

Habakkuk 2:12-20

2:6b –

“Shall not all these take up their taunt against him, with scoffing and riddles for him, and say...

1945 [e] hō-w	559 [e] we-yō-mar,	lōw;	2420 [e] hî-dō-wî	4426 [e] ū-mē-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-
וְהוֹי	וַיֹּאמֶר	לוֹ	חִידוֹת	וּמְלִיצָה	יִשְׂאוּ	מִשָּׁל	עָלָיו	כָּלֵם	אֵלֶּה	הֲלוֹא 6
Woe	and say	against him	a riddle	and taunting	take up	a proverb	against him	all	these	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-tîṭ.	5921 [e] 'ā-lāw	3513 [e] ū-mak-bîḏ	4970 [e] mā-tay	5704 [e] 'ad-	lōw,	3808 [e] lō-	7235 [e] ham-mar-beh	
!	עֲבָטֵיט:	עָלָיו	וּמְקַבֵּד	מַתִּי	עַד-	לוֹ	לֹא-	הַמְרַבֵּה
	with many pledges	to him	and who loads himself	long	how	[What] is his	not	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. “proverb” – **masal** – a proverbial saying, a figurative speech, mocking byword
2. “taunting” – **melisa** – from the word *lis* meaning “to scorn, to deride, to mock”
3. “riddle” – **hidot** – a riddle or elusive saying with paradox or double meaning.

All three are also seen in Proverbs 1:6 –

“to understand a proverb (**masal**) and a saying (**melisah**),
the words of the wise and their riddles (**hidot**).”

Proverbs 1:6

2420 [e] we-hî-dō-tām.	2450 [e] hā-kā-mîm,	1697 [e] dib-rê	4426 [e] ū-mē-lî-šāh;	4912 [e] mā-šāl	995 [e] le-hā-bîn
וְחִידוֹתָם:	הַחֲכָמִים	דִּבְרֵי	וּמְלִיצָה	מִשָּׁל	לְהַבִּין 6
and their riddles	of the wise	the words	and an enigma	a proverb	To understand
Conj-w N-fpc 3mp	Adj-mp	N-mpc	Conj-w N-fs	N-ms	Prep-I V-Hifil-Inf

#3 - Habakkuk 2:12-14

2:12 “Woe to him who builds a town with blood finds a city on iniquity!

2:13 Behold, is it not from the Lord of hosts peoples labor merely for fire, nations weary themselves for nothing?

2:14 For the earth will be filled the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

5766 [e] bē-'aw-lāh.	7151 [e] qir-yāh	3559 [e] we-kō-w-nên	1818 [e] bē-dā-mîm;	5892 [e] 'îr	1129 [e] bō-neh	1945 [e] hō-w	
!	בְּעוֹלָה:	קִרְיָה	וְכוֹנֵן	בְּדַמִּים	עִיר	בְּנֶה	הוֹי 12
	by iniquity	a city	and who establishes	with bloodshed	a town	to him who builds	Woe
	Prep-b N-fs	N-fs	Conj-w V-Piel-ConjPerf-3ms	Prep-b N-mp	N-fs	V-Qal-Prtcpl-ms	Interjection

1767 [e]	5971 [e]	3021 [e]	6635 [e]	3068 [e]	853 [e]	2009 [e]	3808 [e]
bə·dê-	'am·mîm	wə·yî·gə·'û	ʃə·bā·'ō·wt;	Yah·weh	mê·'êṭ	hin·nêh,	hă·lō·w
בְּדֵי	עַמִּים	וַיִּגְעוּ	צְבָאוֹת	יְהוָה	מֵאֵת	הִנֵּה	הֲלוֹא 13
to feed	the peoples	that labor	of hosts	Yahweh	of	behold	[is it] not
Prep-b N-msc	N-mp	Conj-w V-Qal-ConjImperf-3mp	N-cp	N-proper-ms	Prep-m DirObjM	Interjection	Adv-NegPrt

3286 [e]	7385 [e]	1767 [e]	3816 [e]	784 [e]
yi·'ā·pū.	rîq	bə·dê-	ū·le·'um·mîm	'êš,
?	יַעֲפוּ:	רִיק	בְּדֵי	וּלְאֻמִּים
	weary themselves	vain	in	and nations
	V-Qal-Imperf-3mp	N-ms	Prep-b N-msc	Conj-w N-mp

