

Woe #5: The Idolater Silenced

Introduction

The Text

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! 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. ²⁰ But the LORD is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him.” (Hab. 2:18–20)

The “Taunt Song”

- A. For what’s been five weeks now in total, we’ve been considering this “taunt song” that God gives his people to sing in the face of their Babylonian oppressors.
- B. The song began back up in [Hab. 2:6](#) and it continues on to the end of this chapter. And, as we’ve said, the song itself is composed of five “woe oracles” or words of woe.
 - 1. Each is marked out in your Bibles by that opening line: “Woe to him” ([vv. 6, 9, 12, 15, 19](#)).
 - a. Within each of these woe oracles there is: (1) a statement of offense (God tells what these Babylonians are guilty of); and then there’s (2) a promise of judgment that will come to them from the hand of God in some way.
- C. We’ve this morning come to the fifth and final woe ([vv. 18-20](#)) and I think with this we’re really given something of the heart that’s underneath all of this other Babylonian activity we’ve been talking about.
 - 1. And we see that, fundamentally, the big problem here is one of worship: you’re trusting in the wrong gods—gods who cannot really save, cannot really help, cannot really speak; and you’re turning your back on the one true God who really can.
 - a. And though you may make a lot of noise and commotion in your misguided worship, you will be brought to silence before him in the end.
- D. As we consider these things, we’re going to leverage those same three headings I’ve used in the previous woes. We’re going to look at: (1) The Reversal—how God is going to reverse the fortunes of these Babylonians in judgement; (2) The Rescue—how God is going to ultimately rescue his people through Jesus; and (3) The Renewal—how we can live differently now in light of this. So let’s go!

(1) The Reversal

- A. Under this heading, as I've done in weeks past, I'm going to, in particular, bring out those two elements I mentioned above that are in every one of these woe oracles: namely, (1) the stated offense; and (2) the promised judgment.

(1) The Stated Offense (vv. 18-19)

- A. The stated offense is what comes out most clearly for us there in [vv. 18-19](#). And I think it's safe to say we could really sum it up with a single word: "idolatry." Even a cursory reading of the verses bears that out.
- B. But then we have to ask: what exactly is idolatry? Perhaps you already have some idea in your mind, perhaps you don't.
 - 1. But I want to help us along in this by making seven somewhat quick observations, all drawn out from these two verses here.
 - a. The first three will look at idolatry from the perspective of the idolater, the person who's engaged in such a thing.
 - b. And then the latter four will look at idolatry from the perspective of the idol itself.
 - i. And I think when we're through we'll have a much clearer sense of what idolatry is and why it's such a devastating and even damning endeavor—and why God would be calling Babylon out for it here.

Observation #1: We Derive Idols from the World Around Us

- A. With this I'm thinking particularly of the fact that these idols being crafted here by the Babylonians are made of "metal" (v. 18) and "wood" (v. 19) and "stone" (v. 19) and "overlaid with gold and silver" (v. 19).
 - 1. They come from the earth. They are a part of the created order.
- B. This is the first and most fundamental error of idolatry. It is the creature looking to the creation rather the Creator to somehow fulfill him and help him and satisfy him. It is, therefore, doomed to fail from the start.
 - 1. As we quote often here from Augustine's Confessions: "[Y]ou have made us for Yourself, [O Lord,] and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in you" (Confessions, 1.1.1.).
 - a. And yet off we go. Looking to this and looking to that. But if we started the race pointed in the wrong direction, it doesn't matter how hard we run, we only get further and further off track.
- C. Now, of course, I know that, in their minds, the Babylonians were thinking that these idols were mere physical representations of some spiritual deity whom they were connecting with through the metal, wood, and stone.

