

Habakkuk 2
When God Answers And Corrects Me With His Word
Pastor JD Farag

KAPONO: Would you join me as we pray? Lord, we need that to happen this evening, Lord. So would You open our ears and our eyes? Never let us down. You never let us down in Your word, Lord. And so tonight we are here. Thank You for bringing us here.

And would You just guide our focus, Lord? Capture our attention that we may feel Your love in Your word, through Your living word, Lord. And whatever it is that You have for us, Lord, in this book, these verses in this chapter, would You speak to us, please? We ask this in Your name only Jesus. Amen

PASTOR JD: Amen and amen. Wow. How are you guys doing tonight? I don't even need to ask. You just answered me. You can be seated. So glad you're here. Those of you online, we're glad that you're joining with us. Actually, truth be made known, nobody really needed to be here tonight for this teaching except me. Is that selfish? Because this is, this is for me. I'm just going to get that out of the way, as you'll see in a moment.

But we're in *Chapter 2* tonight. And for those of you that were with us last week for Chapter 1, it just abruptly ended. Question mark, the end, bye, and cliffhanger, right? So you know, some teach all three chapters of Habakkuk together in one setting.

Well, number one, I'm not doing that, as you know. And number 2, is because I can't do that. And there's a reason why, particularly with Habakkuk, because there's a certain crescendo of sorts that can be lost, missed if you just package them all together and teach them all three chapters together at one time, because it doesn't give you the time to really meditate on what God is doing in the life of this prophet.

And that's what we're going to see, as you see on the screen, is the work that God's doing is humbling this prophet, Habakkuk. Why? Because a humbled Habakkuk will then and only then receive an answer when he acknowledges, admits to God that he needs correction from God.

So last week I, you know, kind of left it at you have to come back this week. Thank you for coming back this week. I'm going to do the same thing again this week, because you're going to have to come back next week. But this is why the — and what I mean by a crescendo, it's a musical term where there's this building up and then it reaches this, you know, zenith, this point where it just like, boom! And then it all just kind of fits and the lights go on, and it all just makes sense now.

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So we pick it up with Habakkuk asking God two questions for which he did not like the answer. Actually, he didn't even get an answer to the second one. He will tonight. But the first question was God, what are You doing? Do You know what You're doing? Are You seeing this? If You're seeing this, why aren't You doing anything about this?

And so God, just gently, graciously, as He always is, He responds to Habakkuk and tells him, you know, in a nutshell, I know what I'm doing. You don't know what I'm doing. So I'll let you know what I'm going to do in response to your question of "What are You going to do about this, or are You going to do anything about this? What are You doing about this? I don't know what You're doing. Are You doing anything?"

So then God says, oh, yeah, I am. In fact, not only am I doing something about it, if I were to tell you what I'm going to do, you wouldn't even believe it, too unbelievable to be believable. And that certainly was the case, because He then goes on and says, okay, Habakkuk, I'll tell you what I'm going to do. I know what I'm doing. I'm going to let you know what I'm doing. I'm preparing the Babylonians, the Chaldeans, and I'm going to use them as an instrument in My hand to chastise and discipline and beat the idolatry out of My people.

And so, textbook like a child, right, the "why" questions. Why, why, why? And then you answer their question, and now you just got five more "why" questions. And this is what He does. So God answers him, lets him in on what He's doing and that He's doing something about this, the evil, the wickedness, the rebellion of God's people. But then when God tells him "I'm going to use Babylon to discipline My people, correct them,"

"Now, can I ask another question?"

"Yes, Habakkuk, go ahead."

"Um, why? Why are You going to? What are You thinking using a wicked nation to judge a righteous nation?"

And we talked about that last week. So now he's questioning. "Okay, God. Thank You. Now that I know what You're going to do, I don't agree with the way You're going to do it, the instrument that You're going to choose to use to do it." So that's where we left off. Because that question mark at the end of Chapter 1, that cliffhanger, that to-be-continued. [No!] Tune in next week.

