

Habakkuk: Plainly, Write The Vision

Hab 1:2 Habakkuk's first complaint, "LORD, how long will I call for help and you not listen?"

Hab 1:12 Habakkuk's second complaint, "Are you not from everlasting, O Lord my God, my Holy One?"

Habakkuk was grieved and shocked by how God's people continually departed from covenant life. They no longer lived like a chosen and saved people. Exodus 19:3-6, "As Moses went up to meet God, God called down to him from the mountain: "Speak to the House of Jacob, tell the People of Israel: 'You have seen what I did to Egypt and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to Me. If you will listen obediently to what I say and keep My covenant, out of all peoples you'll be My special treasure. The whole Earth is Mine to choose from, but you're special: a kingdom of priests, a holy nation.'" We can look forward in I Peter 2:9 and see we are called, "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;" God has a covenant faithfulness to us. Here in Habakkuk we can see that Habakkuk is very concerned about the Lord's inactivity or lack of breaking up the strongholds and evils that were befalling them. So we find here a theme dominating, in the beginning of the book of Habakkuk. Habakkuk is in a passionate dialogue of anguished wrestling with the Lord. He is in impatient lament, wrestling with the Lord. It is obvious, even by verse two and three that Habakkuk is distressed, exhausted and despondent. He is agitated with God over all the seeming unchecked wickedness that has resulted in a divided community that is riddled with suspicions, accusations and personal attacks. Does this situation sound familiar? Habakkuk even harshly questions the Lord, "And You will not save..?" So Habakkuk painfully observes and challenges God on what appears to be Lord's indifference and inactivity in the face of his undeserved suffering. Then we come to Chapter Two. And it starts off with Habakkuk stating, "I will climb up to my watchtower and stand at (my watchpost) my guardpost. There I will wait to see what the Lord says and how He will answer my complaint." Habakkuk has entered a state of being in which he is withdrawn and a detachment has taken place. We must keep in mind scripture says, we are to wait patiently for the Lord and He will incline to our cry. My question here would be, "Do we trust the Lord enough to let Him do His work, His way and in His timing?" We are all activated in a small or great degree by a principal called alternation. Alternation is periods of involvement coupled with periods of withdrawal. We take up our burdens BUT then we are to lay them down. So how do we pick up or lay down a given (burden) vision from the Lord when we find

ourselves working and then resting, in this constant interchanging state we call alternation? Alternation is the rhythm of our existence as humans, but God's ways are higher than our ways. Here starting in Habakkuk 2:1, Habakkuk begins the process of going from worry, wrongful anxiety, frustration, condemnation, feelings of judgment, mayhem and abandonment to using a Godly principal, a tool, by which he is able to lift his sight above the mayhem, above the normal things that are seen, above all the hub-bub, so that he may get a new perspective from a new higher point of view. We as humans, as Christians, have to remember that **God is not only in history, He is above history. He is The Alpha and The Omega. We are in history, but God is not only part of it, in it and through it, God is above it. Higher than it!** We as humans are involved in the necessity of our time and space relationships. We find it difficult to decipher the meaning of our personal struggles, our corporate struggles, and our friends and loved ones struggles... We find deciphering the troubles of our current times profoundly complex and above our complete understanding. We see through a glass darkly as Corinthians says. If however we could be lifted out of this complex, even for a brief moment, to gain some profound perspective, then we might just be able to see more of the whole picture, through the eyes of God. We are to have a quiet confidence. A confidence that waits patiently on God, with a full and complete trust in Him. Now we come to verse two... "And the Lord answered me: "Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so he may run who reads it. 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." Habakkuk 2:2-3 (ESV). Note the KJV says, "that he may run that readeth it." And the Amplified says, "Write the vision and engrave it so plainly upon tablets that everyone who passes may [be able to] read [it easily and quickly] as he hastens by. For the vision is yet for an appointed time and it hastens to the end [fulfillment]; it will not deceive or disappoint. Though it tarry, wait [earnestly] for it, because it will surely come; it will not be late on its appointed day." The CEB, Common English Bible, says "...make it (so) plain upon a tablet (so) that a runner can read it." One who is passing by quickly. **It is not a place to dwell, but rather a place to read and proceed.**