3220 [e]	5921 [e]	3680 [e]	4325 [e]	3068 [e]	3519 [e]	853 [e]	3045 [e]	776 [e]	4390 [e]	3588 [e]	
s	yām.	'al-	ye·ḵas·sū	kam·ma·yim	Yah·weh;	kə·bō·wḏ	'et-	lā·da·'at	hā·'ā·reš,	tim·mā·lê	kî
ס .	יָם:	עַל-	יְכַסּוּ	כַּמַּיִם	יְהוָה	כְּבוֹד	אֵת	לְדַעַת	הָאָרֶץ	תִּמְלֵא	כִּי 14
-	the sea	on	cover	as the waters	of Yahweh	the glory	of	with the knowledge	the earth	will be filled	for
Punc	N-ms	Prep	V-Piel-Imperf-3mp	Prep-K, Art N-mp	N-proper-ms	N-msc	DirObjM	Prep-I V-Qal-Inf	Art N-fs	V-Nifal-Imperf-3fs	Conj

1. “Woe” from **how** or **hoy** in Hebrew is often translated “woe”, but is closer to the English “**Ahah!**” or “**Ah!**”
2. Parallelism in this third woe.
 - a. In grammar parallelism is parallel structure or construction by using successive verbal constructions which correspond in grammatical:
 - i. structure
 - ii. sound
 - iii. meter
 - iv. meaning
 - b. Already seen in Woe #1 and #2
 - c. First parallelism in this woe/proverb is a double a-b-c pattern:

a – he builds (*bo-neh*) - to build

b – a city

c – with blood (*be-da-mim*) – **with** blood

a – he establishes (*we-ko-w-nen*) - to be firm

b – a town

c – with violence (*be-aw-lah*) – **with** injustice, unrighteousness
 - d. Second parallelism is:

a – they will labor

b – the peoples

c – to feed fire (*be-de 'es*) - **to feed** the fire

b – the nations

c – in vanity (*be-de riq*) – **in** vain

a – they will become weary
3. In scripture cities can be seen as man’s effort to humanize God’s plan for man to subdue the earth.

- a. Instead of having dominion over the earth, mankind created cities as a way to preserve themselves and reap the greatest benefit with the least effort.
- b. Cities are often seen as bad, evil and in opposition to the Lord
- c. First city was built by Cain and dedicated to his son in Genesis 4:16-17:
 “Then Cain went away from the presence of the Lord and settled in the land of Nod,[f] east of Eden. Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch. When he built a city, he called the name of the city after the name of his son, Enoch.”
- d. Nimrod built an empire Genesis 10:8-10 and was a forerunner of Nebuchadnezzar and the anti-Christ
- e. Tower of Babel in Genesis 11:4 was man’s arrogance in direct rebellion to the Lord’s command and purpose
- f. Sodom in Genesis 13:10 and 19:24-25
- g. Egypt enslaved the Hebrews to build their treasure cities in Exodus 1:11
4. 2:13 states that the oppressive ruler, Babylon, will receive no benefit from their efforts to build the city. Their labor and weariness for self will be in vain.
5. Fire has destroyed many great cities when they fell and fire will be there in the end:
 - a. Isaiah 66:15
 - b. 2 Peter 3:10
6. 2:14 – In the end it will be God who will prevail.
 - a. Every empire will fall to the next rising empire (nation shall rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom)
 - b. Eventually, as Habakkuk points out, all the empires of man will fall to the Lord and the Lord’s glory and the Lord’s knowledge will fill the earth:
7. In 2:14 Habakkuk draws from well-known ancient Hebrew text:
 - a. Numbers 14:21 – “Truly, as I live, and as all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord.”
 - b. Isaiah 11:9 – “They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.”
 - c. Habakkuk combines Moses’ “glory of Yahweh” with Isaiah’s “knowledge of Yahweh” in the universal covering of the earth.
8. Note that Jeremiah refers to Babylon while quoting Habakkuk in Jeremiah 51:58 while making some modifications:
 “Thus says the Lord of hosts: The broad wall of Babylon shall be levelled to the ground, and her high gates shall be burned with fire. The peoples labor for nothing, and the nations weary themselves only for fire.”