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Well, next week is now. So we pick it up. What's interesting is the conspicuous absence of any response from God. He doesn't answer the second question. He's going to, but not yet. And there's a reason, and we're going to see why. So Habakkuk asks the question. I think he got the hint when it's crickets, silence, and God doesn't respond. He's responded to the last one. Well, now I got another question about how You're going to do what You're going to do now that I know what You're going to do.

And God doesn't answer him. So what's Habakkuk going to do? Well, as we're about to see, he's going to humble himself so that he can receive correction. You know what that says? He knows he needs to be corrected. You know the pastoral epistles, as their affectionately referred to, Titus and Timothy, the qualifications for elders. It's unfortunate because in that list of qualifications, there's the qualification of able to teach. That does not mean that to qualify to be an elder, you have to be able to teach. No. What that means is you have to be teach-able, teachable.

You'll forgive me. We're going to get there, get in the text. We'll pray in a moment. Just be patient with me. So this was early on, on the mainland in the — back in the day, as they say. We had a criteria for people that we would either put in positions of leadership or hire on staff. And this went back even before my first church that I planted. This was my sending church. And they had to be — now just wait — they had to be FAT. I'm not talking physically. FAT spiritually, which is the acronym for F: faithful, A: available, and T: teachable. And if they didn't meet that and weren't FAT — I tried. You know, that's my story, and I'm sticking with it — we weren't going to bring somebody into a position of leadership.

Even Paul says don't lay hands on men suddenly. It'll go to their head. Pride will set in. They'll get heady, and you're going to have a big mess on your hands. I tell you, it's true. I got the scars to prove it. So it's done carefully, prayerfully. Because if you get someone in a position of leadership or authority that is not teachable, it is trouble with a capital T. Habakkuk is now teachable. So let's pray. That was my introduction. How are you doing? You okay? All right. Let's pray.

Father, it's all You now. It's on You now, not me. I yield to You. None of me. All of You. Not just less of me, more of You. I don't want to get in Your way. I don't want in any way to say something You don't want said, nor do I, conversely, want to not say something that You do

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want said. So I'm going to submit completely, surrender totally to the Holy Spirit because the Holy Spirit is our teacher. The Holy Spirit is the one who opens the eyes of understanding.

So will You do that for us tonight, Lord, especially with this chapter? Because wow. Please prompt me, by the Holy Spirit, to not miss some powerful lessons to be learned from this chapter. I don't want to overemphasize them, but I neither wish in any way to not bring attention to them. Because this is for me. I need this. This is the minister needing to be ministered to. I want to be teachable because I'm a teacher. How am I going to be a teacher if I'm not teachable? So Lord, it's all Yours. Do as You wish, according to Your will. In Jesus' name. Amen.

All right. Spoiler alert. Right out of the chute, *verse 1*, mic drop. This is Habakkuk now, after the Lord remains silent and answers not his second question about why would You use the Babylonians, of all people? So no response. Habakkuk's response, *verse 1*. **"I will stand my watch and set myself on the rampart..."**

This is the watchtower, the vantage point, the high point where the watchman would watch for what was coming, good or bad. Good news. Bad news. Friend. Foe. They would watch with anticipation. So he's posturing himself on this wall, watching. And that's what he says. And I'm just going to sit here and watch **"to see what He will say to me..."**

Oh, right there. We haven't even gotten the good part yet, or the, I should say, convicting part, the correcting part. Would to God that we, like Habakkuk, would say, you know, I'm just going to wait on the Lord for an answer from the Lord because I want to know what He will say to me about this.

Boy, we just talked about it Sunday, the distractions, the many, competing time demands clamoring for our attention, stealing our time away from the Lord. You're going to wait? How long are you going to wait? As long as it takes.

And then he says this. He says, I'm going **"...to see what He will say to me, and what I will answer [And I want you to notice this word] when I am corrected."**

Whoa. When? It doesn't say "if." It's kind of like, you know, if I've offended you, I'm sorry. Wow. That's the best you got? No, he knows. It's not a matter of if. It's a matter of when I am to be corrected.

