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https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_grace-theological-journal.php

INTERPRETIVE CHALLENGES RELATING TO HABAKKUK 2:4b

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THE worthy reputation of Hab 2:4b in both Jewish and Christian circles is well attested. For example, "the Talmud records the famous remark of R. Simlai (Makkot 23b), 'Moses gave Israel 613 commandments. David reduced them to 10, Isaiah to 2, but Habakkuk to one: *the righteous shall live by his faith.*'"¹ New Testament theology is also built upon that text's firm foundation. Concerning Paul's utilization, Johnson appropriately asserts: "'The just shall live by faith,' — it is, without question, near the soul of Pauline theology."² Historically, the testimony of the text as a theological benchmark continued to grow. The preeminent illustration of this phenomenon was the text's catalytic effect in leading to the Reformation: "Habakkuk's great text, with his son Paul's comments and additions, became the banner of the Protestant Reformation in the hands of Habakkuk's grandson, Martin Luther."³ Consequently, Feinberg's appraisal of Hab 2:4b should not be regarded as an overstatement: "The key to the whole Book of Habakkuk . . . the central theme of all the Scriptures."⁴

In spite of this reputation, the text has occasioned many critical investigations. These studies range from those immediately associated with the text to those which are tangential; in terms of result, they range from those which are destructive to those which are constructive. This endeavor is intended to be a general survey of the most significant challenges relating to Hab 2:4b.

Since the text is particularly strategic, every conservative student of the Word of God has the theological responsibility of sharpening his focus on the tensions manifested by these studies. Also, this

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¹S. M. Lehrman, "Habakkuk," in *The Twelve Prophets*, Soncino Books of the Bible, ed. by A. Cohen (London: Soncino, 1948) 219.

²S. L. Johnson, Jr., "The Gospel That Paul Preached," *BSac* 128 (1971) 327.

³*Ibid.*, 328.

⁴C. L. Feinberg, *The Major Messages of the Minor Prophets: Habakkuk, Zephaniah, and Malachi* (New York: American Board of Missions to the Jews, 1951) 23.

responsibility cannot be avoided merely because an ultimate resolution of all the tensions is improbable.⁵

The occasion of these tensions is related primarily to the "textual, hermeneutical, exegetical, and theological problems raised by the use of Hab 2:4 in the New Testament."⁶ A corollary to this central concern is the alleged Paul/James antithesis between faith and works. However, when all the scriptural data is synthesized, the arguments are found to be complementary, and a biblically balanced approach emerges.⁷

A larger, concentric corollary involves the scriptural data which may be systematized within the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints. Larger yet is the concentric corollary of divine sovereignty and human responsibility. In all of these cases and from the reference point of an exegetical, systematic theology, the issues are not illuminated by an either/or methodology but by a both/and sensitivity. The key word of biblical and systematic studies in theology must be "balance."

INTERNAL CHALLENGES

It is expedient to examine the text of Hab 2:4b first. There are at least two good reasons for this tack: textual variants are minimal, and consequently, the line becomes a poetical reference point which provides important clues concerning the interpretation of the more difficult lines within the immediate context.⁸

*Textual considerations*⁹

The major textual problem concerns the third masculine singular suffix attached to מְרַנֵּן . Brownlee summarizes the pertinent data:

⁵Concerning a tangentially *but yet vitally related* discussion on the significance of the genitive $\theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ in the phrase $\delta\iota\kappa\alpha\iota\omicron\sigma\upsilon\sigma\eta\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ within its context (i.e., Rom 1:17a; cf. Hab 2:4b quotation in Rom 1:17b), Cranfield honestly concludes that "*the last word in this debate has clearly not yet been spoken. It would therefore be irresponsible to claim that the question has been conclusively decided either way*" [italics added]. C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1975), 1. 98-99. The extended discussion of this problem by Cranfield represents only one facet of the tension related to the present study.

⁶Johnson, "The Gospel That Paul Preached," 338, n. 31.

⁷Cranfield carefully describes the Protestant/Catholic tensions over $\delta\iota\kappa\alpha\iota\omicron\upsilon\sigma\eta$. His recognition of both distinction and concord with regard to justification and sanctification is noteworthy. Cranfield, *Romans*, 1. 95.

⁸In the light of the textual complications of vv 2:4a and 2:5a, the latter reason is particularly significant. Cf. D. E. Gowan, *The Triumph of Faith in Habakkuk* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1976) 45; C. F. Keil, *Minor Prophets*, in vol. 10 of *Commentary on the Old Testament in Ten Volumes*, by C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, n.d.), 2. 73; E. Henderson, *The Book of the Twelve Minor Prophets* (London: Hamilton, Adams, and Co., 1845) 303.

⁹For extended discussions, see: W. H. Brownlee, "The Placarded Revelation of Habakkuk," *JBL* 82 (1963) 322ff.; J. A. Emerton, "The Textual and Linguistic

Instead of באמונתו in Hab. 2:4, G, Aq., and Old Latin read באמונתו. It is no loss that the word in vii. 15 [i.e. 1QpHab] is no longer extant, for in the script of the scroll ו and ׳ could not have been distinguished. The interpretation אמנתם ("their faith") at viii. 2, however, fortunately confirms the 3rd per. suffix. T's קושטהון interprets also the 3rd sing. suffix — the plural number being merely a part of the translator's free representation of the thought. The Palestinian recension reads εν πιστ[ε]ι αυτου with MT against G's εκ πιστεως μου In the N.T. neither suffix is attested (Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11; Heb. 10:38), but the interpretation is consonant with the 3rd pers.¹⁰

*Semantic considerations pertaining to צדיק*¹¹

1. *General considerations.* With the introduction of the semantics of the צדק words, the battle for balance in this study commences. To a greater or lesser degree, every scholar's presuppositions color his interpretation of the data. Generally speaking, Hill's treatment demonstrates commendable balance. Dodd's treatment is based upon a legitimate footing; however, at times, he becomes eccentric to the right. His footing is worthy of citation:

It is evident that this study of the Greek renderings of צדק has an important bearing upon the uses of δικαιοσύνη, δίκαιος, δικαιοῦν in the New Testament. In particular, the Pauline use of these terms must be understood in the light of Septuagintal usage and the underlying Hebrew. The apostle wrote Greek, and read the LXX, but he was also familiar with the Hebrew original. Thus while his language largely follows that of the LXX, the Greek words are for him always coloured by their Hebrew association.¹²

Problems of Habakkuk II. 4-5," *JTS* 28 (1977) 10ff. [note pp. 17-18 for further bibliography]; P. J. M. Southwell, "A Note on Habakkuk ii. 4," *JTS* 19 (1968) 614-16 [a good synopsis of the data with the texts conveniently printed]; F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews*, trans. by T. L. Kingsbury (2 vols., reprinted; Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1978), 2. 198-99; F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964) 272-73 and nn. 195, 196. In n. 196, Bruce outlines the various ways that the LXX witnesses position the possessive μου with δίκαιος. *Ibid.*, 273, n. 196.

¹⁰W. H. Brownlee, *The Text of Habakkuk in the Ancient Commentary from Qumran* (JBLMS 11; Philadelphia: Society of Biblical Literature, 1959) 44-45. Concerning the μου of the LXX, it "could mean either 'because of my [sc. God's] faithfulness' or 'because of his faith in me.'" Cranfield, *Romans*, 1. 100. It is obvious that the active and passive options of πιστις contribute to this ambivalence. For further comment on the diversity of the possessive pronouns in Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, see: J. Eadie, *A Commentary on the Greek Text of the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1869) 244.

¹¹For an excellent discussion of the root צדק, with generally credible syntheses, see: D. Hill, *Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings: Studies in the Semantics of Soteriological Terms* (SNTSMS 5; Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1967) 82-162 [i.e., chap. 4, "The Background and Meaning of ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣΥΝΗ and Cognate Words"]; note especially pp. 82-98.

¹²C. H. Dodd, *The Bible and the Greeks* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1935) 57.

It will be seen that Barr's slightly left-of-center polemic will help to check indiscriminate extensions of the aforementioned principle, regardless of the specific words involved (e.g., צדק, אמן, etc.).

After an etymological survey of the root צדק (cf. Ugaritic, Phoenician, and Arabic),¹³ Hill concludes:

On the basis of these illustrations of early usage it is difficult to assert with confidence a single primary meaning of the root צדק. The most we can say is that they suggest that the fundamental idea of צדק available to us is that of conformity to a norm which requires to be defined in each particular case.¹⁴

Turning to the Old Testament, it is first necessary to note that there is a "two-fold application of the צדק-terms"¹⁵: "The application of צדק-words to Yahweh" and "the application of the צדק-words to Israel and to the individual."¹⁶

Cranfield's survey adequately presents the most significant data and exposes the judicial and ethical subcategories:

Where *ṣedeq* is used in connexion with the conduct of persons, it refers to the fulfillment of the obligations arising from a particular situation, the demands of a particular relationship. As far as Israel was concerned the supremely important relationship was the covenant between God and His people; and *ṣedeq* in the OT is to be understood in the context of the Covenant. The adjective *ṣaddiḳ* is used to describe those whose conduct and character, whether specifically in relation to the administration of justice or quite generally, are characterized by *ṣedeq*. But [italics added] there are passages in which *ṣaddiḳ* used of Israel or of the individual Israelite, refers to status rather than to ethical condition (see, for example, Ps. 32:11 in the light of vv. 1, 2 and 5; Isa. 60:21). The cognate verb used in the Qal, can mean (i) "be just," "be righteous" (e.g. Job 35:7; Ps. 19:9 [MT:10]; 51:4 [MT:6]); (ii) "be in the right" in the sense of having a just cause (e.g. Gen. 38:26); (iii) "be justified," "be declared righteous" (e.g. Ps. 143:2; Isa. 43:26). In the Hiph^cil (and occasionally in the Pi^cel), it means "justify," "declare righteous," "acquit" (e.g. Exod. 23:7; Deut. 25:1; Prov. 17:15); there is also one place (Dan. 12:3), where the Hiph^cil seems to mean "make righteous," "turn to righteousness."¹⁷

¹³Hill, *Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings*, 82-83.

