

THRU THE BIBLE SYNTHESIS
"Part XXIV: Habakkuk - Hope Amid Massive Injustice And Unrest"

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

There is much **injustice** and **unrest** in our world today . . .

- (1) On Saturday last, while flying near Cuba to aid fleeing boat people, two private, unarmed, American Cessna aircraft with four Cuban Americans on board were shot down by Cuban migs. U.S. intelligence reports that taped recordings showed the Cuban pilots rejoiced at the destruction of the planes. Outrage from the Cuban American community was intense, and the U.N. condemned the action.
- (2) The Presidential race is riling up voters. (a) Stock investors are reacting to the uncertainties of the presidential race. The Tuesday issue of The Wall Street Journal, p. C1 reported that "The strength of Patrick Buchanan and his appeal to disgruntled workers has led some economists to question the future of deficit-reduction efforts." (b) Then conservative radio personality, Rush Limbaugh complained all week long that fellow Republicans were sniping at him because he is not firmly promoting one Republican politician above any other.
- (3) TV show, Hard Copy reports that Princess Diana, on top of her divorce woes, is now heavily guarded in Kensington Castle for protection. She is first on a list of the IRA to be **kidnapped!**
- (4) Bishop Walter Righter, a retired Episcopalian official is being tried for heresy for ordaining a practicing homosexual. The **problem** is that **many** gays who were **non-practicing** in their orientation have been ordained by past leaders, and were Bishop Righter to be **convicted**, that backlog of incidents could split the Church! On the **other** hand, the Church's **BIBLE** outright **condemns** homosexuality!
- (5) In the last year, we received reports from several parties about grave injustices and unrest in **Evangelical** churches in Connecticut. This week, an associate pastor in a Connecticut Evangelical Free Church was arraigned by officials on charges of abusing children in the Church's **pastor's office!**
- (6) In another heartbreaking story from Hard Copy, a serial killer who strangled a young girl to death has taken her **gravestone** and planted it on the hood of a car and scratched a note on the stone that he's **not done killing YET!**

How can individuals DEAL with such massive unrest and injustices that we face on a regular basis?!

(We turn to the sermon's "Need" section . . .)

Need: Many are concerned about massive injustices and unrest: Cuba's shooting down civilian American aircraft, the November elections, grave injustices throughout our culture and even in churches -- what's going on, why, when, and WHERE'S GOD?!"

- I. **As Judah neared judgment for failing in her divine world mission, great injustices and world unrest BOTHERED the godly in Judah!**
 - A. Though God created the world and set man up as His deputy, sin deposed him, and Satan became ruler on earth, Gen. 1-5; 2 Cor. 4:4.
 - B. The Lord renewed history through the Noachic flood, Gn. 6:1-9:7.
 - C. Yet, Noah's descendant, Nimrod, began an apostasy opposing God's rule on the earth, Gn. 10:8-10; 11:1-9; Rev. 12:1-3.
 - D. God thus chose Abraham to start a nation to check this sin, Gn. 12:1-3
 - E. Yet, after many challenges en route, that nation, Israel failed to curb Nimrodian error, itself becoming so seduced by it that judgment fell:
 1. Because of Solomon's apostasy, God divided Israel's kingdom, giving most of the tribes to his servant, Jeroboam, 1 Kings 11:1-13.
 2. But Jeroboam started an idol worship to keep people from turning to Solomon's side. That led later kings to sin, so God sent Jeroboam's nation into Assyrian captivity, 1 K. 12:25-2 K. 17:41!
 - F. Though Israel's fall to Assyria should have sparked Judah to repent, Judah became even more wicked as injustice and unrest permeated the nation. Also, the Babylonians defeated Assyria and threatened military and social unrest in the region, Bible Knowledge Com., O.T., p. 1506.
- II. **Accordingly, God dealt with a godly, concerned and highly sensitive prophet named Habakkuk so that HE and ALL GODLY INDIVIDUALS could handle the injustices & unrest around them!**
 - A. Habakkuk was upset at the massive injustices he saw amidst his people in Judah, and asked God **what** He would **DO** about them, Hab. 1:1-4:
 1. Habakkuk wondered why God allowed violence to occur in the land with abusers seemingly going unchecked, Hab. 1:1-2.
 2. He asked why God let strife between people to go unchecked, 1:3b.
 3. He wondered why Moses' Law look **paralyzed** as the wicked so hemmed in the upright that being upright meant losing in court, 1:4!