The Vision that we have is limited to and is rooted in our perceived reality. God's vision is in His reality and His vision is reality. His vision will come to pass. When God shares His vision with us, we are to write it and write it plainly. And once we have a vision from the Lord, we as humans have to figure in (factor in) the exponential factor of God-at-work and how He leads us to supernatural results... Our vision needs to be specific, people oriented, positively embracing the future and be coupled with faith, hope and trust in the Lord that He will do what He said He will do. Do we trust the Lord..? Or do we fear that He will fail us, in a place where we find ourselves speaking it and not writing it as He commands us to do? **If we have a vision we are to write it and make it plain, so there**

is no confusion or excess time wasted babbling, where we are supposed to be filling our time with empowering, equipping, encouraging, exhorting in love, fellowship, the breaking of bread, the Word, fellowship and in songs of praise. God is sovereign in word as well as in deed and His revelation cannot be forced. **We can't force His revelation!**

The term watchpost or watchtower used here for Habakkuk is a military term that is used to depict Habakkuk as a watchman. A watchman who is on the lookout for a word from God... Vision is specific. It is goal-oriented and plain written text that it may produce qualitative and quantitative results. **When a vision gets personified in writing, not so much in word, it walks in the Spirit of Excellence, in the full faith and trust in the Lord.** As Christians, we must keep in mind... It is not by our strength, but His. What does God's word tell us to do? What does God's word say will happen if we don't? Proverbs 29:18, **"Where there is no vision, the people perish:** but he that keepeth the law, happy is he." KJV. The ESV says, **"If people can't see what God is doing, they stumble all over themselves; But when they attend to what He reveals, they are most blessed."**

My objective here is to articulate the meaning of this writing in Habakkuk and demonstrate the uplifting elements found within this writing, to inspire us, the listeners, to embrace these revolutionary life-changing aspects of this writing. We have a team that is working together and we are to stick with the written vision, even though it may take longer than expected. If we look at verse four we see what The Lord discloses as the essential distinction between the wicked and the righteous. The wicked are puffed up by vanity and what they try to make happen, through boasting and pride. They take the path that leads to death and defeat. However the righteous, write the vision, make it plain, trust in the Lord and by faith take a path that leads to life and victory. A vision written "so plain that a runner passing by could read it." Another version says that it must be so clear that a passerby can read it swiftly and without difficulty. **We aren't to dwell, but to write it and do it! If it is the vision of the Lord, it has a guaranteed, appointed time of fulfillment.**

At this point in this message and in our reading, this should mark a significant turning point in our personal struggle to spend so much time explaining aspects of a vision. We should be spending our time running with it, while not berating our current position or stature, not questioning what the Lord has done and is doing. Standing on who we are in and through Christ. Vision needs to have a solidity that is more than just the Very Temporary Character it is given through a message, a discussion or an encouraging word. Vision should bear upon it a clearly written future that is to be worked towards. A direction! A heading! Not some temporary stimulus, drama or emotion that is

embellished by flattering words, which are likened unto pipe dreams... In relation to a vision, spoken words, are temporary, humanly things that so easily beset us as humans! Drama, emotions, flattering words... They are all temporary and will not endure. **The written word, unlike the spoken, establishes a concrete point of origin and authenticity that gives an authentic, clear present and future response against anything, anyone or any future unfolding event that could ever possibly arise in opposition.**

It is in the instance of a commitment of a written vision, we form a covenant, giving the declared counsel of God. Writing a vision is an objective manifestation of divine and righteous intent that will place the vision, the covenant, Out Of Bounds as far as rumor and denial may be concerned. We are to write it out that all may know what it is that He will do, and the writing of it will also protect you yourself in the end, even when it seems that the promises of God are not being fulfilled. We are not to waste our time with foolish contentions and issues.