¹⁴Ibid. Cf. Cranfield, *Romans*, 1. 94.

¹⁵Hill, *Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings*, 86-96. This data should be carefully surveyed. For treatments of a popular nature, see: A. B. Davidson, *The Theology of the Old Testament*, ed. by S. D. F. Salmond (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1907) 264-82; R. B. Girdlestone, *Synonyms of the Old Testament* (reprinted; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1973) 158ff.; L. J. Kuypers, "Righteousness and Salvation," *SJT* 30 (1977) 233-52.

¹⁶Hill, *Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings*, 86-92 and 93-96.

¹⁷Cranfield, *Romans*, 1. 94.

The existence of an ethical sense in some occurrences of צַדִּיק in the Old Testament must not be disputed: "On many occasions . . . the 'righteous' are those who, in humility and faithfulness, trust in Yahweh, despite persecution and oppression: those who seek to live uprightly and without pride of heart, depending on Yahweh for protection and vindication."¹⁸ However, the question remains whether it is valid to categorize צַדִּיק in Hab 2:4b as "just, righteous, in conduct and character . . . towards God."¹⁹

2. צַדִּיק in Genesis 15:6. As previously intimated, the judicial implications concerning the nature of any man who is designated צַדִּיק are not always given due credence. To Habakkuk or any godly Jew, the background of God's dealings with Abraham would be foundational: "Then he [i.e., Abraham] believed [וְהֵאֱמַן] in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness [וַיַּחְשְׁבֶהָ לוֹ צְדָקָה]" (Gen 15:6).²⁰ Of particular significance to this study is the observation that the roots of the two key words of Hab 2:4b (i.e., צַדִּיק and אֱמוּנָה) are associated in this important verse from the Pentateuch. Also related to this judicial phenomenon is the delocutive employment of the Hiphil of צַדַּק (i.e., הִצְדִּיק, to "pronounce in the right," "justify").²¹ These observations are germane to a balanced understanding of צַדִּיק (and אֱמוּנָה) in Hab 2:4b.

Gowan believes that the term has a judicial nuance, based upon the occurrence of צַדִּיק in antithetical contexts: "The word . . . is used in a situation of controversy and contrast, to denote those whom God favors."²² This argument does favor a non-ethical employment of צַדִּיק in Hab 2:4b, but it presents a slightly different perspective, one which cannot be ignored in the light of the larger context:

¹⁸Hill, *Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings*, 94. Hill's discussion of the ethical usages of צַדִּיק is excellent. He points out that such usages are inextricably related to the attributes of the Lord associated with the צַדַּק-group of words [cf. the same phenomenon in reference to the אֱמָן-group] (ibid., 92). Furthermore, "the suggested threefold development in the history of the צַדַּק-words may be of guidance in the understanding and interpretation of other religious and theological terms. This development takes the word from an association with man and his life (in this case, the 'righteousness' of the king) to an association with Yahweh, and back again to man, with a richer content and colour drawn from its relation to deity" (ibid., 97).

¹⁹BDB 843. For an extended development of this ethical category, see: Dodd, *The Bible and the Greeks*, 42ff.

²⁰For an important discussion of Hab 2:4 as it presupposes the foundational truths of God's dealings with Abraham (e.g., Gen 15:6) along with Paul's "Christian Midrash," see: E. E. Ellis, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957) 117, n. 1; 119-20. Cf. W. B. Wallis, "The Translation of Romans 1:17—A Basic Motif in Paulinism," *JETS* 16 (1973) 22.

²¹R. J. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax: An Outline* (2nd edition; Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto, 1976) 28.

²²Gowan, *The Triumph of Faith in Habakkuk*, 42. It is fair to assume, however, that Gowan's thesis and conclusion concerning צַדִּיק in Hab 2:4b have been affected to a degree by his desire to demonstrate an antithetical substantive in עֲפֹלָה (2:4a). Ibid.

The *just* (Hebrew, *tsaddik*), the righteous one, is the one who has been vindicated, whom God has declared to be right. There is a legal background to this word; it denotes the winner in a case at law in some of its Old Testament uses. So it is not restricted in its reference to a purely internal quality of goodness which one may possess. It is used in situations of controversy to denote the side which is right. Its opposite is wicked (Hebrew, *rasha*^c), and we saw the two words paired in 1:4 and 1:13 [italics added].²³

3. *The Greek renderings.*²⁴ An important generalization is noted by Dodd:

Where the Hebrew conception of righteousness differs from the popular Greek conception we may put it thus, that whereas for the Greek δικαιοσύνη is always being pulled over from the broad sense of "righteousness" to the narrower sense of "justice," the pull in Hebrew is in the opposite direction.²⁵

In the light of this, it is obvious that the Septuagint's renderings of the $\rho\tau\chi$ -words modified the δίκαιος words. These changes primarily reflect divine and covenantal influences found in the Hebrew word. NT usages basically follow this pattern:

That Paul's use of the words δίκαιος, δικαιοσύνη and δικαιοῦν (and also of δικαίωμα and δικαιοσύνη) reflects his familiarity with, and is to a very considerable extent molded by, the LXX use of them to render words of the *šdk* group is clear, and is generally agreed. . . . But, in spite of the general agreement on the importance of the LXX here, there is far from being general agreement as to the precise significance which these words have in Paul.²⁶

Ironically, it would seem that these observations and clarifications magnify the interpretive challenges relating to Hab 2:4b.

Semantic considerations pertaining to הַיָּהוָה

This kind of life must be understood within its biblical framework:

To *live* is not merely to exist, in Hebrew thought. One is not really alive when sick, weak, in danger or with a damaged reputation. To be alive is to have vigor, security and honor. So this verse does not merely tell us how we can barely hang on to some feeble thread of existence in

²³Ibid., 41.

²⁴See: Hill, "δίκαιος and Related Words in Greek Usage," in *Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings*, 98ff.

²⁵Dodd, *The Bible and the Greeks*, 45. For specific comparisons and contrasts, see: Hill, *Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings*, 102-3.

²⁶Cranfield, *Romans*, 1. 95. Concerning the verb (i.e., δικαιοῦν), he especially notes that "none of the occurrences . . . can be at all tolerably explained on the basis of the word's use in secular Greek." Ibid.

times such as Habakkuk describes; no, it speaks of being richly and fully alive. That interpretation is confirmed by 3:17-18.²⁷

Hill corroborates this interpretation, but with an ethical emphasis:

Man's life, however, is more than simply length of days and abundance of possessions: it consists rather in what he is by virtue of his goals and ideals. . . . The pessimistic outlook which characterizes Ecclesiastes focuses attention on enjoyment, but in Proverbs the ideal is the good life, the life of righteousness. "In the paths of righteousness is life" (Prov. 12:28; cf. 11:19; 10:16); wisdom is the source and means of life (3:2; 8:35), and the fear of the Lord leads to life (19:23). . . . We recall the utterance of Deut. 8:3, "Man lives (יִחִי) by everything which proceeds from the mouth of the Lord" Only by faithfulness, that is, by loyalty to Yahweh and his covenant, will the righteous man live (Hab. 2:4). In these instances the verb יִחִי connotes not only physical survival in a time of disaster, but also living in right relation to God.²⁸

Ethical responsibilities, however, must not be used to distort the ultimate, theocentric foundation of biblical life. The most significant aspect of the Hebrew understanding of "life," is "its dependence on God."²⁹ Consequently, it is appropriate to classify the יִחִי of Hab 2:4b under the heading of the "pregnant sense of fullness of life in divine favour."³⁰

Semantic considerations pertaining to אֱמוּנָה

The significance of אֱמוּנָה in Hab 2:4b and in its mediate connection (i.e., through the Greek rendering πίστις) to the NT references supersedes all the other hermeneutical challenges of this investigation.

1. *The usage of אֱמוּנָה.*³¹ The feminine noun אֱמוּנָה in the OT primarily connotes "firmness, steadfastness, fidelity."³² Of particular

²⁷Gowan, *The Triumph of Faith in Habakkuk*, 42-43. Cf. H. S. Bryant, "The Meaning of Habakkuk 2:4" (unpublished Bachelor of Divinity thesis, Grace Theological Seminary, 1966) 27-29, 34-36. Against this reference being merely an eschatological one, see: R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1936) 87-88. Cranfield combines the abundant and eschatological life perspectives: Cranfield, *Romans*, 1. 101.

²⁸Hill, *Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings*, 165.

²⁹Ibid., 168.

³⁰BDB 311.

³¹See esp.: "Faith' and 'Truth' — an Examination of some Linguistic Arguments," chap. 7 of: J. Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language* (London: Oxford University, 1961) 161-205. Also: ibid., 161, n. 1; and A. Jepsen, "אֱמֵן," *TDOT* 1. 292ff.