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Oh, again, would to God that that would be our posture before God, that we, with anticipation, would wait for His correction. Is not all Scripture God breathed, inspired for instruction, rebuke, correction? And to anticipate it. Ask for it. Wait for it. Watch for it. Wow. What changed? What do you think changed? I think God has been doing this work in this prophet to get him to the place where he would be able to receive. Let me explain it this way.

So more times than not, sadly, oftentimes, let's say, God won't reveal something to us if we're not in a place where we're going to receive it. There's a proverb to this effect, that the upright at heart God will direct. In other words, God is not going to tell you what to do, reveal His will for you or what He's doing if you're not at a place to receive it. Here's an illustration. I totally stole it from somebody else, so you know it's going to be good. Full disclosure so...

Basketball team. The coach calls for a timeout. They come to the bench, and the ones on the bench stand up. The players are off the court. They're standing there, huddled around the coach. And the coach says, "We need to make a correction here." And he points their attention to the scoreboard. He says, "You see what that scoreboard says?"

And one of the players chimes in and says, Yeah, we're down 22-8. We need to make some corrections because we're not going in the right direction." And then one of the players pipes up and says, "You know what? I don't receive that scoreboard." "Have a seat. You, go in."

Did that connect? That's us. You know, we're that player. Don't think, yeah, don't shed yourself in a favorable light like, you know, oh, that's arrogant. I won't receive that. What's the matter with you? What are you talking about? We're down 22-8. You don't receive it? Get out of here! How ridiculous. How absurd. And you know we do that with God.

"We need to make some corrections."

"I don't receive it."

"Have a seat. Don't call Me. I'll call you."

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So now it gets better. This is, I mean, we haven't even gotten to *verse 2*. Well, we'll get there. I want you to pay particular attention to the word **"when"** and what follows with the word **"then."** Now watch this. **"...when I am corrected. Then the Lord answered me..."**

Oh, wow. Well, we'll finish *verse 2* but I can't move on unless I point this out because it's when I'm willing to be corrected, it's then that the Lord responds. Unless and until I am at the place when I am willing to receive correction, then the Lord says, all right.

"Then the Lord answered me." When? **"Then the Lord answered me and said, [And this is just off the charts] "Write [This is the Word of God] the vision and make it plain on tablets, that he may run who reads it."**

Now, this can have perhaps a twofold meaning. Run to take the Word and spread the Word, the word of God. The word of God. And it could also mean you're going to read it and go, ho! Babylon's going to come, and I'm out of here and I'm gonna run. So **"Write the vision and make it plain on tablets, that he may run who reads it. For the vision [Verse 3] is yet for an appointed time."**

Moad in the Hebrew. It's the same word in my native tongue of Arabic. It's the time that is set and appointed, an appointment. The appointment's been set at the appointment time, the appointed time. **"But at the end it will speak, and it will [Now, why would God say this?] it will not lie."**

Why would God say it will not lie? Because think about it. Just because God hasn't done what you thought He should have done, or when you thought He should have done it, the way you thought He should have done it, you stopped believing it. Maybe it's not true. And now He's going to hit it head on because this is a big problem.

And this is so apropos for us today. Again, I'm glad you're here, but you didn't need to come. This is for me. I'm taking one for the team, you know. **"Though it tarries, wait for it."**

(Deep sigh) Not again. "God, you know I hate to wait." "That's why I'm going to make you wait." Because, you see, just because it hasn't happened [*I'm going to use that word again*] yet. I don't like that word because "yet" is roommates with "wait" because it hasn't happened yet.

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So here's us. And don't get all spiritual on me now. We're like, well, it hasn't happened yet, so it's probably not going to happen. Well, Peter addresses that. We're going to talk about that a little bit on Sunday in the Prophecy Update. God is not slow concerning His promise. He's not subject to time. He's the God of time and lives outside of time. And this, a thousand years for man is like one day to God, that is actually profound if you really understand it.

