

# Habakkuk 2:4-20

- The vision that Habakkuk is to write and run with identified in 2:2-3 is now reported in Habakkuk 2:4-5.
- Verse 2:6a introduces an elaboration of five woes for the person/kingdom spoken of in the vision/message of 2:4-5.
- The five woes are then spoken beginning in 2:6b. The five woes are completed at the end of chapter 2 in 2:20. They are listed below.
- The five woes are likely not part of the vision identified in 2:2-3 and recorded in 2:4-5. The five woes are likely an expansion or a response to the vision recorded in 2:4-5.

2:4 – **“Behold, his soul is puffed up; it is not upright within him, but the righteous shall live by his faith.”**

2421 [e]	530 [e]	6662 [e]	5315 [e]	3474 [e]	3808 [e]	6075 [e]	2009 [e]	
yih·yeh.	be·'ë·mū·nā·tōw	wə·ṣad·dīq	bōw;	naḫ·šōw	yā·šə·rāh	lō-	'up·pə·lāh,	hin·nēh
יְהִי־יֵה	בְּאֵמוּנָתוֹ	וַצַּדִּיק	בּוֹ	נַפְשׁוֹ	יָשָׁרָה	לֹא-	עֲפֹלָה	הִנֵּה 4
shall live	by his faith	but the just	in him	His soul	is upright	not	the proud	Behold
V-Qal-Imperf-3ms	Prep-b   N-fsc   3ms	Conj-w   Adj-ms	Prep   3ms	N-fsc   3ms	V-Qal-Perf-3fs	Adv-NegPrt	V-Pual-Perf-3fs	Interjection

1. “Behold” introduces the vision.
2. The vision recorded in 2:4-5 is the Lord’s response to the issue that Habakkuk could not understand. This vision is God’s explanation to Habakkuk’s complaint
3. The enemy or the opposition in this case in 606 BC it was Babylon and Nebuchadnezzar who would soon become king to replace his father Nabopolassar when he died in 605 BC.
4. The Lord explains that the enemy or the opposition’s soul is:
  - a. Puffed up
  - b. Not upright
  - c. (contrary to the righteous man who lives by his faith, or his trust in the Lord)
5. To explain the answer to Habakkuk’s confusion the soul of the opposition is compared to the soul of the righteous.
6. “Puffed up” is *uppelah* in Hebrew meaning “puffed up”, “bloated”, “tumorous”, “swell”
  - a. The opposition is proud and self-exalting
  - b. The proud person’s own character is a flaw that prevents any correction
  - c. Things are not right with a person like this. The only result will be eventual disaster.
  - d. Thus, Proverbs 16:18 – “Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.”
7. “Not upright” is from *lo-yaserah*
  - a. Remember Hosea’s daughter’s name *lo-ruhamah* meaning “no-mercy” or “no-pity” or “she has not received mercy”
  - b. *Lo-* in Hebrew means “no” or “not”
  - c. *Yaserah* or *yashar* /yaw-shar/ means “to be smooth”, “straight”, “right”
  - d. The “puffed up” man’s soul is “not right”  
The “proud” man’s soul is “not straight”  
The man whose soul is “swollen” is “not smooth”

8. The proud man has a soul that cannot be fixed or corrected by the Lord, so that man is doomed
  - a. The proud man presumes he has the answers, the strength, the resources.
  - b. The success of a proud man confirms his false security and becomes a trap, a pit, a snare for that man.
9. POINT: The proud man cannot be upright. The proud man cannot be just. The proud man cannot be righteous.
10. Habakkuk's fear was that if the Lord does not intervene the Babylonians (and, the nations and people like them) will continue to succeed. Their success will continue to inspire them. And, there will be no stopping them. But, the Lord has given Habakkuk the formula:
  - a. The proud are not upright.
  - b. The proud are not self-sustaining, instead they are self-destructing
11. The first half of verse 2:4 is contrasted with the just man or the righteous man.
  - a. The just man knows he needs the Lord and so begins looking for answers.
  - b. The righteous man is not proud because he sees his needs and seeks the Lord
  - c. The righteous man is righteous because he looks outside himself of help
  - d. Thus, the righteous man is righteous because of his faith (trust) in the help he is getting from the Lord
12. "just" or "righteous" is *we-sad-diq* or *tsaddiq* /*tsad-deek*/ meaning "just" and "righteous"
  - a. This concept of righteousness is directly connected to the idea of judicial standing.
  - b. The idea is a person's actions or morals is not official until it is evaluated in a legal court by a judge.
  - c. This righteous standing of a man was decided by the judge, or in this case the Lord
13. Isaiah 5:23 woe to the ones who make righteous the wicked for a bribe and turn away the righteousness of the righteous
14. Job 13:18 compared with Job 40:8 where Job wants a judicial decision concerning his righteousness
15. The order of the Hebrew wording in this verse:
  - a. The proud – not upright is his soul - in him (....the proud will perish)
  - b. The righteous - by his faith - he shall live (...the righteous, corrected by faith, shall live)

2:5 – “Moreover, wine is a traitor, an arrogant man who is never at rest.  
 His greed is as wide as Sheol; like death he has never enough.  
 He gathers for himself all nations and collects as his own all peoples.”