³²BDB 53. For a helpful survey in chart form listing every occurrence, the KJV rendering, point of reference, and meaning, see: Bryant, "The Meaning of Habakkuk 2:4," 20-24.

significance is the employment of the word in the sense of "faithfulness."³³ When referring to God, this usage reflects a divine attribute often paralleled with his **קִדְוָה** or his **צְדִקָּה** (cf. Pss 88:12; 89:2, 3, 6, 9, 25; 96:13; 98:3; 119:90; 143:1; Isa 25:1; Hos 2:22 [all versifications from Hebrew Bible]). The word has a passive meaning in the overwhelming number of cases; note the following excerpts from Lightfoot's research:

It will thus be seen that **אמונה** properly represents the passive sense of **πίστις**, as indeed the form of the word shows. . . . Thus in its biblical usage the word **אמונה** can scarcely be said ever to have the sense "belief, trust," though sometimes approaching towards it. . . . Unlike the Hebrew, the Greek word seems to have started from the active meaning. . . . In the Old Testament, there being no Hebrew equivalent to the active meaning, **πίστις** has always the passive sense, "fidelity," "constancy," unless the passage in Habakkuk be regarded as an exception.³⁴

Thus, there would be no debate regarding the significance of **אמונה** in Hab 2:4b if its usage was determined by statistical precedent. For this reason, many would conclude that "²*emunah* seems . . . to emphasize one's own inner attitude and the conduct it produces"³⁵ and that its significance is "constancy in executing and fulfilling the commands of God through all uncertainty and conflict."³⁶ Nevertheless, the usage of **אמונה** in Hab 2:4b could be regarded as transitional and consequently could be construed to bear a double sense (i.e., both active and passive).³⁷ In the light of this possibility, further pursuits are necessary.

2. *The theoretical root* [**אמן**]. After a survey of the cognates of **אמן** (e.g., Arabic, Ethiopic, South Arabic, Syriac, etc.),³⁸ one might be led to conclude unreservedly that "the basic idea underlying the root is that of firmness or fixity"³⁹ and that:

³³Ibid.; cf. usage category 3. Also, see usage category 4 in: KB 1. 60.

³⁴J. B. Lightfoot, *The Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians* (reprinted; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1957) 155, 156. Lightfoot's whole excursus, "The words denoting 'Faith,'" should be studied; it is a valuable synopsis (ibid., 154-58).

³⁵Jepsen, *TDOT* I. 317.

³⁶G. Quell and G. Schrenk, "δικη, δίκαιος, δικαιοσύνη, κτλ.," *TDNT* 2. 177. Cf.: "The idea [in Hab 2:4b] is that of unwavering hold of the word of God against all contrary appearances" (O. Michel, "πίστις," *NIDNTT* I. 597).

³⁷Lightfoot, *Galatians*, 155. The contention that the usage of **אמונה** in Hab 2:4b is transitional and that it actually attains to an active meaning is actively supported and delineated by Barr: *Semantics*, 201.

³⁸Cf. Barr, *Semantics*, 185-86.

³⁹Dodd, *The Bible and the Greeks*, 66. Dodd, along with others, would also argue that "the Greek translators show themselves aware of this by occasionally translating

When a Hebrew heard the various words derived from the root mn , the basic idea that came to his mind was apparently "constancy." When they were used of things, they meant "continual"; and when they were connected with persons, "reliability."⁴⁰

Nevertheless, Jepsen interjects a crucial qualification: "However, derivatives could have special meanings in any given context."⁴¹ This qualification is the polemical standard of Barr:

Even assuming, therefore, that the "ultimate" etymology of words of the root m-n is "firmness," we have here an illustration of the harm of paying excessive attention to the most ultimate etymology and failing to consider what forms were current at the relevant times and what senses they bore in actual usage. Extant forms are not derived directly from the ultimate etymology or from the "root meaning." There is a detailed and often complicated history for each form; the fact that for lack of knowledge we often cannot trace it does not mean that we can suppose it does not exist.⁴²

The significance of Barr's statement is more clearly seen if it is remembered that the Qal perfect of אמן is not attested in biblical Hebrew.

Built upon the above semantic hypothesis is Barr's suggestion that historically there are really two spheres of the evolution of the usage of אמנה .⁴³ The discussion of this debate will be restricted to the biblical data. Dodd's introductory comments are germane:

In the vocabulary of religion and ethics the verb is chiefly used (i) in the *niphal* participle, which bears the passive meaning "made firm," "confirmed," "established," and so "trustworthy," "faithful"; and (ii) in the *hiphil*, which means "to be convinced," "to trust."⁴⁴

On one side are those who would historically relate the usage of אמנה exclusively to the Niphal verbal. Many would argue that in the absence of corresponding substantives for the Hiphil's active sense

the words from this root by such expressions as $\sigma\tau\eta\rho\acute{\iota}\zeta\epsilon\iota\nu$, $\sigma\tau\eta\rho\iota\gamma\mu\alpha$ " (ibid.). However, Barr registers some legitimate objections to such arguments. Cf. Barr, *Semantics*, 166-71.

⁴⁰Jepsen, *TDOT* 1. 322-23.

⁴¹Ibid., 323.

⁴²Barr, *Semantics*, 187. For Barr's polemic against the "fundamental meaning" syndrome which leads to the "root fallacy" complication in relation to אמן , see: ibid., 161ff. He argues against "an illegitimate confusion of theological and linguistic methods" (163). His argument is well taken; however, theological presuppositions are never totally set aside, as illustrated sporadically within his own discussion.

⁴³See his argument: ibid., 186-87.

⁴⁴Dodd, *The Bible and the Greeks*, 66.

(cf. Aramaic **הַיְמֻנְוּתָא**, “faith”), “the substantives **אֱמוּנָה**, **אֱמֻנָה**, represent the sense of the *niphal*, ‘steadfastness,’ ‘trustworthiness,’ ‘faithfulness’”⁴⁵ Therefore, **אֱמוּנָה** would be taken to denote “*trustworthiness*, the frame of mind which can be relied upon.”⁴⁶

On the other side are those who would emphasize an overriding relationship of **אֱמוּנָה** to **הָאֱמִין**. Barr argues that “. . . the whole structure built upon the supposed ‘fundamental meaning’ of the root collapses as soon as real attention is given to the verb *he²emin* ‘believe’”⁴⁷ This relationship (i.e., of **אֱמוּנָה** to **הָאֱמִין**) is developed to support an active sense for the substantive (i.e., **אֱמוּנָה** = “*trustfulness*, the frame of mind which relies on another”⁴⁸). Vitrally related to this argument is the discussion of the function of the Hiphil of **הָאֱמִין**. This is adequately attended by Barr, who opts for an “internal-transitive” function as opposed to a “declarative-estimative” function.⁴⁹

Up to this point, the examination of this semantic debate has not been complicated by mediating positions; however, there are many who rightly contend that construing **אֱמוּנָה** as exclusively passive or as exclusively active upsets a fine biblical balance. For this reason, a mediating position is undoubtedly the preferable way of striving for theological harmony of all the scriptural data. Unfortunately, there are varieties of mediating positions which multiply the complexity of this pursuit for balance. At least two major varieties are worthy of mention. For convenience, they might be labeled lexical (i.e., the *word* **אֱמוּנָה** as it relates to *both* its active and passive historical spheres) and contextual (i.e., the *context* of **אֱמוּנָה** in Hab 2:4b, especially the relationship of **צְדִיק** in its largest context). Presuppositions are also obvious in these mediating positions; however, as previously intimated, this is unavoidable. Consequently, a continuous evaluation of one’s presuppositions is mandatory in order to determine whether they are valid or invalid as measured by the theological totality of revelation.

Eadie’s generalization concerning the **אֱמוּנָה** of man serves as a fitting introduction to a mediating position: “The idea of steadfastness expressed by the Hebrew noun implies faith.”⁵⁰ An essentially

⁴⁵Ibid., 68. Cf. *ibid.* 59ff.; Lightfoot, *Galatians*, 155; and, Barr, *Semantics*, 173, 198, 201-5.

⁴⁶Lightfoot’s delineation of the passive sense: *Galatians*, 154.

⁴⁷Barr, *Semantics*, 164. For some pertinent observations on πιστεύειν with the dative paralleling **הָאֱמִין בְּ**, see: Dodd, *The Bible and the Greeks*, 66-68.

⁴⁸Lightfoot, *Galatians*, 154.

⁴⁹Barr, *Semantics*, 176ff. His argument corroborates his earlier assertion that “the subject of the verb *he²emin* is frequently or normally a man” (*ibid.*, 164).

