

The Vision Shall Speak

Key Verse: *“The vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.”*
—**Habakkuk 2:3**

Selected Scripture:
Habakkuk 2:1-4

THE PROPHECY OF HABAKKUK is set in the kingdom of Judah during the rule of evil King Jehoiakim prior to the Babylonian conquest. Israel’s unfaithfulness to Jehovah had led them to ask for a king like all the nations surrounding them. (I Sam. 8:5) After granting their request, Israel was ruled by kings who were alternately faithful and unfaithful to God. Eventually, Israel became divided into two kingdoms, Israel and

Judah, after King Solomon set up shrines to idols to please his many foreign wives.—I Kings 11:4-12

The first two chapters of the Book of Habakkuk record a dialogue between the prophet and God. Habakkuk asked the Lord, “How long, O LORD, must I call for help? ... Wherever I look, I see destruction and violence. ... There is no justice in the courts. The wicked far outnumber the righteous.” (Hab. 1:2-4, *New Living Translation*) God replies, “Look around at the nations; ... I am doing something in your own day, something you wouldn’t believe even if someone told you about it. I am raising up the Babylonians ... cruel and violent people.

They will march across the world and conquer other lands.”—vss. 5,6, *NLT*

Habakkuk then raises additional questions to God: “Surely you do not plan to wipe us out? ... You are pure and cannot stand the sight of evil. Will you wink at their treachery? Should you be silent while the wicked swallow up people more righteous than they?” (vss. 12,13, *NLT*) As chapter two opens, the prophet models the perfect response for those who look for the Lord’s will in their lives; he is going to watch and wait. “I will climb up to my watchtower and stand at my guardpost. There I will wait to see what the LORD says and how he will answer my complaint.”—Hab. 2:1, *NLT*

Jehovah quickly replies: “Write my answer plainly on tablets, so that a runner can carry the correct message to others.” (vs. 2, *NLT*) The Hebrew word for tablets refers to wooden planks prophets would write upon and then display for all to see. This implies writing in large, legible print so a runner could read it when passing by. Thus, Habakkuk was to write God’s response clearly so those who read and understood the plain message could tell it to others.

The Lord’s answer to Habakkuk is a clear statement that those who rule with evil and cruelty will themselves be destroyed. “Look at the proud! They trust in themselves, and their lives are crooked. But the righteous will live by their faithfulness to God.”—vs. 4, *NLT*

In the vision of God’s plan, he has allowed the permission of evil in the earth for a limited time. However, it is the divine purpose to eradicate evil and its results in the coming Messianic kingdom. This will be the “appointed time” referred to in our Key Verse. Of this, Paul writes, “Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father: To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”—Gal. 1:3-5 ■