

# Habakkuk 2:5-8

- 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·'ē·mū·nā·tōw	wə·šad·dīq	bōw;	naḫ·šōw	yā·šə·rāh	lō-	'up·pə·lāh,	hin·nêh
יִהְיֶה:	בְּאֵמוּנָתוֹ	וְצַדִּיק	בּוֹ	נַפְשׁוֹ	יֶשְׁרָה	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. “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
2. The order of the Hebrew wording in this verse can be compared like this:
  - 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)

<b>The Proud</b>	<b>not upright</b>	<b>his soul in him</b>	<i>(he will perish)</i>
<b>The Righteous</b>	<i>(righteous)</i>	<b>by his faith</b>	<b>He shall live</b>

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] yin-weh;	3808 [e] we-lō	3093 [e] yā-hîr	1397 [e] ge-ber	898 [e] bō-w-gêd,	3196 [e] hay-ya-yin	3588 [e] kî-	637 [e] we'aḇ
יָנַח	וְלֹא	יָהִיר	גִּבֹּר	בּוֹגֵד	הַיַּיִן	כִּי	וַאֲפֵלֶּא 5
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] yîs-bā'	3808 [e] we-lō	4194 [e] kam-mā-weṭ	1931 [e] we-hū	5315 [e] naḇ-šōw,	7585 [e] kiš-'ō-wl	7337 [e] hir-hîb	834 [e] 'ā-šer
יִשְׂבַּע	וְלֹא	כַּמּוֹת	וְהוּא	נַפְשׁוֹ	כַּשְׂאוֹל	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] hā'am-mîm.	3605 [e] kāl-	413 [e] 'ê-lāw	6908 [e] way-yiq-bōš	1471 [e] hag-gō-w-yim,	3605 [e] kāl-	413 [e] 'ê-lāw	622 [e] way-ye-'ê-sōḇ
הָעַמִּים:	כָּל-	אֵלָיו	וַיַּקְבִּץ	הַגּוֹיִם	כָּל-	אֵלָיו	וַיֵּאַסֵּף
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-ConseclImperf-3ms	Art   N-mp	N-msc	Prep   3ms	Conj-w   V-Qal-ConseclImperf-3ms

1. After saying the righteous will live because of faith, but the arrogant have something wrong inside their soul that will eventually destroy them, Habakkuk describes how those without faith will be destroyed.
2. “wine betrays him” or “wine is a traitor” or “by wine he transgresses” or “wine betrays an arrogant man”
  - a. “betrays” or “traitor” is from *bagad* (here *bo-w-ged*) meaning “to act treacherously”, “to deal treacherously”
    - i. In 1:13 it was translated “treacherous”
  - b. Wine leads the arrogant man further on than wisdom would allow.
    - i. The Masoretic text says “wine”
    - ii. The Dead Sea Scrolls say “wealth”
  - c. Likewise, the Babylonians are led further into their vices by wine
    - i. “never at rest” – always going further to conquer
    - ii. “greed is as wide as Sheol” – always wanting more stuff
    - iii. “gathers for himself all nations...collects...peoples” – always absorbing more nations/people into the Babylonian Empire
  - d. The Babylonians “sin nature” (wine, wealth, arrogance) prevents them from stopping short of disaster
  - e. Interesting, Babylon’s last days were spent drinking wine at Belshazzar’s party in Daniel 5:1-5 -  
*“King Belshazzar gave a great banquet for a thousand of his nobles and drank wine with them. While Belshazzar was drinking his wine, he gave orders to bring in the gold and silver goblets that Nebuchadnezzar his father[a] had taken from the temple in Jerusalem, so that the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines might drink from them. So they brought in the gold goblets that had been taken from the temple of God in Jerusalem, and the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines drank*

*from them. As they drank the wine, they praised the gods of gold and silver, of bronze, iron, wood and stone. Suddenly the fingers of a human hand appeared and wrote on the plaster of the wall, near the lampstand in the royal palace.”*

- f. Ancient historians characterize Babylonians at this time as being heavy drinkers
  - g. Arrogance mixed with wine is like a truck going downhill without brakes
  - h. Or, the Babylonians arrogance was like wine because they could never stop:
    - i. “never at rest”
    - ii. “greed as wide as Sheol”
    - iii. “never enough”
    - iv. “gathers all nations”
    - v. “collects all peoples”
3. “Greed is as sheol”
- a. “sheol” is from *kis-o-wl* which is a form of the word *se-ol* or *sheol* in the Hebrew.
    - i. It’s meaning is “underworld” as in the place to which people descend at death.
    - ii. It is translated as “grave”, “hell”, “underworld”, “hades”
    - iii. The concept is people from all time descend into the underworld, or *sheol*, but there is always large amounts of space. It is never crowded or full.
    - iv. Thus, man’s greed is bottomless and can never be full any more than *sheol* can be full.
4. “Gathers all nations...collects peoples”
- a. This is political conquest
  - b. This is like an addiction to wine...political and military addiction cannot stop.
  - c. All other concerns and interest are set aside to follow the addiction of conquest.
  - d. Of course, this will lead to individual and national ruin.
  - e. The moral consequence of this addictive behavior will come back to haunt individuals and nations (empires)
5. Those who believe the Lord will wait and trust. Those who march to the arrogance of their own human nature will perish. It is a natural result. But, you must wait for it.
- a. This principle is applicable in everyday life
  - b. But, the focus here is eschatological. This principle will eventually resolve everything. It will bring about the Day of the Lord:
    - i. Wrath for the arrogant
    - ii. Salvation for those with faith