Our help and fulfillment rarely comes in accordance with our own timetable. Life is so deeply unified, so interwoven, that **There Are No Solitary, Isolated Events.** All the events of life are intertwined. Unless we were to be able to stand outside of this process called life, outside of all the time and space limitations we have, see and embrace and fully see the fullness of the operations of it all, it is impossible for us to know the divine schedule. We can either wait in rebellion (actively or passively), or resignation, or anticipation... **The waiting of the righteous is expectant, has anticipation and has patiently, trusting, activity that is on-going from within the timetable of God's plan. The things that we do, say and engage in are supposed to be for our or others edification, encouragement or comfort and done out of love, while not dwelling on the past, but on the present, while looking towards the future. We need to have practical unity.** Ephesians 4:29, "Let no corrupt communication come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give peace to those who hear." The God's Word translation says, "Don't say anything that would hurt another. Instead speak only what is good and useful for improvement."

Ephesians 4:17 - Ephesians 5:21 ~ ~ **"17 Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. 18** They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. **19** They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. **20** But that is not the way you learned Christ! — **21** assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him,

as the truth is in Jesus, **22** to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, **23** and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, **24** and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. **25** Therefore, having **put away falsehood**, let each one of you **speak the truth** with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. **26 Be angry and do not sin**; do not let the sun go down on your anger, **27** and **give no opportunity to the devil**. **28** Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, **doing honest work with his own hands**, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need. **29** Let **no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear**. **30** And **do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God**, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. **31** Let **all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice**. **32 Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you**.

Ephesians 5: We are to walk in Love:

1 Therefore **be imitators of God**, as beloved children. **2** And **walk in love**, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. **3** But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. **4** Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead **let there be thanksgiving**. **5** For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. **6 Let no one deceive you with empty words**, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. **7** Therefore do not become partners with them; **8** for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. **Walk as children of light** **9** (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), **10** and **try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord**. **11** Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. **12** For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. **13** But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, **14** for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you." **15 Look carefully then how you walk**, not as unwise but as wise, **16** making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. **17** Therefore do not be foolish, but **understand what the will of the Lord is**. **18** And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but **be filled with the Spirit**, **19 addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord** with your heart, **20 giving thanks always and for everything** to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, **21 submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.**"

It is made pretty obvious what would grieve the Holy Spirit here, by looking at verse 30's placement in the midst of the previous verses. Verse **"29 Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. 30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. 32 Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you."** That verse is buried in the middle of verses directed at the Christian believer in watching what we speak and do and making sure that all that we say and do is done out of edification, encouragement and comfort while being done out of love and forgiveness.

Romans 14:19 NLT says, "So then, let us aim for harmony in the church and try to build each other up." Since we are to be eager and desire spiritual gifts, we should try to excel in gifts that build up the church. Prophecy is the speaking of what God is revealing or has revealed. It is spoken to a person or to a people, so that they may grow. It is for their edification, exhortation and comfort. It is for the edification, exhortation and comfort of the body of Christ. I Corinthians 14:3 (International Standard Version) "But the person who prophesies speaks to people for their upbuilding, encouragement, and comfort." (Aramaic Bible in Plain English) "But he who prophesies speaks edification, encouragement and comfort to children of men." (GOD'S WORD® Translation) "But when a person speaks what God has revealed, he speaks to people to help them grow, to encourage them, and to comfort them." (King James) "But he that prophesies speaks unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort."

I Thessalonians 3:5, 6, 7, 12 **"5 For this reason, when I could bear it no longer, I sent to learn about your faith, for fear that somehow the tempter had tempted you and our labor would be in vain. 6 But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and has brought us the good news of your faith and love and reported that you always remember us kindly and long to see us, as we long to see you— 7 for this reason, brothers, in all our distress and affliction we have been comforted about you through your faith. 8 For now we live, if you are standing fast in the Lord. 9 For what thanksgiving can we return to God for you, for all the joy that we feel for your sake before our God, 10 as we pray most earnestly night and day that we may see you face to face and supply what is lacking in your faith? 11 Now may our God and Father himself, and our Lord Jesus, direct our way to you, 12 and may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, as we do for you, 13 so that he may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.**