1. But the Bible is plain: there are no deities behind such things. So Moses says of the nations: They “serve gods of wood and stone . . . that neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell” (Deut. 4:28). There’s no god beyond this that can help.
 2. But, now, later in Deuteronomy, Moses does say, and elsewhere in the Scriptures it’s made abundantly plain, there are spiritual realities behind these physical idols. But, suffice it to say, these are not the kind of spiritual beings you want to be tapping into.
 - a. Indicting Israel for her own failures with idolatry, Moses says: “¹⁵ [T]hen [they] forsook God who made [them] and scoffed at the Rock of [their] salvation. ¹⁶ They stirred him to jealousy with strange gods; with abominations they provoked him to anger. ¹⁷ They sacrificed to demons that were no gods . . .” (Deut. 32:15–17a; cf. Ps. 106:37; 1 Cor. 10:20).
 - i. It’s not the divine here that you’re engaging. It’s the demonic.
- D. But we derive our idols from the world around us. We look not to the Creator but to the creation. That’s where it starts.

Observation #2: We Make, Shape, and Dress Idols to Our Own Liking

- A. You see that in these verses, don’t you? There’s this emphasis on the fact that the Babylonians are the ones making it: “[I]ts maker has shaped it . . . [I]ts maker trusts in his own creation when he makes speechless idols!” (v. 18). He’s the one who overlays it “with gold and silver” (v. 19) and dresses it up all pretty.
- B. All of this brings out, I think, the fact that one of the things that draws us to idolatry is the sense of control that we can have in the whole process.
 1. Yes, it’s true, we derive our idols from creation.
 2. But in another sense we also get to create a bit ourselves: we carve the stone, we whittle the wood, we pour the molten metal into the mold, we overlay it all with shine. To some degree we control it.
 - a. In other words: we get to play god even as we pursue other gods. We don’t have to come under our Maker, we get to stand over as maker.
- C. That word “maker” there is the Heb. word **yatzar**.
 1. Do you want to know the first time this word shows up in the Bible? Gen. 2:7: “[T]hen the LORD God formed [Heb. yatzar = ‘made’] the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.” And it goes on from there: “And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed” (v. 8).
 - a. I include that last part just because I want you to see: God made us, God breathes life into us, and then God puts us in a fruitful place, he has good gifts to give us.

b. But we don't want to come under our Maker and trust and obey and wait on him. "What if he doesn't give us what we want? What if he holds out on us?"

i. So we make, shape, and dress our idols to our own liking. We want something we can manipulate and control and form in the direction of our desires. We don't have to submit. We don't have to wait.

D. But it's a counterfeit. It's a reversal of and rebellion against the real thing. Think about it . . .

1. God makes us in his image, breathes in life, and satisfies.
2. Our idols, we make them in our own image, but, as we'll see, they have no breath or life, and they leave us empty in the end.

a. We try to do an end run around God and get satisfaction and life without him. We take matters into our own hands . . . but it never works.

Observation #3: We Place Our Trust in Idols for Deliverance

A. This is brought out there at the end of v. 18: "[I]ts maker trusts in his own creation"

1. This really is the nub of the matter so far as idolatry is concerned from our end. The idols have our hearts. We have fixed our hope upon them to deliver us, to instruct us, to guide us, to satisfy us.

B. So when the [Heidelberg Catechism](#) asks in the 95th question is: "What is idolatry?" It answers with the following: "Idolatry is having or inventing something in which one trusts in place of or alongside of the only true God, who has revealed himself in the Word."

1. You see it, don't you? It all turns on this issue of "trust"—"having or inventing something in which one trusts" in some deep and fundamental way, for deliverance and redemption, for provision and protection, for satisfaction and joy.

C. So in the ancient world you had idols and gods that you would sacrifice and pray to and put your trust in to help you with a variety of life's issues.

1. So some you could beseech for help in times of war.
2. Others you would look to for help when you wanted a child and to be blessed with fertility.
3. Still others could help with the weather and seasons, bringing rain and a fruitful harvest and things like this.

a. But the bottom line is: your trust is not in the creator God who is truly over all; it's in these created things that you are trying to manipulate in your own way and on your own time to get what you want.

D. Your trust is there. That's why, for example, we see these Babylonians praying to their idol there in v. 19, saying, "Awake!" and "Arise!"

1. In time of need or trouble, they're calling for help from that in which they trust: an idol, a false god.
- E. But now we turn to those latter four observations, and we come to see not so much what we make of these idols now, but what they truly are in reality. For this, we'll start to make our way back up these verses . . .