Because time is relative. And God doesn't dwell in time, nor is He subject to time. He dwells in eternity. So for us, though, this has taken a long time, and I just have to wait because it hasn't happened yet. But watch what God does here. And I think this is a word, certainly for me, but for maybe someone here tonight or watching online. **"...wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry."** *[Delay]*

Well, it seems to me like You're taking Your own sweet time. I'm starting to lose heart here. This thing is so long. And I'm getting mocked about it too, by the way, if you haven't noticed. No, I did notice. That's why I inspired Peter to write what he wrote. And it's going to get worse, by the way, because that's actually a prophecy about the last days. And we're in the last days, and it's going to get worse. So have a nice evening.

But don't miss this because this is our problem. Because it hasn't happened yet, because we have to wait, we start doubting. And so God, in response, in His grace is reassuring. You don't think God knows your heart? I mean, you perhaps heard it said or even yourself said something along the lines of, you know, I'm starting to give up here. This is taking too long. I don't think it'll ever happen.

And you can just put it into whatever context fits or applies. In a sense, that's what God is saying here, is that yeah, so I know that you're starting to doubt that it will happen, but I just want to reassure you that just because it hasn't happened yet in your time, on your calendar, in your way, doesn't mean it's not going to happen. "Yeah, but why so long?" "Oh, it's not long." If a thousand years is like a day to the Lord and the creation of Adam was approximately 6000 years ago — let this sink in. This is not hyperbole.

God created Adam six days ago. Is that Friday? And we're like, here, what's taking so long? And God's like, pfff! It's been like six days, man. What's the matter with you? Oh, for you it seems like a long time, and it hasn't happened yet. But it will. It will surely come. Here's

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maybe a takeaway. You might be dealing with a situation in your life where you're still waiting, waiting, waiting, waiting, (Snoring sound) waiting some more. Hurry up and wait. An oxymoron. And we misinterpret that as maybe God is not going to bring it to pass.

You know, listen; God knows us better than we will ever know ourselves. He knows our hearts. We don't know our hearts. No man knows the heart. Jeremiah says, I'll tell you a little bit about the heart, what you can know about the heart. It's deceitfully and desperately wicked. Incurable. Terminal. Beyond hope. That's why we need a new heart. We need God's heart.

And then he says — and this — it's like, you had to say that? Yeah, because the Holy Spirit inspired me. It's God breathed, human author. Nobody can even know it. Now that's bad when your heart has deceived you, and you believe it, and you don't even know that you believed your deceitful heart that's deceived you. Was that too much? I think you got the point. Let not — that was a whole Update too.

“Let [Keyword] not yourselves or anyone deceive you.” **“Let”** The inference? We let ourselves be deceived. Sometimes we let ourselves be deceived by ourselves. We don't need any help. You don't have to try to deceive me. I'm doing a great job on my own deceiving myself. Thank you very much, though. So it is deceptive. It's false. It's not true. **“It will surely come, it will not tarry.”** You might think it will and is, but it will not.

Are we good? Oh, it gets even better, because now God is — remember now, this is the written word of God, and we have it right here. The word of God. This is the word of God, the written word of God. That's going to come into play in a minute. But God wants Habakkuk to write His words.

And He says, *verse 4*, basically this. There's going to be one of two responses to My word, the word of God. **“Behold the proud, his soul is not upright in him.”** Translated: He will reject it. He won't receive it. He won't be corrected by it. He won't take heed to it. Okay. **“But [Watch this] the just shall live by his faith.”**

Boom! Where have you heard this before? What's faith? **“The things hoped for, the evidence [Evidence, strong word] of that which is not yet seen.”** [*Yet seen*]

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We can't see it. That's next week, by the way. Okay, this is all you're getting out of me. Chapter 3. We must just trust God in our finite sight. We don't live by sight. We live by faith. Faith is the antithesis of sight. And everything in our sin nature our adamic nature, our human nature, the flesh chafes at this.

Because if you really think about it, in Chapter 1, what Habakkuk is asking God is, I want to see what You're doing. Oh, you don't trust Me? Oh, you don't think that I see? You just want to see if I see? Here's another one. Just, you know, bear with me. Do you realize that when we're with Him, caught up to meet Him in the air, which, by the way, things are looking is sooner than we might realize. Hallelujah! Do you realize we're not going to need faith anymore? It's served its purpose.

