely come, it will not **TARRY (loiter [spend time idly])**.

NOTE: Not the present **vision** only, but vision or prophecy in general: it was a doubt that arose in the minds of the prophet and other good men, upon the notice given that the **Chaldeans** would be raised up to the **destruction** of the **Jews**; that then the law of God would cease, his worship would not continue; vision and prophecy would be no more; it

would be all over with the doctrine of the law and the prophets: now in answer to this, and to remove this doubt, they are assured that vision or prophecy should "**yet**", or still, continue, and even "**to the appointed time**"; the time fixed for the continuance of it, notwithstanding the people of the Jews should be carried captive into another land: and accordingly so it was; there were prophets, as Daniel and Ezekiel, in the time of the **captivity**; and, after it, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi; yea, the law and the prophets were until John; for vision and prophecy were to be sealed up by the **Messiah**, and not before; see (Luke 16:16) (Daniel 9:24) it was true indeed with respect to the present vision or prophecy concerning the Messiah, that that was not to be fulfilled presently; there was some considerable time first to elapse; there was a **time appointed** for the accomplishment of it, and it would remain till that time, and then be most surely fulfilled; which would be before the **sceptre** departed from Judah, while the **second temple** was yet standing, and when Daniel's seventy weeks, or four hundred and ninety years, were come; which were the limited, determined, and appointed time for the **Messiah's coming**, the time appointed of the Father, the **fulness of time**; so there was an appointed time for **his coming** to **take vengeance** on the Jewish nation, for their rejection of him, to which the apostle applies these words, (Hebrews 10:37) and also for his spiritual coming, to visit his people in a gracious way; there is a set time to favour Zion and her children; as well as there is a day fixed for his **second coming**, or coming to **judgment**. (Source: bible studytools.com/commentaries/gills-exposition-of-the-bible/)

NOTE: At the end it shall **speak** and **not lie**. We shall not be disappointed of it, for it will come at the time appointed; nor shall we be disappointed in it, for it will fully answer our believing **expectations**. The **promise** may seem silent a great while, but at the end it shall speak; and therefore, though it tarry longer than we expected, yet we must continue waiting for it, being assured it will come, and willing to tarry until it does come. The day that God has set for the **deliverance** of his people, and the **destruction** of his and their enemies, is a day, (1.) That will surely come at last... (2.) It will not tarry, for God is **not slack**, as some count slackness (2 Pet. 3:9); though it tarry past our time, yet it does not tarry past God's time, which is always the best time. 3. This vision, the accomplishment of which is so long waited for, will be such an exercise of **faith** and **patience** as will try and discover men what they are, (Source: The Matthew Henry Commentary on the whole Bible classic.studylight.org/com/mhc)

Thought 1. When we look at the fact God says, "it will not tarry (loiter [spend time idly])", What came to mind is it will not take any more time than what's necessary. So, since it's not time yet, that means the time he's taking to bring it to pass is necessary, or else, he would do it sooner than what's been set by him! That truth helps to "wait."

Hebrews 6:11-12, And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of **hope** unto the end: That ye be not **slothful (lazy)**, but **followers (imitator)** of them who through **faith** and **patience (longanimity** [disposition to endure long under offenses]) inherit the promises.

Romans 8:22-28, For we know that the whole **creation** groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the **Spirit**, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, **WAITING** for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our **body**. For we are **saved** by **hope (expectation)**: but hope that is seen is not HOPE: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with **patience (cheerful or hopeful endurance, constancy, patient continuance waiting)** **WAIT** for it. Likewise the SPIRIT also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh **intercession FOR US** with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession

FOR the saints according to the will of God. And we know that **ALL things work together for good** to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

Thought 2. You did notice that a list of God's things was given before Paul said in verse 28 that "all things work together for good"? What verse 28 means is that all of God's things work together for our good. This is proven when we consider the sorrow of the world, which works death, does not work for our good. 2 Cor. 7:10

2 Corinthians 7:9-10, Now I rejoice, not that ye were made **sorry**, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive **damage** by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh **repentance** to salvation not to be repented of: but the **sorrow** of the world worketh **DEATH**.

Habakkuk 2:4, Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not **upright** in him: but the JUST shall LIVE by his **faith (morally fidelity: -- faithfulness)**.

NOTE: There are some who will proudly disdain (think nothing of) this vision, whose hearts are so lifted up that they scorn (neglect) to take notice of it; if God will work for them immediately, they will thank him, but they will not give him credit; their hearts are lifted up towards vanity, and, since God **puts them off**, they will shift for themselves and not be beholden to him; they think their own hands sufficient for them, and God's promise is to them an insignificant thing. That man's soul that is thus **lifted up** is **not upright** in him; it is not right with God, is not as it should be. Those that either distrust or despise God's all-sufficiency will not walk uprightly with him, Gen. 17:1. But, (2.) Those who are truly good, and whose hearts **are upright** with God, will **value** the **promise**, and venture their all upon it; and, in confidence of the truth of it, will keep close to God and duty in the most difficult trying times, and will then live comfortably in communion with God, dependence on him, and **expectation** of him. The just shall live by faith; during the **captivity** good people shall support themselves, and live comfortably, by faith in these precious promises, while the performance of them is **deferred**.