⁵⁰Eadie, *Galatians*, 244.

credible argument for a balanced conception of אֱמוּנָה may be noted in Keil's presentation:

אֱמוּנָה does not denote "an honourable character, or fidelity to conviction" (Hitzig), but . . . firmness (Ex. xvii. 12); then, as an attribute of God, trustworthiness, unchangeable fidelity in the fulfillment of His promises (Deut. xxxii. 4; Ps. xxxiii. 4, lxxxix. 34); and, as a personal attribute of man, fidelity in word and deed (Jer. vii. 28, ix. 2; Ps. xxxvii. 3); and, in his relation to God, firm attachment to God, an undisturbed confidence in the divine promises of grace, *firma fiducia* and *fides*, so that in ²*ēmūnâh* the primary meanings of *ne²ēmân* and *he²ēmîn* are combined. This is also apparent from the fact that Abraham is called *ne²ēmân* in Neh. ix. 8, with reference to the fact that it is affirmed of him in Gen. xv. 6 that אֱמָיִן בִּיהוָה, "he trusted, or believed, the Lord;" and still more indisputably from the passage before us, since it is impossible to mistake the reference in יִחַיֶּה בְּאֱמוּנָתוֹ to Gen. xv. 6, "he believed (*he²ēmîn*) in Jehovah, and He reckoned it to him *litsēdâqâh*."⁵¹

It is obvious that a balanced conception of אֱמוּנָה in Hab 2:4b will avoid the error of taking the words to mean that one is justified by character. It will also avoid synergistic conceptions of the non-biblical variety.⁵² At the same time, אֱמוּנָה may be conceived of as a "fruit of faith": "faithful faith" or "steadfast trust."⁵³ Bryant, after discussing the active and passive options for אֱמוּנָה and leaning towards an emphasis upon the former, concludes:

It must be carefully maintained that neither the Old nor the New Testament separate faith from its fruits of faithfulness. The distinction between faith and faithfulness is somewhat artificial, for . . . in the long

⁵¹Keil, *Minor Prophets*, 2. 73. "And in addition to this, ²*ēmūnâh* is opposed to the pride of the Chaldaean, to his exaltation of himself above God; and for that very reason it cannot denote integrity in itself, but simply some quality which has for its leading feature humble submission to God, that is to say, faith, or firm reliance upon God" (ibid., 74). For more discussion on the theocentric footing of an anthropological manifestation of fidelity, see: C. von Orelli, *The Old Testament Prophecy of the Consummation of God's Kingdom*, trans. by J. S. Banks (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1885) 325-27; Delitzsch, *Hebrews*, 2. 200; and J. B. Payne, *The Theology of the Older Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962) 314. For corroborations of a mediating position in general, see: Ellis, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament*, 119-20; Johnson, "The Gospel That Paul Preached," 340, n. 31; Lightfoot, *Galatians*, 154ff.

⁵²A good illustration would be the DSS pesher of Hab 2:4b. For discussion, see: G. Bertram, "συνεργός, συνεργέω," *TDNT* 7. 873.

⁵³Bryant, "The Meaning of Habakkuk 2:4," 32, 41, 62. Cf. von Orelli's "believing fidelity" (i.e., a trusting faithfulness based upon God's fidelity; C. von Orelli, *The Twelve Minor Prophets*, trans. by J. S. Banks [reprinted; Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1977] 248).

run they are the same thing. The Bible knows nothing of a true faith which does not hold fast its confidence to the end.⁵⁴

Syntactical considerations

The preposition כ attached to אֲמוֹנָה is obviously instrumental. Von Orelli suggests that the “כ introduces the efficient medium of the preservation of life, as in Ezek. xviii. 22.”⁵⁵ Also, the whole phrase (i.e., כְּאֲמוֹנָתוֹ) should be taken with יְחִיָּה, not with וְצַדִּיק.⁵⁶

EXTERNAL CHALLENGES

The larger context

The book. An awareness of the destructive attempts to transpose major sections of chaps. 1 and 2 of Habakkuk enables the interpreter to identify eccentric contextual associations relating to Hab 2:4b.⁵⁷ The traditional order of the text of the first two chapters constitutes the larger context:

The text, as it now stands, permits a perfectly natural development of the prophet's thought; in reality, the development becomes more vivid, for instead of one problem that perplexes the prophet we have two, and instead of one divine reply we have two. Surely there is nothing impossible or improbable in this. . . . On the whole, the . . . interpretation, which requires no omissions or transpositions, seems to satisfy most completely the facts in the case.⁵⁸

⁵⁴Ibid., 49; cf. 44-49. Michel concurs: “To sum up, it may be said that *he²ēmîn* and *ē²mūnāh* describe a living act of trust in the OT, and also the dimension of human existence in a historical situation” (Michel, “πίστις,” 597). Cf. W. Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1967), 2. 285. Herein it would be profitable to compare the evidence from Gen 15:6/Rom 4:3 and Gen 22:1-19/Jas 2:14-24; etc.

⁵⁵Von Orelli, *The Old Testament Prophecy of the Consummation of God's Kingdom*, 325, n. 2.

⁵⁶Cf. Keil, *Minor Prophets*, 2. 73; R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Galatians, to the Ephesians, and to the Philippians* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1937) 143-44; and the forthcoming discussion of ἐκ πίστεως in Rom 1:17.

⁵⁷For discussions of the major critical conjectures, see: A. Jeffers, “A Commentary on the Book of Habakkuk” (unpublished Master of Theology thesis, Grace Theological Seminary, 1960) 14-17; C. L. Taylor, Jr., “Introduction and Exegesis of the Book of Habakkuk,” in *The Interpreter's Bible*, ed. by G. A. Buttrick, et al. (New York: Abingdon, 1956), 6. 975-77; G. A. Smith, *The Book of the Twelve Prophets* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1906), 2. 115ff.; F. T. Kelly, “The Strophic Structure of Habakkuk,” *AJSL* 18 (1901-2) 94ff.; R. K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969) 932-37.

⁵⁸F. C. Eiselen, *The Minor Prophets* (New York: Eaton & Mains, 1907) 467-68. Refutations of transpositions based upon elaborate chiasmic fabrications are neither

*The "placarded revelation"*⁵⁹

In Hab 2:2-3, the prophet is given instructions which clearly suggest the priority of this *חִזְוֹן* (v 2). These verses "form the introduction to the Word of God, which the prophet receives in reply to his cry of lamentation addressed to the Lord in ch. i.12-17."⁶⁰ Though Keil would include v 1 of chap 2 in this introduction, it is better to regard Hab 2:1 as transitional. It is the climactic summons of the prophet's second lament (i.e., 1:12-2:1).

Verse 2 is particularly significant: "Then the LORD answered me and said, 'Write down [כְּתוּב] the vision and make it plain upon the tablets [עַל-הַלְחוֹת] in order that one who reads it may run.'" Interestingly, Holt paraphrases the last part of v 2: "'so he who reads it may live obediently.'"⁶¹ He, of course, is taking *רוּץ* metaphorically (cf. metaphorical *הֵלַךְ*; cf. also *רוּץ* in Ps 119:32, and the running metaphors of the NT, e.g., 1 Cor 9:24-27, Phil 3:13-14, etc.). This view is at least worthy of some consideration in the light of the ethically climactic context. *הַלְחוֹת* generates most of the discussion which ultimately pertains to Hab 2:4b. It has been suggested that the article implies particular tablets which were displayed publicly;⁶² however, this is an unnecessary conjecture.⁶³ "The article . . . may only designate the tablets which were to be employed for the purpose. It may merely indicate these as definite in the mind of the speaker."⁶⁴

The plural termination has been employed to substantiate a larger scope (cf. below) for this "placarded revelation."⁶⁵ But, the

desirable nor credible. Cf. H. H. Walker and N. W. Lund, "The Literary Structure of the Book of Habakkuk," *JBL* 53 (1934) 360. For outlines and discussions of the traditional order, see: Eiselen, *The Minor Prophets*, 464-65; von Orelli, *The Old Testament Prophecy of God's Kingdom*, 323-24; and Hendriksen's contextual paraphrase: Hendriksen, *Exposition of Galatians* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1968) 127-28.

⁵⁹I.e., Brownlee's appropriate terminology pertaining to this contextual challenge: Brownlee, "The Placarded Revelation of Habakkuk," 319.

⁶⁰Keil, *Minor Prophets*, 2. 67-68.

⁶¹J. M. Holt, "So He May Run Who Reads It," *JBL* 83 (1964) 301. For a presentation of the traditional interpretations of the words involving facility in the communication and/or dissemination of this vision, see: Henderson, *The Twelve Minor Prophets*, 301.

⁶²E.g., T. Laetsch, *Bible Commentary: The Minor Prophets* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1956) 330; cf. Ewald's view as delineated in Henderson, *The Twelve Minor Prophets*, 301.

⁶³Cf. P. Kleinert, "Habakkuk" in *Minor Prophets*, trans. by C. Elliott, in *Commentary on the Holy Scriptures*, ed. by J. P. Lange (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, n.d.) 22.

⁶⁴Henderson, *The Twelve Minor Prophets*, 301.

⁶⁵Kleinert so argues: "The reason that several tablets are mentioned here, and not one, as in Isaiah [8:1], is found in the rich and various contents of the five-fold woe" (Kleinert, "Habakkuk," 22).

plural could also be explained in the following manner: "The 'tablets' or 'plaques' represent multiple copies, each of which is to be set up in a prominent place."⁶⁶ It is no wonder that Laetsch admits that "just how long the inscription to be written by Habakkuk was is hard to tell."⁶⁷ Nevertheless, a survey of the pertinent syntactical data and the major positions is required.

1. *Its scope.* Five separate viewpoints concerning the length of the inscription can be distinguished; two view it as short, and three as long. The two "short" views are summarized adequately by Brownlee:

Scholars who look for a brief text as the placarded revelation of Habakkuk usually restrict it to 2:4, interpreting 2:5-6a as an introduction to a taunt song over the fall of Babylon. However, J.M.P. Smith in *An American Translation* links vss. 4-5 together in a separate paragraph, and the RSV has followed suit. The argument for including these two verses is that the particles *we²af ki* at the beginning of vs. 5 are conjunctive.⁶⁸

The $\text{וְאֵת} \text{כִּי}$ is syntactically important. This fact must be recognized regardless of the problem involved. It is suggested that the either/or option might be sensibly replaced by a both/and perspective in reference to the development of the argument. It seems best to take the binder as "and furthermore,"⁶⁹ or "moreover, in addition."⁷⁰ Emerton's suggestion will be accepted: "The words *we²ap ki*, with which verse 5 begins, link it to verse 4 and suggest that it is part of God's answer to the prophet . . ."⁷¹ Consequently, v 4 can be understood as the crucial lesson of God's disclosure which was to be recorded (i.e., the unrighteous one's essence is perverted), and vv 5ff.