Peter talks about it. Why would you have faith or hope in something that you've already got? No. This is the evidence of what you'll get to see. But when your faith is turned to sight, no need for faith. It's fulfilled its purpose because now I see. Wait a minute, Pastor. Seeing is believing. False. Jesus said believe, and you will see. Belief. Faith. Trust. And you're going to have to live like that. You're going not to live by that.

So two responses. The proud, the arrogant, the unteachable, the uncorrectable: they're too proud. They're going to reject it. But the just, justified, righteous: they're going to trust God by faith, and live trusting God by faith. Okay, now I need to get me some of that faith.

Where can I get me some of that? I'm so glad you asked. I think it's *Romans 10:17* where Paul, by the Spirit says — now you're going to have to stay with me on this because he says, **“Faith comes by hearing...”**

Stop. That's the principle. What's the principle? Whatever you're hearing is what you will begin to believe in and put your faith in. Because that faith came by that hearing. Then he qualifies it. So like, in other words, if you're only hearing rubbish, then you believe it and you put your trust in it. And that's where your faith comes from and that's where your faith is in. Because that's the principle. **“Faith comes by hearing.”** The more you hear it, the more you have faith in it. Now, this is not a redundant redundancy because in *Romans 10:17*, he says, **“...and hearing by the word of God.”**

Boom! Did you catch that? So again, just hang in there with me. I'm speaking for myself. When my faith starts to wane and weaken and falter, I have to confess to you that I know

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why. It's because I have not heard the word of God, so my faith has not been built up. So why do you think it is that God would have Habakkuk the prophet write the word of God? Because that's how faith comes, by hearing the word of God. And that's what he's going to do. This is God's word.

And God, again, ever so gently, in His grace, His love, His mercy, knows, man, you know, Habakkuk, My beloved prophet, is doubting. He's waning. He's wavering. So he needs the Word, and I'm going to give it to him because his faith is wavering, and I need him to be strengthened in his faith, which only comes by hearing the word of God.

Now, if your faith is not in God, it's in something else, then I can pretty much assume that whatever that something else is, is what you've been hearing. That's why the delineation, the distinction between not just hearing — faith comes by hearing — but it's the hearing of the Word of God. And so here's My word, Habakkuk. Write it down so people can hear. So that's where they can get their faith. And you'll be first in line. This is God's word, the word of God, written. It's explicit. We just read it. Habakkuk, write this down. Write what down? My word, God's word. This is God's word. He wrote it, the written word of God, logos.

So *verse 5*. **“Indeed, because he transgresses...”** Now we're talking about Babylon here. Because remember, that was the question on the table: How is it that You could justify using a more wicked nation to judge a nation who is more righteous? Which we actually argued is the opposite that's true, because really, Babylon was not more wicked than God's people. In fact, God's people could arguably have been more wicked than the Babylonians. Why?

Because they were God's people. They served the true and living God. They were sinning against God. The Babylonians, I mean, they didn't know any better. I mean, they're not sinning. Well, who are they sinning against? They're not God's people. They just do what wicked, sinful people do: Sin.

But My people who are called by My name; you're held to a higher righteous standard, and you have sinned greatly by that standard. So number one, I'm not using a more wicked nation to discipline a more righteous people. And I don't want to get ahead of myself, but I'm actually going to take care of that too.

So **“...he is a proud man, [Now this is, some believe, referring to King Nebuchadnezzar] and he does not stay at home. Because he [Or it could be just broadly speaking] Because he**

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enlarges his desire as hell, and he is like death, and cannot be satisfied, he gathers to himself all nations and heaps up for himself all peoples. *[You gotta know that Babylon was wicked and evil to the core, through and through] [Verse 6] [God's word]* **“Will not all these take up a proverb against him, and a taunting riddle against him, and say, ‘Woe to him who increases what is not his— how long? And to him who loads himself with many pledges’? Will not [Verse 7] your creditors rise up suddenly? Will they not awaken who oppress you? And you will become their booty. [Their spoil, their take] [Verse 8] [Here's why] Because you have plundered many nations, all the remnant of the people shall plunder you, because of men’s blood and the violence of the land and the city, and of all who dwell in it. “Woe to him who covets evil gain for his house, that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of disaster! You give [Verse 10] shameful counsel to your house, cutting off many peoples, and sin against [Now watch this] your [Own] soul.”**