(Source: *The Matthew Henry Commentary on the whole Bible classic.studylight.org/com/mhc*)

Hebrews 3:12-14, Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of **unbelief**, in departing FROM the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be **hardened** through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, **IF** we hold the **beginning** of our **confidence** (FAITH) **stedfast** unto **the end**...

Habakkuk 2:5, Yea also, because he transgresseth by wine, he is a **PROUD** man, neither **keepeth (rest)** at home, who enlargeth his **desire** as **hell**, and is as death, and cannot be satisfied, but gathereth unto him all nations, and heapeth unto him all people...

NOTE: Although the character of the one described in this verse was primarily a reference to the Babylonian state, in its wider application, it describes the **greedy**, godless states of all times. Here we have a metaphor of the approaching enemy destined to overthrow God's rebellious Judea. It is that of a **proud**, treacherous, haughty drunkard, **Babylon**, drunk with power, motivated by an insatiable desire like that of the drunkard for drink. "The drunkard can never drink enough wine ... the Chaldeans can never conquer enough land." The reason for the choice of such a metaphor probably derived from the fact of, "drunkenness being a besetting sin of Babylon. It was, in the case of **Belshazzar**, the immediate cause of the **fall of Babylon** (Daniel 5:2-5, 30)." Throughout history, this metaphor has persisted, rapacious (given to plunder) conquerors, never satisfied, burning with an insatiable lust for more and more, being repeatedly compared to drunkards.

(Source: *Coffman Commentaries on the Old & New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bcc/*)

Jeremiah 25:11-12 ...these nations shall serve the **king** of **Babylon** seventy years. And it shall come to **pass**, when **seventy** years are accomplished, that I will **PUNISH** the **king** of Babylon, and that **nation**, saith the Lord, for their **iniquity**...

Daniel 5:2-5, 30, Belshazzar, while he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which his father **Nebuchadnezzar** had taken out of the **temple** which was in Jerusalem; that the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink therein. Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which was at Jerusalem; and the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, drank in them. They drank wine, and **praised** the **gods** of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone. In the same hour came forth **fingers** of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote.

...In **that night** was **Belshazzar** the king of the **Chaldeans** slain.

Habakkuk 3:17-18, *Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls:
Yet I will **REJOICE** IN **the LORD** (Yahweh), I will **joy** in the God of **my salvation**.*

NOTE: This is a vivid description of the results of the "**scorched earth**" policy of the Babylonian invaders. The end result of such destruction would be starvation and death to multiplied tens of thousands of the population. Everything of value that could be transported would be carried away by the ruthless invaders, and what remained would be wantonly destroyed for the precise purpose of making the lands uninhabitable. That such a prospect was a source of **great agony** in the heart of Habakkuk is certain. Leaving such a pitiful lament without any further comment, Habakkuk went on to declare his **joyful trust** in the Lord no matter what would happen. (Source: Coffman Commentaries on the Old & New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bcc/)

NOTE: There is no more moving comment on the prime words of this prophecy, that, "The just shall live by faith," than that which is contained in these verses. The affirmation is exquisitely and nobly worded.

Habakkuk's **unwavering faith** in God is not blind. He exercised it in the full knowledge of the horrors that were to come upon his native land and the people whom he loved.

I will rejoice. I will joy ... The secret of such a response is in the object of his love, trust, and affection; it is God Himself. The salvation (Habakkuk 3:13) has here become my salvation, in prosperity and in adversity, in **joy** and in sorrow, in victory and in defeat. (Source: Coffman Commentaries on the Old & New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bcc/)

Habakkuk 3:19, *The **LORD God** is **my strength**, and HE WILL make my feet like **hinds'** feet, and HE WILL make me to walk upon mine high places. To the chief singer on my stringed instruments.*

NOTE: "In fruitful fields and flocks men had been taught to look for the presence and blessing of God; but here is a man who can dispense with all that, who can **believe** where he **cannot SEE**, who loves God, not for his gifts, but **for himself**, who can dispense with them all if he has but him." **Like hind's feet...** The hind is the DEER, the most **sure-footed** of creatures; and the figure means that no matter how **rough** the going gets, Habakkuk will not stumble and fall.

Thus, ends the magnificent words of this wonderful prophecy. May God indeed bless all who take time to read and meditate upon it. How precious indeed is the word of the Lord. (Source: Coffman Commentaries on the Old & New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bcc/)