⁶⁶Brownlee, "The Placarded Revelation of Habakkuk," 321 On the parenthetical data of v 3, see: W. H. Brownlee, "The Composition of Habakkuk," in *Hommages à André Dupont-Sommer* (Paris: Maisonneuve, 1971) 264. For eschatological remarks which should be reviewed guardedly, see: F. Delitzsch, *Hebrews*, 2. 198-99. For a profitable discussion of the exegetical data of v 3, see: Henderson, *The Twelve Minor Prophets*, 301-2.

⁶⁷Laetsch, *Minor Prophets*, 330. Cf. Brownlee, "The Placarded Revelation of Habakkuk," 319.

⁶⁸Brownlee, "The Placarded Revelation of Habakkuk," 321 (Brownlee offers a commendable survey of the data and issues: *ibid.*, 319-25). Cf. Lehrman's option for vv 4-5: Lehrman, "Habakkuk," 219. Also, von Orelli (for v 4): von Orelli, *The Old Testament Prophecy of the Consummation of God's Kingdom*, 323-24, 327.

⁶⁹BDB 65.

⁷⁰Laetsch, *Minor Prophets*, 332. Cf. his discussion: *ibid.*, 331-32. For an expanded treatment of the syntactical possibilities (including a potential correlation with the $\text{וְאֵת} \text{כִּי}$ of v 4), see: Emerton, "The Textual and Linguistic Problem of Habakkuk II.4-5," 1-2, 4-5. Cf. Brownlee, "The Composition of Habakkuk," 265, n. 2.

⁷¹Emerton, "The Textual and Linguistic Problems of Habakkuk II.4-5," 1.

could be conceived of as the consequent lesson (i.e., the unrighteous one's actions are perverted).

Only one of the three major suggestions for a longer scope is worthy of development. The other two, the "vision" to be recorded refers to the revelation of 1:5-11, and the הַזִּוּן should be taken literally as a reference to the theophany of chap. 3, are surveyed by Brownlee. They are not viable options.⁷² The viable suggestion pertains to the אֲשֶׁר clause commencing at v 2:5b. This binder suggests that the divine disclosure to be recorded is not to be restricted exclusively to the contents of Hab 2:4-5a. Keil notes that "the allusion to the Chaldaean is evident from the relative clause which follows, and which Delitzsch very properly calls an individualizing exegesis to גַּבַר יְהִיר ."⁷³

Prior to a contextual summary, it must be noted that there is also a piece of logical syntax which continues this interwoven disclosure; the obvious antecedent of $\text{אֵלֶּה כָּל־הַדְּעָמִים}$ (v 6) is כָּל־הַדְּעָמִים , who are the objects of the oppressor's tyranny.⁷⁴ Based upon the above observations, it is most likely that the "placarded revelation" extends beyond the disclosure of v 4. It is suggested, therefore, that v 4 be considered the primary "general principle to be applied in a particular case as here with the ungodly Chaldeans."⁷⁵ (The revelation of Hab 2:5a could be viewed as a secondary or supplemental maxim.)

The immediate context

"The immediate context of vs. 4b (i.e., vss. 4a and 5a)," Gowan concedes, "is about as difficult as any part of the Old Testament to understand."⁷⁶ Three major problems are usually cited. First, it is often assumed that there is a "lost subject"⁷⁷ in Hab 2:4a. As an example, Taylor argues that "a noun form is expected as a counterpart to *righteous*, which occurs in the second half of the verse; 'the wicked' would be normal and is found in the Aramaic paraphrase

⁷²See: Brownlee, "The Placarded Revelation of Habakkuk," 319-21.

⁷³Keil, *Minor Prophets*, 2. 75; cf. 2. 71. Cf.: Brownlee, "The Placarded Revelation of Habakkuk," 321 (however, see: Brownlee, "The Composition of Habakkuk," 265). On the discussion of אֲשֶׁר introducing an independent relative clause, see: GKC 445-46.

⁷⁴Cf. Emerton, "The Textual and Linguistic Problems of Habakkuk II.4-5," 3.

⁷⁵Bryant, "The Meaning of Habakkuk 2:4," 59-60. Cf. von Orelli's "mashal-like principle" (*The Old Testament Prophecy of the Consummation of God's Kingdom*, 327) and Brownlee's "aphorism" ("The Composition of Habakkuk," 265). For further discussion on these general principles and their application to the nearest historical reference point (i.e., Babylon), see: Kleinert, "Habakkuk," 22, 24.

⁷⁶Gowan, *The Triumph of Faith in Habakkuk*, 44.

⁷⁷Brownlee, "The Composition of Habakkuk," 265.

(Targ.).”⁷⁸ Second, it is also argued that a leading verb in the same line is missing (i.e., one parallel to the הִיָּה of 2:4b).⁷⁹ Finally, it is alleged that the reference to “wine” in Hab 2:5a is incongruous; Gowan facetiously brings this out when he comments:

In the RSV, “but the righteous shall live by his faith,” is followed by, “Moreover, wine is treacherous,” and somehow that doesn’t seem the place for a temperance lesson. This is a really frustrating passage for an exegete, for it seems that now we have come to the pivotal point of the book, and we’re not sure what verse 5a means!⁸⁰

Habakkuk 2:4a. Southwell looks for the “‘missing subject’” in הִנֵּה ; he conjectures that it should be revocalized הִנֵּה from the root ננה , rendering it “the eminent man.”⁸¹ However, it is best to understand הִנֵּה in its normal sense as an interjection: “behold!”⁸² It is usually an “interrupting call for attention.”⁸³

עֲפֹלָה presents a seemingly impossible challenge of decipherment. A broad perspective on the problems involved is gained by Keil’s general comment: “The early translators and commentators have taken this hemistich differently. They divide it into protasis and apodosis, and take עֲפֹלָה either as the predicate or as the subject.”⁸⁴ Emerton’s synopsis of the factors contributing to the complication is adequate:

The difficulty is to determine the meaning of the obscure word ^c*uppēlāh*, and to find the right way of construing it with the other words in this part of the verse. The word appears to be the third person feminine singular perfect *pu^cal* of ^c*pl*. B.D.B. distinguishes between two different roots ^c*pl*. To root I belong the noun ^c*ōpālīm*, “hemorrhoids,” and also the place Ophel, to which B.D.B. ascribes the meaning “mound, hill.” The Arabic noun ^c*afalun*, “tumour,” is compared, and it is suggested that the meaning of the Hebrew verb is “swell.” The

⁷⁸Taylor, “Introduction and Exegesis of the Book of Habakkuk,” 988-89. However, some would argue that such a subject (viz., the Chaldean) is “inferred.” Cf. Keil, *Minor Prophets*, 2. 72.

⁷⁹For conjectures which are tailored to fit this assumption, see Emerton’s survey: Emerton, “The Textual and Linguistic Problems of Habakkuk II.4-5,” 15-16.

⁸⁰Gowan, *The Triumph of Faith in Habakkuk*, 44.

⁸¹Southwell, “A Note on Habakkuk ii.4,” 616-17. He deletes לֹא־יִשְׁרָה on metrical grounds. For an outline of his position with challenges of its weaknesses, see: Emerton, “The Textual and Linguistic Problems of Habakkuk II.4-5,” 13-14.

⁸²Cf. the Ugaritic *hn* II (*UT* 391) and the Akkadian *annuma*, “now” (KB 238).

⁸³KB 238-39; BDB 243-44. Cf. Emerton, “The Textual and Linguistic Problems of Habakkuk II.4-5,” 11. The possibility of a syntactical correlation with the כִּי of v 5 has previously been mentioned as a possible option; however, more evidence is desirable. Cf. Brownlee, “The Composition of Habakkuk,” 265.