It gets worse. You know, you live by the sword, you die by the sword. What's that other saying? I know I'm butchering them, but whatever. You know, the roosters, the hens come. The rooster comes home to roost? That's not it, is it? Okay. Just grace. Grace. Chickens come home to roost. Is that it? Oh, thank You, Jesus. Hallelujah. You reap what you sow. Now *verse 11* is interesting. **“For the stone will cry out from the wall, and the beam from the timbers will answer it. [Well, I'd like to be a fly on that wall] [Verse 12] “Woe to him who builds a town with bloodshed, who establishes a city by iniquity!”**

Again, speaking of Babylon. So what's God doing here? He's writing His word. This is the word of God for Habakkuk, chiefly, to renew his faith, which we're going to talk about next week, because he's got to rely on, live by faith, not sight. You can't see it, and I couldn't show it to you anyway. How can infinite let you — how can infinite let you, as finite, see infinite? No can.

So this is, again, he's responding to his question only when Habakkuk humbles himself and waits to be corrected, taught, redirected. Then God says, game on. The word of God, write it down, because that's where the faith is going to come that you're going to need to rely upon. So yeah, I'm going to take care of the Babylonians.

And notice how this is God's way of saying, you don't think that I see everything? Because really, you were sort of questioning Me, doubting whether or not I was seeing what was

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happening. And even in Chapter 1, You cannot — You're so holy, You cannot behold evil with approval, nor can You turn a blind eye. So what exactly are You doing? Are You seeing this? Are they getting away with this?

God's like, oh, Habakkuk. Habakkuk. Habakkuk. Habakkuk. You know when your parents said your name more than once, you knew it was bad. You don't think I see? Oh, I see. I see everything. I know everything. What you see is pff! compared to what I see. And you're asking Me if I'm seeing this? What's the matter with you?

Okay, I may have taken that too far, but this is God's response. Do I see this? Well, let Me tell you what I'm seeing. So He starts off with the bloodiness, the greediness, the wickedness, the violence. And He's going to — it's going to get even more graphic.

“Behold, [Verse 13] is it not of the Lord of hosts that the peoples labor to feed the fire, and nations weary themselves in vain? For the...”

Now this, *verse 14*, is almost at first read seemingly out of place. But what God's doing here is He's contrasting the kingdom of unrighteousness with His eternal kingdom of righteousness.

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

Habakkuk, listen, I see the end from the beginning. You know, we have this phrase that people often use: You know, they're forward thinkers. Wow! Well, I don't know who you think you are, you forward thinker, but I serve a God who knows everything and knows the end from the beginning. And it's going to exactly happen exactly the way He said it would. What do you think about that? Talking about forward thinking. This is the Millennium, of course.

Verse 15. This is — we're back in Babylon. Did you get whiplash on that one? **“Woe to him who gives drink to his neighbor, pressing him to your bottle, even to make him drunk, that you may look on his nakedness! [I'm not even going to —] [I asked the Lord for permission to not expound on this] [“even to make him drunk, that you may look on his nakedness!”] You are filled with shame instead of glory. [This is sexual immorality] You also—drink! And be exposed as uncircumcised!”**

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Circumcision was a symbolism of the cutting away of the flesh. No flesh is going to glory in His presence.

“The cup of the Lord’s right hand will be turned against you, and utter shame will be on your glory.”

Listen, Habakkuk, I'm going to use Babylon, yes, as wicked as they are, as evil as they are, as the instrument of My hand to judge My people. But then when I'm done, I'm going to judge them.

“For the violence [Verse 17] done to Lebanon will cover you, and the plunder of beasts which made them afraid, because of men’s blood and the violence of the land and the city, and of all who dwell in it.”

