

“Comfort In Chaotic Times From A Small Word”

Recently the Rotary district governor was a guest at our Minden Rotary Club. During his talk he admitted being tired of all the negative news that spews forth incessantly. Each of us immediately identifies. Daily our news diet consists of unemployment figures, weak U.S. economic growth numbers, the threat of terrorism, riots from Philadelphia to London, missing college students, and children’s bodies recovered from secluded woods.

Life in a fallen world whose moral levies have broken and gushed forth with destructive floodwaters of sin can be down- right depressing! Where do we find hope?

The answer is in the most unlikely source—the small word “for” in Habakkuk 2:14. Writing at the end of the 7th century, during a time when Judah was coming apart at the ethical seams, facing the juggernaut from the north known as Babylon, with nothing on the horizon other than injustice, economic down-turn, evil, and tyranny, the prophet clarifies that none of these horrible things will last (Hab. 2:13).

How could a hearer of Habakkuk’s original message know that things would get better in the future? This is where the word “for” steps onto center stage.

In Habakkuk 2:14 the prophet unveils the reason we know that there is a better future coming. This is the connection the word “for” makes between the promise of the end of the chaos in verse 13 and the reason for our certainty in verse 14.

Scarcely did a conjunction carry such weight and introduce such good news. Habakkuk wrote, “For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.” The prophet repeats the century-old prophecy of Isaiah (Is. 11:9).

If Habakkuk is referring to the same future complex of events Isaiah did, it seems to me that the focus is on the time of the first coming of Jesus Christ (John 1:14; 2 Cor. 4:6) all the way to his Second Coming and the ushering in of the age-to-come. In other words, with the coming of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the kingdom of God arrived. Because of Christ, someday that kingdom will fill the entire earth and the weight, majesty, greatness, holiness, love, mercy, grace, and justice of God will fill the entire earth no less than the waters cover the seas. In other words, the goal to which God is taking this earth is that not one square inch of this terrestrial ball will lack the full knowledge of God’s glory!

Why is there such comfort in this glorious goal? Because it means God will accomplish all he needs to that his entire Church will be present in that glory (Rom. 8:28)!

So, read the paper, listen to the news, but look beyond it all to a more certain future. How do we know? “**FOR** the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.” Praise God!