#4 - Habakkuk 2:15-17

2:15 “Woe to him who makes his neighbors drink—you pour out your wrath and make them drunk, in order to gaze at their nakedness!

2:16 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!

2:17 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.

637 [e]	2573 [e]	5596 [e]	7453 [e]	8248 [e]	1945 [e]
wə·'aḇ	ḥă·mā·tə·kā	mə·sap·pê·aḥ	rê·'ê·hū,	maš·qêḥ	hō·w
וְאֵף	חַמַּתְךָ	מְסַפֵּחַ	רֵעֵהוּ	מִשְׁקָה	הוּא 15
and Even	your bottle	Pressing [him to]	his neighbor	to him who gives drink to	Woe
Conj-w Conj	N-fsc 2ms	V-Piel-PrtcpI-ms	N-msc 3ms	V-Hifil-PrtcpI-msc	Interjection

4589 [e]	5921 [e]	5027 [e]	4616 [e]	7937 [e]
mə·'ō·w·rê·hem.	'al-	hab·bîṭ	lə·ma·'an	šak·kêr;
!	מְעוֹרֵיהֶם:	עַל-	הַבֵּיט	לַמַּעַן
his nakedness	on	you may look	that	to make [him] drunk
N-mpc 3mp	Prep	V-Hifil-Inf	Conj	V-Piel-InfAbs

6188 [e]	859 [e]	1571 [e]	8354 [e]	3519 [e]	7036 [e]	7646 [e]
wə·hê·'ā·rêl;	'at·tāḥ	gām-	šə·têḥ	mik·kā·bō·wḏ,	qā·lō·wn	šā·ba·'tā
וְהִעָרַל	אַתָּה	גַּם-	שָׁתֵה	מִכְבוֹד	קָלוֹן	שִׁבְעַתָּ 16
and be exposed as uncircumcised	You	also	Drink	instead of glory	with shame	You are filled
Conj-w V-Nifal-Imp-ms	Pro-2ms	Conj	V-Qal-Imp-ms	Prep-m N-ms	N-ms	V-Qal-Perf-2ms

3519 [e]	5921 [e]	7022 [e]	3068 [e]	3225 [e]	3563 [e]	5921 [e]	5437 [e]
kə·bō·w·de·kā.	'al-	wə·qî·qā·lō·wn	Yah·weh,	yə·mîn	kō·ws	'ā·le·kā,	tis·sō·wḅ
כְּבוֹדְךָ:	עַל-	וְקִיּוֹלוֹן	יְהוָה	יְמִין	כּוֹס	עָלֶיךָ	תִּסּוּב
your glory	on	and utter shame will be	of Yahweh	of the right hand	the cup	against you	[will be] turned
N-msc 2ms	Prep	Conj-w N-ms	N-proper-ms	N-fsc	N-fsc	Prep 2ms	V-Qal-Imperf-3fs

2865 [e]	929 [e]	7701 [e]	3680 [e]	3844 [e]	2555 [e]	3588 [e]
yə·hî·ṭan;	bə·hê·mō·wṭ	wə·šōḏ	yə·kas·se·kā,	lə·bā·nō·wn	ḥā·mas	kî
וַיִּחַיְתוּ	בַּהֲמוֹת	וְשָׂד	יִכְסֶה	לְבָנוֹן	חַמַּס	כִּי 17
[which] made them afraid	of beasts	and the plunder	will cover you	Lebanon	the violence [done to]	For
V-Hifil-Imperf-3ms 3fp	N-fp	Conj-w N-msc	V-Piel-Imperf-3ms 2mse	N-proper-fs	N-msc	Conj

s	3427 [e]	3605 [e]	7151 [e]	776 [e]	2555 [e]	120 [e]	1818 [e]
bāh.	yō·šə·bê	wə·kāl	qir·yāh	'e·reṣ,	wa·ḥā·mas-	'ā·dām	mid·də·mé
ס .	בָּהּ	יֹשְׁבֵי	וְכָל־	קִרְיָהּ	אֶרֶץ	וְחַמַּס־	אָדָם
-	in it	who dwell	and of all	[and] the city	of the land	and the violence	of men
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

#5 - Habakkuk 2:18-20

2:18 “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!