Observation #4: But Idols Are Dead

- A. That's what God says there at the end of v. 19: *Behold, it is overlaid with gold and silver, and there is no breath at all in it.*"
1. One commentator puts it this way: *"The glitter of the idol cannot conceal its lifelessness" (NICOT)*. It looks shiny, it looks flashy, but it also looks dead . . . because it is.
- B. I'm reminded here of that story with Elijah and the prophets of the false god Baal.
1. Remember how he sets up a contest between his God YHWH, and their god Baal. And whichever god would respond with fire from heaven, well, he is the true God. And you remember, try as they may, the prophets of Baal could not rouse him. So in [1 Kings 18:26-29](#) we read: *"²⁶ [They] called upon the name of Baal from morning until noon, saying, 'O Baal, answer us!' But there was no voice, and no one answered. And they limped around the altar that they had made. ²⁷ And at noon Elijah mocked them, saying, 'Cry aloud, for he is a god. Either he is musing, or he is relieving himself, or he is on a journey, or perhaps he is asleep and must be awakened.' ²⁸ And they cried aloud and cut themselves after their custom with swords and lances, until the blood gushed out upon them. ²⁹ And as midday passed, they raved on . . . , but there was no voice. No one answered; no one paid attention."* Why? Because there was no one there!
 - a. Elijah mocked: *"Maybe he's thinking; maybe he's using the restroom; maybe he's out on vacation somewhere; maybe he's napping."*
 - b. But Elijah knows: Baal is dead. He's breathless. You might as well be crying out to a corpse.

Observation #5: But Idols Are Dumb

- A. It follows of course, that if these idols are dead, then they are also dumb.
1. And by dumb here, I mean it not in the sense that a schoolboy means it when he's making fun of a kid who is wearing the wrong brand of jeans or out of sync with the cool crowd or something.
 2. I mean it in the technical sense: they can't speak.
- B. So God says there at the end of v. 18, these are *"speechless [Heb. illem = 'dumb'] idols."* They can't help you. They can't instruct you. They won't show you where to go or what to do. They can't talk.

Observation #6: But Idols Are Deceptive

- A. So we see up in v. 18 God refers to these idols as *"teacher[s] of lies."*

1. Now this, at first might seem perplexing. If they are dead and dumb, how are they at the same time teachers of lies? I thought we just got done saying they don't talk, they can't teach. What's this all about?
- B. Well, I think the idea is that they are teachers of lies in the sense that we make them say what we want.
1. That's the danger and the allure of idolatry.
 2. These idols essentially become projections of our own desires and lusts.
 - a. Similar to the way we can manipulate and shape them physically, we can do the same thing with the deeper matters of worship and prayer—when we claim to perceive what they are revealing to us.
- C. I dare say you've probably been tempted to this same sort of thing even in your own approach to God in prayer and things.
1. So the young man struck by the beauty of the girl in his college group says: "I've been praying and I've discerned God is calling us to start dating."
 - a. Oh really? How did you come that? It could be true. But it could also just be that you want it to be true.
 2. Or in a similar manner: "I just feel like God is calling me to break off this relationship and move on."
 - a. Okay, well that could be right. But it could also be that you're just tired of dealing with person, you don't want to work through the issues, you want an easy out and using God's name seems a convenient way to justify your own selfishness. And who can argue? You've prayed, you've discerned.
- D. So it's this sort of thing, we can even do sometimes with Jesus, that these Babylonian idolaters are doing here in an even more amplified manner, no doubt.
- E. And, of course, false prophets and priests will try to capitalize on this dynamic as well.
1. So one commentator writes: "Habakkuk is referring [here] to the priests who manipulate people by 'making the idol speak' or pronounce an oracle. The Babylonian . . . priests functioned as diviners, interpreting omens, signs and performing rituals that were designed to solicit an answer from the gods" (IVPOTBC). And oh, how wonderful, wouldn't you know it: it's the answer you wanted to hear! It'll keep you coming back. But it's a lie.
 - a. I think of the false prophets in Jeremiah's day that were willing to tickle the ears of the people. "God is not angry with you because of your sin, all will go well." The people wanted to kill Jeremiah for telling them otherwise (cf. [Jer. 26:8](#)), but he was telling them the truth. And these others were just manipulating with lies for their own benefit. Leading the people off a cliff.