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!’ ”**

1945 [e] hō-w	559 [e] wə-yō-mar,	lōw;	2420 [e] hî-dō-wt̄	4426 [e] ū-mə-lî-šāh	5375 [e] yîs-šā-'ū,	4912 [e] mā-šāl	5921 [e] 'ā-lāw	3605 [e] kul-lām,	428 [e] 'ēl-leh	3808 [e] hā-lō-w-
ווי Woe	ויאמר and say	לו against him	הידות a riddle	ומליצה and taunting	ישאו take up	משל a proverb	עליו against him	כלם all	אלה these	הלאו 6 Will not
Interjection	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] 'ab-tīt.	5921 [e] 'ā-lāw	3513 [e] ū-mak-bîd	4970 [e] mā-tay	5704 [e] 'ad-	lōw,	3808 [e] lō-	7235 [e] ham-mar-beh
! עבטיט with many pledges	עליו to him	ומכבד and who loads himself	מתי long	עד how	[What] is his	לא not	המרבה to him who increases
N-ms	Prep   3ms	Conj-w   V-Hifil-Prtcpl-ms	Interrog	Prep	Prep   3ms	Adv-NegPrt	Art   V-Hifil-Prtcpl-ms

1. Here is a list of five woes that will return to those drunk with arrogance and addicted to conquest.
2. “all these” refers to the “nations” and “peoples” who had been “gathered” and “collected” by the arrogant.
  - a. In this case it was the Persians and the Medes who had enough of Babylon’s oppression.
  - b. Here is a list of the things Babylon will be mocked for by the very nations that Babylon had oppressed.
3. The five woes include these three parts:
  - a. “a proverb” - *Masal* – a proverbial saying, a figurative speech or a mocking byword
  - b. “taunting” - *Melisa* – which is a word that comes from the Hebrew root *lis* which means “to scorn, to deride or to mock.
  - c. “riddle” - *Hidot* – this is the idea of a riddle or an elusive saying. The riddle may include words that have a double meaning

## Habakkuk 2:6-8:

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

**<sup>7</sup> Will not your debtors suddenly arise,  
and those awake who will make you tremble?  
Then you will be spoil for them.**

**<sup>8</sup> 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.**

lā-mōw.	4933 [e] lim-šis-sō-wt̄	1961 [e] wə-hā-yî-tā	2111 [e] mə-za'-zə-'e-kā;	6974 [e] wə-yîq-šū	5391 [e] nō-še-ke-kā,	6965 [e] yā-qū-mū	6621 [e] pe-ta',	3808 [e] hā-lō-w
למו their	למשות booty	והיית and you will become	מועזיך who oppress you	ויקשו and will they not awaken	נשקיך your creditors	יקומו rise up	פתע suddenly	הלאו 7 will not
Prep   3mp	Prep-I   N-fp	Conj-w   V-Qal-ConjPerf-2ms	V-Piel-Prtcpl-mpc   2ms	Conj-w   V-Qal-ConjImperf-3mp	V-Qal-Prtcpl-mpc   2ms	V-Qal-Imperf-3mp	Adv	Adv-NegPrt

5971 [e]	3499 [e]	3605 [e]	7997 [e]	7227 [e]	1471 [e]	7997 [e]	859 [e]	3588 [e]
'am-mîm;	ye-ter	kāl-	ye-šāl-lū-kā	rab-bîm,	gō-w-yim	šal-lō-w-tā	'at-tāh	kî
עַמִּים	יֵתֵר	כָּל־	יִשְׁלֹדּוּ	רַבִּים	גּוֹיִם	שָׁלוּחַ	אַתָּה	כִּי 8
of the people	the remnant	all	shall plunder you	many	nations	have plundered	you	Because
N-mp	N-msc	N-msc	V-Qal-Imperf-3mp   2ms	Adj-mp	N-mp	V-Qal-Perf-2ms	Pro-2ms	Conj

		3427 [e]	3605 [e]	7151 [e]	776 [e]	2555 [e]	120 [e]	1818 [e]
ḵ	bāh.	yō-šə-bê	wə-kāl	qir-yāh	'e-reṣ,	wa-ḥā-mas-	'ā-dām	mid-də-mê
פ	בָּהּ:	יֹשְׁבֵי	וְכָל־	קִרְיָהּ	אֶרֶץ	וְחַמְסֵ־	אָדָם	מִדְּמֵי
-	in it	who dwell	and of all	[and] the city	of the land	and the violence	of men	because of blood
Punc	Prep   3fs	V-Qal-Prtcpl-mpc	Conj-w   N-msc	N-fs	N-fs	Conj-w   N-msc	N-ms	Prep-m   N-mpc

1. Similar, memorable sounds:
  - a. 2:6b *lo* and *low* sound the same, but different meanings
  - b. 2:8b *middeme adam* in Hebrew “for the bloody gorings of men” is easy to remember in Hebrew.
2. Double meaning:
  - a. “Your creditors” means “to bite”. This is a good word for “creditor” because he “bites” his portion from the borrower. Babylon’s biters/creditors will suddenly rise up
  - b. “pledges” in 2:6b means “weight of pledges, heavy debts” and also “heap of mud” or “thick clay”
3. Proverbs or proverbial truth:
  - a. Multiplying ill-gotten gain:
    - i. Proverbs 28:8
    - ii. Proverbs 22:16
    - iii. Proverbs 13:11
  - b. Sudden disaster
    - i. Proverbs 6:15
    - ii. Proverbs 29:1
4. Justice/vengeance
  - a. Because you have pillaged may nations, all that remains of the people shall pillage you

## **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.”