5115 [e]	3808 [e]	3093 [e]	1397 [e]	898 [e]	3196 [e]	3588 [e]	637 [e]
yin-weh;	wə-lō	yā-hîr	ge-ber	bō-w-gêd,	hay-ya-yin	kî-	wə-'ap̄
יְנוּחַ	וְלֹא	יָהִיר	גִּבּוֹר	בּוֹגֵד	חַיֵּינִין	כִּי-	וְאַף
he does stay at home	and not	proud	[He is] a man	he transgresses	by wine	because	And indeed
V-Qal-Imperf-3ms	Conj-w   Adv-NegPrt	Adj-ms	N-ms	V-Qal-Prtcpl-ms	Art   N-ms	Conj	Conj-w   Conj

7646 [e]	3808 [e]	4194 [e]	1931 [e]	5315 [e]	7585 [e]	7337 [e]	834 [e]
yiś-bā',	wə-lō	kam-mā-wet̄	wə-hū	naḫ-šōw,	kiš-'ō-wl	hir-hîḇ	'ā-šer
יִשְׂבַּע	וְלֹא	כַּמּוֹת	וְהוּא	נַפְשׁוֹ	כַּשְּׂאוֹל	הַרְחִיב	אֲשֶׁר
be satisfied	and cannot	like death	and he [is]	his desire	as hell	he enlarges	because
V-Qal-Imperf-3ms	Conj-w   Adv-NegPrt	Prep-k, Art   N-ms	Conj-w   Pro-3ms	N-fsc   3ms	Prep-k   N-cs	V-Hifil-Perf-3ms	Pro-r

5971 [e]	3605 [e]	413 [e]	6908 [e]	1471 [e]	3605 [e]	413 [e]	622 [e]
hā-'am-mîm.	kāl-	'ê-lāw	way-yiq-bōṣ	hag-gō-w-yim,	kāl-	'ê-lāw	way-ye-'ē-sōḫ
הָעַמִּים:	כָּל-	אֵלָיו	וַיִּקְבֹּץ	הַגּוֹלִים	כָּל-	אֵלָיו	וַיִּאַסֵּף
peoples	all	for himself	and heaps up	nations	all	to himself	and He gathers
Art   N-mp	N-msc	Prep   3ms	Conj-w   V-Qal-ConsecImperf-3ms	Art   N-mp	N-msc	Prep   3ms	Conj-w   V-Qal-ConsecImperf-3ms

2:6 – “Shall not all these take up their taunt against him, with scoffing and riddles for him, and say,  
 ‘Woe to him who heaps up what is not his own— for how long?— and loads himself with pledges!’ ”

559 [e]	2420 [e]	4426 [e]	5375 [e]	4912 [e]	5921 [e]	3605 [e]	428 [e]	3808 [e]	
wə-yō-mar,	lōw;	ḥî-dō-wṭ	ū-mə-lî-šāh	yiś-śā-'ū,	mā-šāl	'ā-lāw	kuḷ-lām,	'ēl-leh	hā-lō-w-
וַיֹּאמֶר	לוֹ	חִידוֹת	וּמְלִיצָה	יִשְׂאוּ	מִשָּׁל	עָלָיו	כָּלָם	אֵלֶּה	הַלּוֹא-
and say	against him	a riddle	and taunting	take up	a proverb	against him	all	these	Will not
Conj-w   V-Qal-ConjImperf-3ms	Prep   3ms	N-fp	Conj-w   N-fs	V-Qal-Imperf-3mp	N-ms	Prep   3ms	N-msc   3mp	Pro-cp	Adv-NegPrt

5671 [e]	5921 [e]	3513 [e]	4970 [e]	5704 [e]	3808 [e]	7235 [e]	1945 [e]	
'ab-tîṭ.	'ā-lāw	ū-mak-bîd	mā-tay	'ad-	lōw,	lō-	ham-mar-beh	hō-w
עֲבֻטֵיט:	עָלָיו	וּמַכְבִּיד	מַתִּי	עַד-	לוֹ	לֹא-	הַמַּרְבֵּה	הוּא
with many pledges	to him	and who loads himself	long	how	[What] is his	not	to him who increases	Woe
N-ms	Prep   3ms	Conj-w   V-Hifil-Prtcpl-ms	Interrog	Prep	Prep   3ms	Adv-NegPrt	Art   V-Hifil-Prtcpl-ms	Interjection

## **FIVE WOES:**

Woe #1 – **2:6b-8** –

“Woe to him who heaps up what is not his own—for how long?—and loads himself with pledges!”

Will not your debtors suddenly arise, and those awake who will make you tremble?

Then you will be spoil for them.

Because you have plundered many nations, all the remnant of the peoples shall plunder you, for the blood of man and violence to the earth, to cities and all who dwell in them.”

Woe #2 – **2:9-11** –

“Woe to him who gets evil gain for his house, to set his nest on high, to be safe from the reach of harm!

You have devised shame for your house by cutting off many peoples; you have forfeited your life.

For the stone will cry out from the wall, and the beam from the woodwork respond.”

Woe #3 – **2:12-14** –

“Woe to him who builds a town with blood and founds a city on iniquity!

Behold, is it not from the Lord of hosts that peoples labor merely for fire, and nations weary themselves for nothing?

For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.”

Woe #4 – **2:15-17** –

“Woe to him who makes his neighbors drink—you pour out your wrath and make them drunk, in order to gaze at their nakedness!

You will have your fill of shame instead of glory.

Drink, yourself, and show your uncircumcision!

The cup in the Lord's right hand will come around to you, and utter shame will come upon your glory!

The violence done to Lebanon will overwhelm you, as will the destruction of the beasts that terrified them, for the blood of man and violence to the earth, to cities and all who dwell in them.

Woe #5 – **2:18-20** –

“What profit is an idol when its maker has shaped it, a metal image, a teacher of lies?

For its maker trusts in his own creation when he makes speechless idols!

Woe to him who says to a wooden thing, ‘Awake’; to a silent stone, ‘Arise!’

Can this teach?

Behold, it is overlaid with gold and silver, and there is no breath at all in it.

But the Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him.”