You gotta know that Babylon violently, ruthlessly would take and instill such terror before they would take a city and the land and the people. Verse 18. You'll forgive me for the humor I see in this.

But verse 18, **“What prophet is the image, [Because now we're going to idolatry] [These images, wooden images] that its maker should carve it, the molded image, a teacher of lies, that the maker of its mold should trust in it, to make mute idols?”**

Meaning they don't talk. And you're trusting in...they can't even talk? That's what sin does, by the way. There is a corrupting component, if I can say it like that. When we just got done reading that they're sinning against their own soul, they're actually causing irreparable damage to themselves. Sin destroys. It destroys the mind. It destroys the body. It destroys the spirit.

You know that saying, and I think it's worth repeating. “Sin is not bad because it's forbidden. No. Sin is forbidden because it's bad.” The tender commandments from a loving, tender, heavenly Father who says, no! Don't do that! I can't stand to watch the damage it will cause to you. I love you. I love you too much to see you suffer needlessly the consequences of your folly and your sin and your disobedience. I mean, the first two are right here.

And, you know, don't make any graven images. Well, check that box. Don't bow down and worship it, trust in it. I'll check that box. But, you know, the first five and the second five are actually a foreshadow, a type of the cross. Because the first five are about loving God with

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all your heart, soul, mind, body, strength. That's vertical. The second are loving your neighbor as yourself, horizontal in the shape of a cross, fulfilled by the only One who could on that cross. He didn't abolish it, didn't do away with it, not one jot, not one tittle. No, He fulfilled it. Because there's no way we could. We already blew it.

So here comes Jesus. He says, well, I'll do it. So I'll fulfill it because you can't. And I'll make you a deal. Sorry if this is crass. I will become sin for you so you can become righteous, the righteousness of God. I don't even have to think about that. Where do I sign? No need. He signed it in His blood, for us, instead of.

So back to these humorous — it gets kind of funny here. **“Woe to him [Verse 19; we’re almost done] who says to wood, ‘Awake!’ To silent stone, ‘Arise! It shall teach!’ Behold, it is overlaid with gold and silver, yet in it there is no breath at all.”**

Okay, let me have this one. I mean, can you please use your God-given humor and God-given imagination with me on this? I mean, picture this. Here's their wood idol, and it can't talk. And they say, hey, wake up! Talk. Okay, I guess they're still sleeping. Let's go to the stone. Stone, arise! Teach. Nothing happens. And then notice this. They overlay these wood idols and stone idols that they made in their own image with bling. No, that's what it says. I'm trying to modernize it. Gold and silver. I can't even imagine. What did they do, put like gold chains around them or something? Arise! Teach. Wood, wake up, speak.

Well, if they could speak, you know what they would say? I'm a piece of wood. I mean, thanks for the bling, but I'm wood. The stone can't speak. You're going to be waiting around a long time. You're going to grow old. Your clothes are going to go out of style and all that, you know, they — they can't, and if they could, they would say, You fool! You fool. I'll keep the bling. But you're still a fool. I can't. I'm a stone. Not stoned. That's different. I'm a stone. I'm not a god. I can't speak. I can't do anything. All I can do is just be a stone. I'm wood. All I can do is just be a wood. Because that's what a wood is, wood.

Now verse 20 and we'll close. **“But...” [And this is so cool] [I love to end a chapter like this] “But the Lord is in His holy temple. [Shhh!] Let all the earth keep silence before Him.”**

That's it. Final word. The Lord rules over all and overrules all and will have the final word on all. And I have spoken, and it is written. Now silence! Okay. Well, God, You more than

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answered my questions. I have no more questions. Any more questions? Nope. I'm good, I'm good. I think I'll remain silent. Good idea.

