

### Sinning Against Yourself

Habakkuk 2:9-17

We've seen so far in our study that God can work *all things* for the ultimate good of His people. I can think of nothing worse than to be a Jew, a child of God, in the 7<sup>th</sup> century B.C. and to know that the Babylonians were coming to destroy our capital, Jerusalem, take us captive, and to tear down Solomon's Temple. But that is precisely the vision that God gave Habakkuk, and that is what the prophet recorded for all to read. God says in His second response to Habakkuk (2:2-20) that He'll bring judgment on all who oppose Him.

#### I. There is a detailed description of the ones who oppose God (v. 9-13).

The primary application of these four verses is a description of *the king of Babylon* and his people.

##### A. He lives for self.

"He gets evil gain for his house and puts his nest high" (v. 9); "He cuts off many people" (v. 10);

"He builds a city with bloodshed... (v. 12); "And he mixes venom for others to drink" (v. 15).

Babylon is the place of the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11), an act of defiance to God's command.

By Habakkuk's time (610 B.C.), Babylon had overtaken the Assyrians as the world's great empire.

##### B. He sins against self.

This a great principle and theme throughout the Bible, one that you should remember when you are in line at a fast food restaurant delivering slow food, when you are on the phone with an agent who talks slow and moves slower, *anytime you feel like mistreating strangers or loved ones.*

*"You are sinning against yourself"* (Habakkuk 2:10).

God designed you to live for others. This is who He is, and it is the image of God within each of us.

"Let each of you look not only to his own interest, but also to the interest of others" (Phil 2:4 ESV).

"Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant" (Phil. 2:3 ESV).

Paul describes those without the grace of God: *"For they all seek their own interest"* (Phil. 2:21).

#### II. There is a divine determination about the ones who oppose God (v. 6, 9, 12, 15, 19).

In Habakkuk 2 there are *five woes* God determines on the one who lives for self and sins against self.

A. What is taken for selfish gain will soon be lost (v. 6) – nothing you take for yourself follows you.

B. What is built for safety experiences calamity (v. 9) – your high tower is never high enough.

C. What is taken by force will soon fall (v. 12) – mystery Babylon (Revelation) God destroys.

D. What he sees as his glory becomes his disgrace (v. 16) – *"the cup in the Lord's will come around to you, and utter disgrace will be your glory* (v. 16). A double fulfillment (Daniel 5; Revelation).

E. What he worships as deity becomes his downfall (v. 19) – breathless gods make breathless men.

#### III. There is a delightful declaration for the ones who surrender to God (v. 14).

"The earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea."

God has a purpose for this earth, and the wickedness of this world will not prevail. In the midst of the five woes against the wicked, God makes this delightful declaration about the earth's future.

*"But thanks be to God, who always leads us as captives in Christ's triumphal procession and uses us to spread the aroma of the knowledge of Him everywhere"* (II Cor. 2:14).

God sees all things externally, as perfectly smooth and straight, no crooks, no bends, no valleys, no hills, no mountains! May we as Christians never cease to see all things in this life as He sees them!

Our God brings good out of evil, triumph out of tragedy, light out of darkness, order out of chaos, and calm out of storms. He makes His people a blessing in a world that is filled with selfishness.

Question: *Is your religion that of Babylon or that of the Lord Jesus Christ?* The answer is in yourself.