⁸⁴Keil, *Minor Prophets*, 2. 72.

only place where the verb occurs in the Hebrew Bible is Hab. ii.4, and B.D.B. expresses doubt about the correctness of the text. Root II occurs in Num. xiv.44 . . . B.D.B. thinks that the verb there perhaps means “be heedless,” and compares Arabic *ġafala*, “be heedless, neglectful, inadvertent.” It may be noted that none of the ancient versions of Hab. ii.4 supports either of the two meanings of the root given by B.D.B. The LXX has [ἐάν] ὑποστείληται (“If he should draw back”), Aquila *νωχελευομένου* (“the slothful”), the Vulgate “qui incredulus est,” the Peshitta *wab^cawwālā* the [sic] (“and in the wicked man”) or *wab^cawlā²* (“and in iniquity”), and the Targum *raššī^cayyā²* (“the wicked”).⁸⁵

To this needs to be added a significant observation by Brownlee: “עפלה” at vii.14 confirms both text and vocalization of Mt 2:4 עפלה.”⁸⁶

In spite of the significance of the last piece of evidence, there still remain “theories that find in *^cuppēlāh* a word for blameworthy person” and “theories that find in *^cuppēlāh* a word denoting the downfall of the wicked.”⁸⁷ Most advocates of the former theory offer their suggestions based upon the assumption that עפלה is “strictly antithetical to צדיק.”⁸⁸ Supporters of the latter theory consider עפלה to be antithetical to יהי. Emerton adds a conjecture of his own. It

⁸⁵Emerton, “The Textual and Linguistic Problems of Habakkuk II.4-5,” 11. A suggested rendering of the LXX would be, “If he draw back, my soul is not well pleased with him.” And, for Aquila, “Behold, the lazy, my soul is not straight with him.” Cf. Taylor, “Introduction and Exegesis of the Book of Habakkuk,” 988. On ὑποστέλλω, see: LSJ 1895-96; *TDNT*, 7. 597-99. For more commentary on the Greek divergencies, see: B. F. Westcott, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1950) 337-38; and Bruce, *Hebrews*, 272, n. 195. Cf. Driver’s undesirable conjecture based upon Aquila (cf. עפל II in KB 723): G. R. Driver, “Linguistic and Textual Problems: Minor Prophets III,” *JTS* 39 (1938) 395. For undesirable conjectures based upon the Syriac, see: Kelly, “The Strophic Structure of Habakkuk,” 103, n. 15. Henderson well notes that “the Syr. . . . wickedness, is founded upon a mistake of עפלה for עולה.” Henderson, *The Twelve Minor Prophets*, 303. Brownlee’s synopsis of the data is pertinent: “The versions seem to have read quite differently. G’s rendering ὑποστείληται, Aq’s *νωχελευομένου*, and the Palestinian recension’s . . . [σ]κοτια all seem to be based upon *עלה*, which in the *Pu^cal* means “be covered, obscure, swoon.” T is too paraphrastic to be of assistance here, nor can one be sure of the *Vorlage* of the Latin; but in both is the thought of unbelief read into the verb, an interpretation which could rest upon *עלה* taken to refer to a giving-up in despair through insufficient faith in the promises of God. . . . G. R. Driver . . . suggests that the *Vorlage* of Aq. and V was *העפל*, which after the Arabic . . . he interprets to mean ‘the heedless man’” (Brownlee, *The Text of Habakkuk in the Ancient Commentary from Qumran*, 43-44).

⁸⁶Brownlee, *The Text of Habakkuk in the Ancient Commentary from Qumran*, 43.

⁸⁷Emerton, “The Textual and Linguistic Problems of Habakkuk II.4-5,” 14, 15.

⁸⁸Henderson, *The Twelve Minor Prophets*, 303. He suggests that עפלה be construed as “an abstract noun, used elliptically for *עפלה* *שׂא*, a man of arrogance or presumption, and so to be rendered adjectively, the *proud, presumptuous, &c.*” (ibid.).

would fall into the latter category “denoting the downfall of the wicked.” Its advantage is that it does not change the consonantal text but only divides עֶפְלָה into עָף לָהּ. He construes the following portion of the line as a relative clause (as do others), and renders the line: “Behold, he whose personality within him is not upright will fly away (i.e., pass away, perish [i.e., antithetical to יָחִיָּה in 2:4b]).”⁸⁹ Though there are advantages to his conjecture, its weakness is its novelty.

Lexically, an association with עֶפְלָה I is preferable.⁹⁰ In view of the likely parallelism with לֹא-יִשְׁרָה,⁹¹ a metaphorical extension of עֶפְלָה is the best interpretation:

His soul is puffed up. עֶפְלָה, perf. *pual* of עָפַל, of which the *hiphil* only occurs in Num. xiv.44, and that as synonymous with הִזְיָד in Deut. i.43. From this, as well as from the noun עֶפְלָה, a hill or swelling we get the meaning, to be swollen up, puffed up, proud; and in the *hiphil*, to act haughtily or presumptuously.⁹²

An apparently similar lexical survey undergirds von Orelli’s conclusion: “Such hollow self-exaltation has been from the time of Gen. iii. a mark of a world estranged from God, and has its root in ethical impurity.”⁹³

Syntactically, there still remains the problem of rendering this verb in the light of the remainder of the line. Considering the force of הִנֵּה and the concord of gender, it seems best to render it indefinitely as a maxim and appositionally with the climactic addition of the assertion which follows it: “Behold, it [i.e. his internal self, cf. נַפְשׁוֹ בּוֹ] is swollen, his soul within him is not level; but a righteous one should live by his faithfulness.”

The יִשְׁרָה in לֹא-יִשְׁרָה most likely possesses a metaphorically extended sense (i.e., ethical).⁹⁴ Brownlee suggests the rendering “humble”:

One will observe . . . that the translation “humble” for *yashērāh* is according to the context. The root idea in this figurative word is

⁸⁹Emerton, “The Textual and Linguistic Problems of Habakkuk II.4-5,” 16-17.

⁹⁰Cf. KB 723.

⁹¹Cf. Henderson, *The Twelve Minor Prophets*, 302.

⁹²Keil, *Minor Prophets*, 2. 72.

⁹³Von Orelli, *The Old Testament Prophecy of the Consummation of God’s Kingdom*, 324.

⁹⁴Cf. Emerton, “The Textual and Linguistic Problems of Habakkuk II.4-5,” 11; Dodd, *The Bible and the Greeks*, 42ff. On the full writing in the Qumran text, see: Brownlee, *The Text of Habakkuk in the Ancient Commentary from Qumran*, 44. For general data with the important cognates, see: KB 413-14.

“level,” not “vertical” — although the well-nigh universal English translation “upright” would seem to suggest the latter. The verb is used for the leveling of hills and valleys in Isa. 40:3. In Hab. 2:4, where levelness is antithetical to “puffed up,” it is clear that the word means humility. The essence of sin according to all the Hebrew prophets is pride and rebellion⁹⁵

נָפֶשׁ (in נִפְשׁוֹ בּוֹ), of course, has a wide range of usage.

In this context, the word *nepeš* seems to denote something like ‘personality,’ and the clause in which it appears should probably be translated ‘his personality within him is not upright.’ . . . If so, it says that the person to whom it refers has a bad character.⁹⁶

Habakkuk 2:5a. Lehrman notes that Hab 2:5a is “a very difficult verse which has been variously explained by the older commentators and given up as unintelligible by the moderns.”⁹⁷ The variants represented by the versions here present the greatest challenge.⁹⁸

הֲיִין is the leading challenge. An excerpt from the text found in the Qumran commentary reads הוֹן יִבְגֹד (i.e. “Wealth is [or will be] treacherous”⁹⁹). Emerton argues for this variant and bolsters his contention with evidence which would support the fact that “a saying about the treacherous nature of wealth would be in keeping with what is said about it in wisdom literature”¹⁰⁰ Certainly, this reading is worthy of consideration.¹⁰¹

Nevertheless, the Hebrew text as it stands is not unintelligible. Textually, it should be noted that “the paraphrastic renderings of T and V suggest a *Vorlage* in appropriate agreement with MT.”¹⁰² הֲיִין also has proverbial connections (cf. Prov 20:1; Hos 4:11; Isa 5:11; Jer 23:9; Eccl 10:19).¹⁰³ Historically, a maxim concerning “wine” would

⁹⁵Brownlee, “The Placarded Revelation of Habakkuk,” 324-25. The objective negation (אֵל) of the text should be noted.

⁹⁶Emerton, “The Textual and Linguistic Problems of Habakkuk II.4-5,” 11.

⁹⁷Lehrman, “Habakkuk,” 219.

⁹⁸Cf. Brownlee’s detailed outline of the textual data: Brownlee, *The Text of Habakkuk in the Ancient Commentary from Qumran*, 45-50.

⁹⁹Emerton, “The Textual and Linguistic Problems of Habakkuk II.4-5,” 8.

¹⁰⁰*Ibid.*, 8. Cf. his evidence, 8-9.

¹⁰¹Emendations based upon the Greek renderings are totally unacceptable. For an example, see: Brownlee, “The Placarded Revelation of Habakkuk,” 324. For arguments against conjectures based upon the Greek readings, see: Emerton, “The Textual and Linguistic Problems of Habakkuk II.4-5,” 1-2, 9.

¹⁰²Brownlee, *The Text of Habakkuk in the Ancient Commentary from Qumran*, 46. “הֲיִין יִבְגֹד (or הוֹן יִבְגֹד) at vii.3 is a radical departure from Mt 2:5 בְּגַדְךָ” (*ibid.* 45).

¹⁰³Emerton, “The Textual and Linguistic Problems of Habakkuk II.4-5,” 7.

be particularly appropriate as its truth could be related to and illustrated by the Chaldeans (cf. Daniel 5).¹⁰⁴

Keil's summary of the second portion of the line is helpful:

The following words גִּבּוֹר יְהִיר are not the object to בּוֹנֵד, but form a fresh sentence, parallel to the preceding one: a boasting man, he continueth not, וְלֹא introduces the apodosis to יְהִיר גִּבּוֹר יְהִיר, which is written absolutely. יְהִיר only occurs again in Prov. xxi. 24, and is used there as a parallel to יָד: ἀλαζών (LXX), swaggering, boasting.¹⁰⁵

יְנִידָה is apparently a denominative *hapax legomenon*: "move, walk to a place (nomads to pasture)."¹⁰⁶ From this, it is possible (based upon an Arabic parallel) that the intent of יְנִידָה would be "reach one's aim."¹⁰⁷ A suggested rendering for Hab 2:5a would be: "Wine is treacherous, a proud man, and he will not be successful." An advantage of this rendering is that it is somewhat analogous to the divergent metrical pattern already recognized and accepted in 2:4a. This rendering is one rejected by Emerton (on the basis of its personification) after comparison to two other renderings:

(b) Wine deals treacherously with the proud man, and he will not be successful. (c) Wine is treacherous, and the proud man will not be successful. Translation (b), which understands the verb *bgd* to take a direct object as in Ps. lxxiii. 15, should probably be rejected, because the natural division into lines of poetry is against it. In translation (c), the first two words of the second line are understood to be in *casus pendens*.¹⁰⁸

Logical parallels. In the light of the multiplicity of challenges relating to Hab 2:4a and 2:5a, it might seem that the immediate context is basically unintelligible. However, it should be obvious already that the basic argument of the passage is not obscured. Logical parallels compensate for particular points of uncertainty. Gowan's reconstructions, although they do not harmonize *totally* with previously chosen options, do lead to a proper understanding of the crucial issue:

¹⁰⁴Cf. Lehrman, "Habakkuk," 219; Henderson, *The Twelve Minor Prophets*, 304. See, also: Laetsch, *Minor Prophets*, 332-33.