I think of that proverb that says, **“With many words, transgression is unavoidable.”** This is why this is for me. With many words transgression is unavoidable? Shoot me now. Many words transgression is unavoidable. There's no way I can avoid transgression and sin if my words are many. And then I think about Ecclesiastes. This doesn't help. **“You are God in heaven. Here is men on earth. Let my words be few.”**

That's why I started out the way I did. You didn't need to come tonight. This was for me. I'm not a man of few words. You know how they say that of some people, “Oh, he's a man of few words.” Wow. He's also probably a man of few transgressions. Well, let's flip that around. He's a man of many words. Well, then he's probably also a man of many transgressions.

But there's this heavenly hush and rightfully so. Not forced. It's just the, for lack of a better way of saying it, the supernatural response to the holiness of God seated on His throne in His holy temple. What are you going to say? You're speechless.

You ever been speechless? I've never been speechless. Maybe once. And it was a miracle. I don't remember what happened, but my wife enjoyed it for the short time it lasted. You know, she said, “You know, I always thought I would marry the strong, silent type.” I'm sorry. Well, she's still married to me 37 years later. So I guess I must have somehow won her over in a different way. Certainly not my many words.

But, no, this a — this is no words. Silence. You know what else it is? And I'm done. I think it's God's way of saying, you know what, Habakkuk? That's all I'm going to say. And that's all you're going to say too. Why? Because that's all you need to know. I can't go beyond this point, and you wouldn't be able to handle it even if I could.

You know when you don't know, you fall back on what you do know. And that's where faith comes in, isn't it? You don't know. You can't see. So what are you going to do? I just got to trust God by faith. I hope somehow, some way, through my fumbling and bumbling, that God broke through to you concerning being correctable, humble, teachable. Boy, how about we leave it like this?

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And this is for me too, me especially. Why don't we just try? Try. See. Try. See. Get quiet. Remain silent. Wait with anticipation and watch and see what the Lord will say when, not if, He corrects you. Then hold on because God's been waiting on standby. It's almost like you can hear the heavenly ghost going — the heavenly host going, he said it! Let's go! Finally! It's about time. What took you so long? You thick-headed, stubborn — I know you know nothing of this — stubborn, obstinate. I can't get through to you, so I gotta break you to get your attention so you'll receive and be teachable.

You know you can learn the easy way or learn the hard way. I know nothing of learning the easy way. I would love nothing more than to learn from your sins vicariously, by proxy. Is that bad? You know I see you suffer the consequences of your sin; I'm like, I ain't doing that. Well, that would be the easy way.

In fact, that's actually what God's intended purpose was in His word in the Old Testament. You know, learn from other's mistakes. Well, I don't learn that way. I gotta learn the hard way. We call it the school of hard knocks. I know, I'm done, but... almost. The school of hard knocks. You know, there's sometimes — I think of what David wrote in the Psalms. **“Blows cleanse away evil.”** Sometimes that's what it takes. How about Psalm 119? We bring it up often. **“It was good that I was afflicted. [Because I wasn't teachable] [I was going astray] But now I take heed to Your word.”**

See, that wouldn't have happened before. So I mean, you can tell. And I won't look at anybody. But you know the body language, right? Body language. You know, you're hanging on every word of God's word. You hunger, you thirst. And God knows that. And God rushes in and honors that and answers that and responds to that. But He won't do it if you're not going to receive it, because then He's party to your disobedience. And that's impossible. He's not going to reveal something to you or answer something for you that you're not going to receive and disobey. Because He knows you're going to. So why would He do that? Because then He becomes complicit in our disobedience, and that's just inconsistent with who God is.

Okay. Are we good? I'm done. Come on up. Stand up. We'll pray and then close. Thank you for your patience. Oh, oh! Don't look at your watches. Wait till you get to the parking lot.

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Father, (Sigh) oh, this was good. This was good. This was good. Oh, I so needed this, and I know I'm not alone. Oh, I wonder how many times we've relinquished what could have been ours had we but been teachable, correctable, to our own peril.

Oh, Lord, let that change tonight for all of us. Don't let us get away with leaving this here and going on about our lives, going to bed tonight, wake up in the morning, and go to work and do nothing about what we heard in Your word tonight. Thank You, Jesus. We love You, Jesus. It's in Your name, Jesus, that we pray. Amen.