F. And this really leads to the last thing I wanted to say . . .

Observation #7: But Idols Do Not Profit

A. I love this! I wonder if you noticed, God’s whole concern with idolatry here has at its center a deeper concern for what will truly “profit” a person. Look back at the beginning of v. 18: “What profit is an idol . . .?”

1. Isn’t that amazing? God’s concern here isn’t that you did an end run around him and got all sorts of goodies for yourself. And he’s jealous or something. Like you cracked the code, and you figured out how to get profit without him.
 - a. That’s what we think when we go after sin. It’s the good stuff. It’s what will really satisfy and that’s perhaps even why God so often says no. He doesn’t want us to be happy. He wants that low-grade misery that Christians are often known for, where we come to define ourselves more by what we can’t have than what we can, by what we’re against than what we’re for, and so forth. He doesn’t want us to profit.
2. But God’s issue with idolatry runs in precisely the opposite direction! He hates these idols because they don’t profit. “You turn from me and trust in these things because you think they will help and benefit you in the end. I’m telling you they will only enslave and steal from you when it’s all done. They will not profit, so I will not stand for it.”

B. And this isn’t just a one-off thing here. This is how God frames his concern with idolatry all over the Scriptures!

1. So God has the prophet Samuel warn the people: “²⁰ [D]o not turn aside from following the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart. ²¹ And do not turn aside after empty things that cannot profit or deliver, for they are empty” (1 Sam. 12:20–21).
2. Or again with the prophet Isaiah now: “All who fashion idols are nothing, and the things they delight in do not profit” (Isa. 44:9).
3. Perhaps the most poignant example comes in Jer. 2:11-13: “¹¹ Has a nation changed its gods, even though they are no gods? But my people have changed their glory for that which does not profit. ¹² Be appalled, O heavens, at this; be shocked, be utterly desolate, declares the LORD, ¹³ for my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water.”
 - a. Did you catch that? God is likened to a fountain of living water here.
 - b. And idolatry is forsaking that fountain and going to play by your own rules, dig your own cisterns. But these cisterns are broken and they hold no water. They leak. You can’t keep them full. You come to them thirsty and they can’t satisfy.

C. They’re dead, they’re dumb, they’re deceptive, and they don’t profit. And if you keep digging anyways in rebellion against the Lord . . . judgment will come.

(2) The Promised Judgment (v. 20)

- A. So God, still speaking of these Babylonian idolaters here, having now stated the offense, he makes plain the promised judgement and with it, the reversal of things. Look at v. 20: “But the LORD is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him.”
- B. One commentator puts the matter plainly for us: “This contrasts with the frenetic activity of man to create ‘speaking’ gods, and the tumultuous cries of worshippers to make dumb idols respond. Lifeless idols approached in clamour are silent, while the living God, approached in silence and reverence, speaks. (TOTC)
1. Try as they may they, they could not get their idols to speak. They speak and speak and speak to it, but the idol itself remains silent.
 2. But then here now God in an act of judgment, it seems to me, is saying the tables will turn. “Soon you will be as silent as your idols, and I, the one true God of heaven and earth, will speak. And there will be nothing you can do, but listen.”
- C. I thought of those thundering verses in Ps. 115: “² Why should the nations say, ‘Where is their God?’³ Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases. ⁴ Their idols are silver and gold, the work of human hands. ⁵ They have mouths, but do not speak; eyes, but do not see. ⁶ They have ears, but do not hear; noses, but do not smell. ⁷ They have hands, but do not feel; feet, but do not walk; and they do not make a sound in their throat. ⁸ Those who make them become like them; so do all who trust in them” (vv. 2-9).
1. If you trust in lifeless idols you will become just as lifeless, just as “dead silent” as them.

“Woe Is Me!”

