

***God's Weighty Reply***  
Habakkuk 2:1-20

1. How do you feel when you see evil win out over good?

At the close of the first chapter Habakkuk is in even greater mental anguish knowing that God will use a nation less righteous than Judah to afflict and chasten His people. With the problem still unsolved we come to chapter two where Habakkuk now faces the greatest moment of his life as he waits on God and muses to himself over the outcome of his dilemma.

**Open Your Heart:** We ask that You teach us, O God, through Habakkuk's godly example. Give us a constant desire to be Your messengers to carry this magnificent gospel to the world.

**Read** Habakkuk 2:1 from more than one translation. *Listen carefully to Habakkuk's words.* Prophets are often portrayed as watchmen in the Bible. (See Ezekiel 3:17 and Isaiah 52:8.)

2. a. Supply the biblical meaning of the term "watchman" from these contexts.

Although the text does not directly indicate it, we can probably assume there has been a pause in the prophet's inner struggle. The mood changes as we examine Habakkuk 2:1.

- b. What attitude do you detect on Habakkuk's part that would enable him to hear God's response to his perplexing questions (2:1)?
- c. Do you see any evidence of tension between God's timing and human timing in verse 1? Explain.

3. What spiritual lesson does the image of the "watchman" carry for us today?

**The Enlightenment of the Prophet—Read Habakkuk 2:2-19, then reread 2:1-3.**

4. a. In what form did the prophet receive his reply from God?
  - b. What explicit command accompanied this Divine communication (verse 2)?
5. What do we learn about this special disclosure from God in Habakkuk 2:3?
6. Why was it vital for this revelation to be written down? *Picture the scene in which this command would be carried out to the people of Judah.*

*The term revelation can be defined as “the act of disclosing something not before realized.” Biblical history is a witness to a developing disclosure of God, His will, His truth and His ways.*

7. Why can the perplexities of God’s dealings with human beings only be comprehended through Divine revelation?

Habakkuk 2:4 contains the first special revelation of this important prophecy which becomes a large part of the answer to Habakkuk’s perplexity (1:12-17). Let’s take time to read and study verse 4 carefully. It is packed with meaning!

8. First, what two contrasting viewpoints on all of life are contained in Habakkuk 2:4?

Note: the verb “puffed up” carries the basic meaning of “swelling,” or a swollen, proud, conceited person—full of himself.

9. In this context who is the proud one (Habakkuk 1:7, 11)?
10. What are some of the character traits of the “puffed up” person God describes (verse 5)?

In Habakkuk 2:4b God reveals the message itself—the contrasting viewpoint of life. In the day of turmoil and destruction, “*the righteous will live by his faith.*” (NIV) This phrase is the climax of the book—the reward for the prophet’s search. It is also God’s answer to men’s questions across the ages.

The Hebrew word *emunah*, translated “faith,” can also mean “faithful” or “steadfast.” However, in this context *faith* and *trust* seem to be the primary meaning.

11. List some of the practical character traits of a person who “lives by faith.”
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
12. Try to imagine that you are living in Habakkuk’s world of foreign invasion and oppression. How would this short but comprehensive phrase, “*the righteous will live by his faith,*” deal with Habakkuk’s perplexing questions, frustrations and fears?

There are three key words in this insightful statement: *righteous*, *live* and *faith*. It is interesting that in the three places where this verse is quoted in the New Testament—in each case a different word receives the emphasis.

13. **Read** each reference below and note the particular emphasis of that verse, keeping the context of the passage in mind.

Romans 1:17

Hebrews 10:38

Galatians 3:11

### **Our Personal Enlightenment**

After pondering how God's weighty revelation, "*the righteous will live by his faith,*" addressed Habakkuk's deep concerns, and taking into consideration the range of meanings this statement holds for New Testament believers. . .

14. a. How has this significant phrase enlarged your understanding of God's way of establishing righteousness on the earth?

b. How has it supplemented your understanding of faith itself?

15. Is there something in your life you are wrestling with for which this verse is the answer?  
*Sit quietly before God and ask Him for discernment in applying this truth to your life. This week at least once a day, reflect on this truth. Write out any insights that come to you during these times of reflection.*

**Heart Check:** Do you ever fall into the category of the proud who are wrapped up in themselves? Ask God how He wants you to act on this thought and move towards growth in this area.

In the *second* portion of God's revelation to Habakkuk (2:6-19) we are no longer looking at a private dialogue between Habakkuk and God, but now God shows Habakkuk five pictures—each marked by a pronouncement of “woe.” This section deals with the contrasting viewpoint of faith—the unbelief of the proud Babylonians, and foretells the fall and total ruin of the Babylonian Empire. **Reread** Habakkuk 2:6-19.

16. For each section below answer the following questions: **What was their sin? Can you suggest a modern day equivalent for this sin? What did God say would be their final end?**  
Verses 6-8

Verses 9-14

Verses 15-17

Verses 18-19

17. How is this section God's answer to the prophet's question about the success of the wicked? In what way does Habakkuk 2:4b complete this picture?

### **Pause and reflect**

This chapter concludes with a beautiful invitation that evokes awe and reverence. **Read and meditate** on the *meaning* of Habakkuk 2:20. Be still and worship the Lord as your Creator and Redeemer!

18. In what ways would the picture of God in verse 20 have been a comfort to Habakkuk? How does it bring comfort you? ❤️ **Store in your heart:** Habakkuk 2:20