2:19 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.

2:20 But the Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him.”

3384 [e]	4541 [e]	3336 [e]	6458 [e]	3588 [e]	6459 [e]	3276 [e]	4100 [e]
ū·mō·w·reh	mas·sê·kāh	yō·ṣə·rōw,	pə·sā·lōw	kî	pe·sel,	hō·w·'il	māh-
וּמוֹרֵה	מַסְכָּה	יִצְרוֹ	כִּסְלוֹ	כִּי	פְסֵל	הוֹעִיל	מָה־ 18
and a teacher	the molded image	its maker	should carve it	that	the image	profit is	What
Conj-w V-Hifil-Prtcpl-ms	N-fs	V-Qal-Prtcpl-msc 3ms	V-Qal-Perf-3ms 3ms	Conj	N-ms	V-Hifil-Perf-3ms	Interrog

483 [e]	457 [e]	6213 [e]	5921 [e]	3335 [e]	3335 [e]	982 [e]	3588 [e]	8267 [e]
'il·lə·mîm.	'ē·lî·lîm	la·'ā·šō·wṭ	'ā·lāw,	yiṣ·rōw	yō·šêr	bā·ṭah	kî	šā·qer;
ס .	אֱלִיִּם	אֱלִילִים ?	לַעֲשׂוֹת	עָלָיו	יִצֵּר	בָּטַח	כִּי	שָׁקַר
-	mute	idols	to make	in it	of its mold	the maker	should trust	that
Punc	Adj-mp	N-mp	Prep-l V-Qal-Inf	Prep 3ms	N-msc 3ms	V-Qal-Prtcpl-ms	V-Qal-Perf-3ms	Conj
								N-ms

3384 [e]	1931 [e]	1748 [e]	68 [e]	5782 [e]	6974 [e]	6086 [e]	559 [e]	1945 [e]
yō·w·reh,	hū	dū·mām;	lə·'e·ben	'ū·rî	hā·qî·šāh,	lā·'êṣ	'ō·mêr	hō·w
!	יֹרֵה	הוּא	דוֹמָם	לְאֶבֶן	עוֹרִי	—	הַקִּיּוּצָה	לְעֵץ
shall teach	it	silent	to stone	Arise	Awake	to wood	to him who says	Woe
V-Hifil-Imperf-3ms	Pro-3ms	Adv	Prep-l N-fsc	V-Qal-Imp-fs	V-Hifil-Imp-ms 3fs	Prep-l, Art N-ms	V-Qal-Prtcpl-ms	Interjection

7130 [e]	369 [e]	7307 [e]	3605 [e]	3701 [e]	2091 [e]	8610 [e]	1931 [e]	2009 [e]
bə·qir·bōw.	'ên	rū·ah	wə·kāl	wā·ke·seṗ,	zā·hāb	tā·pūs	hū,	hin·nêh-
.	בְּקִרְבוֹ	אֵין	רוּחַ	וְכָל־	וְכֶסֶף	וְזָהָב	תְּפוּשׂ	הוּא
	in it	there is no	breath	and yet at all	and silver	with gold	overlaid	it [is]
	Prep-b N-msc 3ms	Adv	N-cs	Conj-w N-msc	Conj-w N-ms	N-ms	V-Qal-QalPassPrtcpl-ms	Pro-3ms
								Interjection

	776 [e]	3605 [e]	6440 [e]	2013 [e]	6944 [e]	1964 [e]	3068 [e]
	hā·'ā·reṣ.	kāl-	mip·pā·nāw	has	qā·də·šōw;	bə·hê·kal	Yah·weh
פ .	הָאָרֶץ:	כָּל־	מִפְּנֵי	הֵס	קִדְשׁוֹ .	בְּהֵיכַל	וַיְהִי־הָ 20
-	the earth	all	before Him	let keep silence	His holy	in temple	But Yahweh is
Punc	Art N-fs	N-msc	Prep-m N-cpc 3ms	Interjection	N-msc 3ms	Prep-b N-msc	Conj-w N-proper-ms