- B. God responded by telling Habakkuk that He was about to bring the **vicious BABYLONIANS** to wreak **HAVOC** in Judah, Hab. 1:5-11!
 - C. God's **answer** upset Habakkuk the **more**: he inquired **how** God could send a nation **more evil** than Judah to punish **her**, 1:12-2:1. His question showed a worry about **himself** surviving Babylon's invasion!
 - D. As the turning point in Habakkuk's life, God's **second** answer gave him hope amidst the massive injustice and unrest he faced, 2:2-3:19:
 - 1. God wanted **ALL** the godly to **apply** what He was about to say, so He had Habakkuk write it down for them (& us, Rom. 15:4), 2:2-3.
 - 2. The Babylonians were certainly going to be destroyed by God in **time**, for as Habakkuk had said, they were **very** wicked, 2:4a, 5-19.
 - 3. However, the **godly** like Habakkuk would **survive** the fall of Judah to Babylon that came before this second judgment by living by **FAITH** in God's promise **to that end**, Habakkuk 2:4b!
 - 4. Thus, the whole world was to recognize that **Almighty God** was in **sovereign control** from His heavenly temple: **all** should **hush** from their **WORRY** and **wait** for His interventions in history, Hab. 2:20!
 - 5. In response, Habakkuk's **faith** is revealed in a great closing prayer:
 - a. In **faith**, he asked God to remember **mercy** on the **faithful** as He expressed **wrath** on the **wicked** in Judah & Babylon, 3:1-2.
 - b. Though close to a nervous breakdown for learning of the suffering to come on Judah, 3:16a, in **faith** Habakkuk vowed to **wait** for **Babylon's** demise **FOLLOWING** Judah's fall, 3:16b.
 - c. Thus in **faith**, **during** the coming **devastation** of **Judah**, Habakkuk decided to "be **joyful** in God my Savior" since "The **Sovereign** Lord" would be "my **Strength**" at that time, 3:17-19!
- III. **Habakkuk's contribution to the "thread of redemption" is to ADD to Zephaniah's input that WHEN God saves His godly REMNANT in errant groups, that REMNANT survives by FAITH, Hab. 2:4b!**

Application: *If worried about massive injustices and unrest around us, we must handle the problem by FAITH: (1) believe on Christ to find salvation from sin as a start, Jn. 3:16. (2) Then, in a LIFE of FAITH, (a) confess any sins outstanding for positioning for blessing (1 Jn. 1:9) and (b) live dependently upon the Holy Spirit's enabling (Gal. 5:16-23) so as to (c) TRUST Scripture's promises to address the problems we face, Hab. 2:4b! Then, "though the fields produce no food . . . I will be joyful in God my Savior. The Sovereign Lord is my strength . . . He enables me to go on the HEIGHTS" (to live ABOVE the problems around us), Hab. 3:17b -19b!*

Lesson: *Worry during times of massive injustice and unrest arises out of a BIG estimate of the PROBLEMS and a LITTLE estimate of GOD. God calls the godly to REVERSE these evaluations to survive by FAITH!*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the sermon's lesson . . .)

In 1787, as representatives of the several American states met in Philadelphia to write a constitution, they struggled for weeks, making little or no progress. It was hot and muggy, and the delegates were about to adjourn in confusion when 81 year old Benjamin Franklin rose and addressed the assembly.

Directing his remarks to George Washington, he said: "**In the beginning of the contest with Britain, when we were sensible of danger, we had daily prayers in this room for Divine protection. Our prayers, Sir, were heard and they were graciously answered...Have we now forgotten this powerful Friend? Or do we imagine we no longer need His assistance?**"

"**I have lived, Sir, a long time, and the longer I live, the more convincing proof I see of this truth: that God governs in the affairs of man. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid? We have been assured, Sir, in the Sacred Writings that except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it. I firmly believe this...**"

"**I therefore beg leave to move that, henceforth, prayers and imploring the assistance of Heaven and its blessing on our deliberation be held in this assembly every morning.**" (The Arthur S. DeMoss Foundation, The Rebirth of America, p. 31)

Benjamin Franklin's suggestion was approved, prayers were begun, and the Constitution of the United States of America came into being.

If it took depending upon Almighty God for America to come into existence, today we ought to depend upon God to handle the massive injustices and upheavals we face in our world, our nation, our state and individual churches, families and marriages. We must turn in faith to Jesus Christ for salvation from sin and to the Word of God for direction and hope.

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