¹⁰⁵Keil, *Minor Prophets*, 2. 75. Concerning יְהִיר, see: Emerton, "The Textual and Linguistic Problems of Habakkuk II. 4-5," 5.

¹⁰⁶KB 601. Cf. BDB 627.

¹⁰⁷KB 601 (note their uncertainty). On both the significance of the Arabic parallel and challenges concerning the pointing of the verb as a Qal, see: Driver, "Linguistic and Textual Problems: Minor Prophets III," 395; and Emerton, "The Textual and Linguistic Problems of Habakkuk II.4-5," 5.

¹⁰⁸Emerton, "The Textual and Linguistic Problems of Habakkuk II.4-5," 6.

If we find that we cannot have any real confidence (at present) in any of these suggestions, then clearly the crucial question for us is whether there is still a possibility of understanding vs. 4b in terms of its larger context, and I believe that there is. A contrast certainly is being presented between two ways: the way of vs. 4b and that of vs. 4a and possibly also 5a. So "life" in 4b is contrasted with the distortion of the person in 4a, and possibly also with the lack of endurance in 5a. "Righteousness" in 4b is contrasted with that negative quality of which we are uncertain in 4a and perhaps also with treachery and arrogance in 5a. What makes the difference between the two ways is *faithfulness*, and so we must try to see how that speaks to all that has gone before in Habakkuk.¹⁰⁹

UTILIZATION CHALLENGES

Three times in the NT Hab 2:4b is employed in crucial lines of argumentation. There are contextual affinities between Paul's lines of argument in Rom 1:17 and Gal 3:11; however, these contexts are essentially different from the contextual thrust of Hab 2:4b.¹¹⁰ The employment of Habakkuk's text in Heb 10:38 (cf. vv 37-38), however, does reflect a degree of affinity in reference to OT and NT contexts. Ellis' generalizations concerning these phenomena are helpful as a footing upon which to build an investigation:

Hab. 2.4 is cited by Paul (Rom. 1.17; Gal. 3.11) to show that righteousness is not achieved through obedience to the law but through faith; the author of Hebrews uses the same passage to describe the proper attitude of the Christian toward the trials of life. In each case the life of the true believer rests on faith, but the application of the passage varies.¹¹¹

It is difficult to discern how many and how valid are Ellis' presuppositions in reference to the last sentence in this quote. It is appropriate to reiterate a major reason for the multiplicity of hermeneutical challenges relating to Hab 2:4b and its employment in the NT. Many interpreters have approached the problem in reverse by noting Paul's

¹⁰⁹Gowan, *The Triumph of Faith in Habakkuk*, 45.

¹¹⁰Attempts to harmonize plenary the OT and NT contexts, aside from some peripheral benefits, have not convincingly proved their case. Cf. M. H. Franzmann, *Concordia Commentary: Romans* (St. Louis and London: Concordia, 1968) 34-38. Regarding the employment of Hab 2:4 in the NT, see Bryant, "The Meaning of Habakkuk 2:4," 36-42. For general principles pertaining to NT quotations from the LXX (including divergencies), see: E. J. Young, *Thy Word Is Truth* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957) 149-50.

¹¹¹Ellis, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament*, 93. Carefully compare his related argument: *ibid.*, 117-21.

citations in their context *first*; then, standing upon this presuppositional base, they work back to the original passage *in order to interpret it*. There is a need for an ultimate perspective which is systematic in scope; however, the aforementioned procedure must not be the means to that end.

Prior to a cursory examination of the NT passages, the major problem concerning the usage of πίστις needs to be remembered: "It is to be observed that the Greek word πίστις is ambiguous. It means both 'faithfulness,' and 'belief' or 'trust.'"¹¹²

In Paul

In spite of the fact that Paul's usages contextually suggest a different thrust of argument (or at least a different emphasis) from the original context, some would still insist that he is employing πίστις in a manner similar to the original אֱמוּנָה. These arguments follow various paths, but one of the most common suggestions is that all the contexts are emphasizing the *faithfulness of God*.¹¹³

Romans 1:17. Most of the phenomena of the Greek rendering (e.g. Rom 1:17b) have been previously discussed in conjunction with the Septuagint's renderings of the Hebrew text of Hab 2:4b (cf. above),¹¹⁴ but a consideration of related factors in the immediate context of Rom 1:17b is necessary.¹¹⁵

It was noted that the δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ in Rom 1:17a has been construed in various ways.¹¹⁶ The major problem here is "... whether δικαιοσύνη refers to an activity of God or to a status of man

¹¹²Dodd, *The Bible and the Greeks*, 69. Cf. W. Sanday and A. C. Headlam, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (ICC; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915) 31-34. See also the previous discussion on אֱמוּנָה. Cf.: "When אֱמוּנָה as πίστις is given a more general sense in R. 1:17; Gl. 3:11 ... this is not wrong but it is certainly a development of the original meaning" (Quell and Schrenk, *TDNT* 2. 177, n. 12).

¹¹³E.g., T. F. Torrance, "One Aspect of the Biblical Conception of Faith," *ExpTim* 68 (1957) 111-14. Cf. R. N. Longenecker, *Paul: Apostle of Liberty* (New York, Evanston, and London: Harper & Row, 1964) 149ff.

¹¹⁴Ὁν ἐκ πίστεως, cf. H. A. Kent, Jr., *The Freedom of God's Sons: Studies in Galatians* (Winona Lake: BMH, 1976) 88; on the importance of the object of faith, see: Lenski, *Romans*, 83; on the μου of the LXX, review: Johnson, "The Gospel That Paul Preached," 339-40, n. 31; on the construing of ἐκ πίστεως with ζήσεται, review: Lenski, *Romans*, 87; Wallis, "The Translation of Romans 1:17 — A Basic Motif in Paulinism," 17-22; J. Denney, "St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans," in *The Expositor's Greek Testament* (reprinted; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970), 2. 591; cf. Eadie, *Galatians*, 245-46; and for a summary, see: Lightfoot, *Notes on the Epistles of St. Paul*, 250-51.

¹¹⁵Cf. Johnson, "The Gospel That Paul Preached," 329ff.

¹¹⁶Cf. n. 5. On δίκαιος, also review: Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 30-31; and n. 17, above.

resulting from God's action, righteousness as a gift from God."¹¹⁷ To this must be added the related matter of the nature of the genitive θεοῦ.¹¹⁸ Without denying the essential truths pertaining to the former position, Paul's total argument would seem to confirm the intent of the latter — the word refers to man's status.

Another point of contention in this debate is the compound prepositional phrase ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν. Harris' survey merely scratches the surface:

A myriad of proposals have been made in regard to the meaning of the phrase *ek pisteōs eis pistin*, such as: from the faith of the preacher to the faith of the hearer; from God's faithfulness to man's faith; from smaller to greater degree of faith (cf. *apo doxēs eis doxan*, 2 Cor. 3:18); from faith as a starting-point to faith as a permanent condition. But it seems more natural to construe *ek* as indicating not the source or starting-point ("from faith") but the basis or means ("by faith;" as in Hab. 2:4), with the *eis pistin* either intensifying the effect of *ek pisteōs* (thus, "by faith from first to last," New International Version), or denoting the goal of God's impartation to men of a righteous status ("leading to faith"). On either of these latter views, faith is portrayed as the vital and perpetual characteristic of Christian experience.¹¹⁹

Harris' last suggestion, in the light of a broad theological scope, is worthy of particular consideration; it might be *roughly* construed as follows: the first πίστις emphasizes an active nuance, and the second πίστις, being goal oriented (i.e., εἰς), emphasizes a passive nuance. The second view (i.e., "from God's faithfulness to man's faith") has been employed in an attempt to bolster the contention that God's fidelity is the major argument that permeates both the contexts of Rom 1:17b and of Hab 2:4b. Murray recognizes the important contribution of such arguments, but he exposes their essential flaw:

It is fully admitted that wherever there is faith there is always the faithfulness of God and of Christ to which that faith is directed and from which it takes its origin. In other words, faith always involves this *polarized situation*. . . . It is one thing to say that our faith always involves a polarized situation; it is another thing altogether to say that *faith* is a polarized *expression*.¹²⁰

¹¹⁷Cranfield, *Romans*, 1. 96.

¹¹⁸Cf. *ibid.*, 96-98; Lightfoot, *Notes on the Epistles of St. Paul*, 250; Johnson, "The Gospel That Paul Preached," 333-35.