- A. But now as we’ve done in weeks past, we have to go *Isa. 6* on this. We have to move from “Woe to you . . . woe to you . . . woe to you!” to “Woe is me!” We have to try to discern our place here with these Babylonians, because we’re not nearly as different as we would think or hope.
- B. In all my observations, you may have noticed, I was using the first person plural—including us in the mix of idolatry, assuming you might already begin to see yourself there.
1. But I realize we might not at first. We might still have a very narrow view of what idolatry really is. We picture a man or woman lying prostrate before a stump or a stone.
 - a. It seems so barbaric, so primitive, so pre-modern and outdated.
 - b. It seems so irrelevant, therefore, to the great majority of us here in the western world.
 - i. Haven’t we moved beyond this superstitious and blatantly silly practice of idol worship? Certainly this is not something I struggle with.

C. But if that's what we're thinking, then we've missed the heart of it all. Indeed, I would even go so far as to say: there is perhaps no more pressing issue you are facing in your life today than this issue of idolatry. It's behind and underneath everything.

D. You say: "What?!" Let me explain. Or better, let me read from a couple other dudes smarter than me so you can hear what they have to say.

1. First, O. Palmer Robertson: "Modern people in their sophistications may regard themselves as free from the obvious folly of idolatry. What educated, self-respecting person would be deluded into expecting special powers to emanate from the form of an antiquated idol? Yet the new covenant Scriptures make it plain that covetousness is idolatry (Eph. 5:5).

Whenever a person's desire looks to the creature rather than the Creator, he is guilty of the same kind of foolishness. An insatiable desire for things not rightly possessed assumes that [such] things can satisfy rather than God himself. Whenever a person sets his priorities on the things made rather than on the Maker of things, he is guilty of idolatry" (NICOT).

2. But now listen to the words of the old Dutch theologian J. Douma: "As the years have passed, many gods have disappeared. Baal is now sleeping for good, Zeus no longer sits on Mount Olympus, and the German gods Woden and Thor have no more worshipers. But idolatry does not depend on names. . . . The Bible . . . shows us clearly that idolatry can live apart from idol names. We read that a man's strength can be his god (Hab. 1:11). You can say to gold, 'You are my confidence' (Job 31:24); money can be called Mammon (Matt. 6:24); and covetousness is explicitly called idolatry in the Bible (Col. 3:5). We can also make our stomach our god (Phil. 3:19).

This list could be expanded. People can make idols out of almost anything. The erotic, the desire for power, reason, nature, tradition, and conscience—each of these can be absolutized in ways both uncultured and very refined. Everyday common things can get a person in their grasp. . . . The heart can become addicted . . . to anything in our homes, from attic to cellar, in cupboards and drawers, in our yards, our eating, clothing and hobbies. Everybody has . . . something that has hold of his heart. It is just as hard to let go of this as it was for Rachel to get rid of her father's household gods (Gen. 31:19).

. . . Idolatry can devise as much as creation holds! Images of gods may well evoke our laughter, but we must not be fooled by the outward appearance. Anyone taking idolatry seriously knows it involves passionate practices that remain relevant to this day."

E. Let me put some flesh on this for you . . .

1. Do you want to know what you're doing, late at night, on the internet, visiting sites you know you shouldn't, looking at stuff you know you shouldn't?

a. You're worshipping. It's the idol of sex and it's big business here in America. You're thinking: "This will satisfy me, this will fill me, this will deliver me from the boredom and mundanity of my life. Oh this will be exciting."

b. And so you're willing to sacrifice your purity, your relationship with a spouse, girlfriend, you'll let even God go, if you can have this. I

i. It's not small. It's not insignificant. It's not just a little harmless fun in the evening that no one else has to know about. It's an act of worship. It's

idolatry. And it's therefore an act of outright rebellion against God. It's spiritual adultery. It's enslaving and it's damning.