¹¹⁹M. J. Harris, "Appendix: Prepositions and Theology in the Greek New Testament," *NIDNTT* 3. 1189. Cf.: "Appendix B: From Faith to Faith": J. Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959), 1. 363-74; Johnson, "The Gospel That Paul Preached," 336-37; Cranfield, *Romans*, 1. 99-100.

¹²⁰Murray, *Romans*, 1. 373.

In the light of all the data undergirding these synopses, Meyer's general conclusion concerning Rom 1:17 is accepted: "Finally, . . . to understand πίστις εἰς πίστιν in the sense of *faith in the faithfulness of God* . . . , is to introduce what is neither in the words nor yet suggested by the context."¹²¹

Galatians 3:11. A similar tension arises when the context of Gal 3:11b is compared with that of Hab 2:4b.¹²² Ramsay's contextual survey pays particular attention not only to the utilization of Hab 2:4b in Gal 3:11 but also to Gen 15:6 in Gal 3:6:

The phrase ἐκ πίστεως is used only once in the Septuagint, Habakkuk II 4 — "The just shall live by his faith." Paul took this saying, connected it with Genesis XV 6 — "Abraham believed in the Lord, and he counted to him for righteousness" — and found in the two the proof of his doctrine of the righteousness that is of faith — δικαιοσύνη τὴν ἐκ πίστεως.¹²³

This interpretation of the data is certainly more credible than that proposed by Longenecker: "The context of Gal. 3:11 indicates that Paul *interpreted Hab. 2:4* [italics added] as human trust and reliance, not as human faithfulness or even the divine faithfulness of the LXX rendering *ek pisteōs mou*."¹²⁴ A more careful approach would be "that Paul has used the Habakkuk passage *analogically*. *The principle of justification by faith in the promises of God* and not in human endeavor, *initially set forth so clearly in the story of Abraham, is found also in Habakkuk*" [italics added].¹²⁵ Burton's careful summary of the tension demonstrates a greater degree of hermeneutical insight, as seen in the following excerpts:

The particular sense which the words bore for Paul and which he intended them to convey to his readers is undoubtedly to be determined rather by Pauline usage in general, and by the part which the sentence plays in the apostle's argument, than by the meaning which the original Heb. had for the prophet. By these considerations . . . πίστεως bears its usual active sense, required by the context, "faith." . . . The use of the passage with the active sense of πίστις involves no

¹²¹H. A. W. Meyer, *Critical and Exegetical Hand-Book to the Epistle to the Romans* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1889) 52-53.

¹²²Cf. R. A. Cole, *The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians* (TNTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965) 96-98; Lightfoot, *Galatians*, 138-39; and P. R. Jones, "Exegesis of Galatians 3 and 4," *RevExp* 69 (1972) 477-78; Hendriksen, *Galatians*, 128.

¹²³W. M. Ramsay, *A Historical Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians* (reprinted; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1965) 344.

¹²⁴Longenecker, *Paul: Apostle of Liberty*, 123, n. 62.

¹²⁵Johnson, "The Gospel That Paul Preached," 338-39.

radical perversion of its meaning, since faith in this sense might easily be conceived to be an ingredient or basis of faithfulness.¹²⁶

*In Hebrews*¹²⁷

A contextual affinity between Heb 10:38 and our passage is demonstrable. Dods' extremely brief summary brings out the most significant data concerning Heb 10:37-38:

In Habakkuk the conditions are similar. God's people are crushed under overwhelming odds. And the question with which Habakkuk opens his prophecy is ἕως τίνος κεκράξομαι καὶ οὐ μὴ εἰσακουσέις. The Lord assures him that deliverance will come and will not delay. By inserting the article, the writer of Hebrews identifies the deliverer as the Messiah, "the coming One." Cf. Mat. xi.3; Luke vii.19; Jo. vi.14. ὁ δὲ δίκαιος. . . . "And the just shall live by faith," i.e. shall survive these troublous times by believing that the Lord is at hand!¹²⁸

The δέ introducing Heb 10:38 functions disjunctively:

The position of the last two clauses of the citation is reversed to avoid connecting ὑποστειλῆται with ὁ ἐρχόμενος. . . . If the author of Hebrews had retained the original sequence, this clause would have referred to Christ himself, since the author had already made "the coming one" definitely refer to Christ. In the new position this clause is connected with δίκαιός μου, which is now the subject of the last part of the quotation. The inversion places δέ at the beginning of the verse, which now indicates the change of subject, the new subject now being the Christian (cf. x.39).¹²⁹

Robertson notes that Heb 10:38b (cf. Hab 2:4a, LXX) is a "condition of third class with *ean* and the first aorist middle subjunctive of

¹²⁶E. D. Burton, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians* (ICC; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920) 166-67.

¹²⁷On OT quotes in Hebrews, see: G. Howard, "Hebrews and the Old Testament Quotations," *NovT* 10 (1968) 208ff. Howard challenges Westcott's universal recognition of the LXX in Hebrews; however, when he comes to Heb 10:37-38, he labels it "LXX Influence" (ibid., 210).

¹²⁸M. Dods, "The Epistle to the Hebrews," in *The Expositor's Greek Testament* (reprinted; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970), 4. 351. Concerning the transposition of lines in Heb 10:38 from Hab 2:4 (LXX), see: ibid.; Westcott, *Hebrews*, 337. Cf. Delitzsch, *Hebrews*, 2. 199, 201; T. W. Lewis, "' . . . And If He Shrinks Back' (Heb. X. 38b)," *NTS* 22 (1976) 90 (cf. n. 3); "Additional Note on X. 37f. On the quotation from Hab. ii. 3f.": Westcott, *Hebrews*, 347-48. On the alleged reference to Isa 26:20 in v 37, see: H. A. Kent, Jr., *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1972) 213, contra R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Epistle of James* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1966) 369. On the eschatological impact of v 37, see: K. J. Thomas, "The Old Testament Citations in Hebrews," *NTS* 11 (1965) 316.

¹²⁹Thomas, "The Old Testament Citations in Hebrews," 316.

hupostellō, old verb to draw oneself under or back, to withdraw, as already in Acts 20:20, 27; Gal. 2:12."¹³⁰ Consequently, and also in the light of the larger context of Hebrews 11, Hoyt interprets the major thrust of the message of Heb 10:38-39 (cf. Hab 2:4) as follows:

Those who are truly Christian will continue in persistence to the very end (38, 39). The just shall live by faith daily. Those who draw back have never come within divine pleasure.¹³¹

THEOLOGICAL CONCLUSIONS

Biblical theology

Reflecting on the important precedent set by usage, it must be stated that the "Heb. *ʿemunah*, translated 'faith' in Habakkuk ii.4 (LXX *pistis*) means 'steadfastness' or 'fidelity.'"¹³² Therefore, the emphasis in Habakkuk is on sanctification.¹³³

It should be observed, however, that an "emphasis" does not abrogate secondary factors reflected in the immediate and larger contexts. The two spheres of development pertaining to the verbals from the אָמַן-complex must at least be recognized in reference to the אָמַן of Hab 2:4b. More importantly, the background and judicial implications of צִדִּיק must be noted. This is corroborated by the association of the roots אָמַן and צִדִּיק in this single short line.

These factors enlarge the scope of study, because they imply a background which ultimately finds its antecedent in Abraham. Contextual associations with the foundational truth of Gen 15:6 are not only likely in Hab 2:4 but also in the larger contexts of the Pauline citations (cf. Rom 4:3, 9, 22; Gal 3:6). Abraham was justified by faith (compare Gen 15:6 with Romans 4), but biblical faith manifests itself in fidelity. Within this sphere, it is legitimate to render Hab 2:4b as follows: "'Through his fidelity of faith he shall live!'"¹³⁴ Ethical implications are preserved but not at the expense of an intricate biblical balance. This is important, because "*faith and faithfulness . . . cannot be separated. . . . Both are present in his [i.e., Habakkuk's] book, even though his emphasis is on faithfulness.*"¹³⁵

¹³⁰A. T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Nashville: Broadman, 1930), 5. 417.

¹³¹H. Hoyt, *Christ—God's Final Word to Man: An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Winona Lake: BMH, n.d.) 52.

¹³²F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans* (TNTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963) 80.

¹³³Wallis, "The Translation of Romans 1:17 — A Basic Motif in Paulinism," 21.

¹³⁴Von Orelli, *The Old Testament Prophecy of the Consummation of God's Kingdom*, 324.

¹³⁵Gowan, *The Triumph of Faith in Habakkuk*, 43, 44. Cf. Gowan's whole discussion, 43ff.

Systematic theology

Paul's use of Hab 2:4b in Rom 1:17 and Gal 3:11 appears to be at first glance a radical departure from the thrust of the context of the OT passage. "But that does not mean that Paul was wrong in taking Hab 2:4 as the great theme verse for his teaching about justification by faith."¹³⁶ It must be remembered that:

Paul does not teach justification by faith in a vacuum. Faith does make one righteous both forensically and, increasingly, in actuality, because faith issues in the ἐν Χριστῷ relationship.¹³⁷

Once again, a full circle has been drawn. From this perspective, it is best to conclude with Westcott that "'faith' (in the Pauline sense) and 'faithfulness to God' (which is what the Prophet had in mind), in the long run, *are* the same thing."¹³⁸

¹³⁶Ibid., 43.

¹³⁷Ellis, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament*, 119.

¹³⁸F. B. Westcott, *St. Paul and Justification* (London: Macmillan, 1913) 52.