2. Do you want to know what you're doing, when you just have to run the numbers again, add up all the money you have in your accounts, check your investments one more time, read another book on financial management, when your joy goes up and down with the stock market, when your holding your wallet like Smeagol holding the ring of power?
 - a. You're worshipping. You're bowing down to the idol of money along with countless others in this city. "Money will satisfy, money will deliver me from life's ills. If I get money I can have ease and comfort and status and all else that comes with it."
 - b. Oh it's so desirable, and so you're willing to sacrifice whatever else you have to get it. Relationships, your own integrity, etc.
 - c. But it doesn't give to you, it takes. You never find peace. You find shackles. If you're trust is in money, how are you feeling about the state of the economy these days? Isn't your heart all just tangled up in knots. What's the Fed going to do next? How are the markets going to respond? What will happen to my savings?
 - d. I'm not saying we shouldn't be concerned with these things, I'm saying: when money is your god, such things will destroy you, because it's unstable and we don't know, and we're trying to drop anchor in a bottomless sea, we'll never find solid ground, we'll always be adrift.
 - i. Money is important, but it makes a horrible god. And when we bow in worship of it, when we sacrifice all else to it, it's idolatry, it's spiritual adultery. It's not only enslaving, it's damning.

(1) We are saying: "God, YHWH, Jesus, oh sure I know you provide, but this . . . if I just had this, I wouldn't even need you, I wouldn't have to wait for you, I can get what I want when I want it."

F. We could just keep spinning off more examples, but I think you get it.

1. We can make idols of our kids, of our jobs, of our health, our looks, our relationships, the approval of people, of our religiosity and morality, and on and on.

G. If you need help identifying some of the idols you may be tempted to bow a knee too, let me give you a few questions to ponder that may start to uncover things for you:

1. Where do you run first when life gets hard?
2. What do you trust in for relief, for help, for deliverance?
3. Where do you go looking for water when your soul is thirsty?
4. What do you want? What would you do anything to get? What do you sacrifice for?
5. What would you feel absolutely devastated—like your life wasn't worth living—if you lost?

H. Every Christian is a recovering idolater.

1. Left to ourselves we're not all that different than these Babylonians.

2. In fact, at bottom, we're the same. We don't trust God to take care of us. We want to take it into our own hands. We want to call the shots. "Woe is me!"
 - a. So what now?

(2) The Rescue

- A. Well this is where we come to The Rescue and the cross of Jesus Christ. I didn't leave myself that much time for this, but we still have to take it in for just a minute: the rescue that God works on our behalf by hurling his own beloved Son in between us and the woes of his wrath.
- B. The judgment that Babylon and you and I deserve for our idolatry comes crashing down upon him.
 1. So I said God will speak and the idolaters will be utterly silenced, made as dead as the idols they've been bowing to.
 - a. Well, Jesus, on that cross, we're told in [Isa. 53:7](#), he was rendered "silent": "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth."
 - i. That word translated "silent" there is the verbal form of that same word back in [Hab. 2:18](#) referring to "speechless" or dumb idols.
 - b. And of course he's not just silenced there on the cross. He's like a lamb "led to the slaughter." He's put to death.
- C. He's made dumb and dead. He's being made like the idols we worshipped.
 1. Though he never worshiped them. He never gave in to such depravity. Though he's taking all the judgment here, he didn't commit any of the offense.
- D. Do you remember the way he was tempted by Satan in the wilderness?
 1. "Leave your illegitimate Father, he's not feeding you, he's not caring for you, turn that stone to bread and get some food in your belly now."
 - a. No! "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God'" ([Matt. 4:4](#)).
 2. "Okay fine you won't leave him for bread, what if I give you 'all the kingdoms of the world and their glory . . .' (v. 8)?" "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me" (v. 9).
 - a. No! "Then Jesus said to him, 'Be gone, Satan! For it is written, "You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve'" (v. 10).

- E. "I will not forsake the fountain of living water and go after these broken cisterns."
 - 1. Oh but even though the Son did not forsake his Father, on that cross his Father forsook him. "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46).
 - 2. And soon after, do you know what he goes on to say: "I thirst" (John 19:28).
 - 3. And soon after that: "It is finished," (John 19:30).
- F. He's worked our rescue. He's suffered in our place. The woe comes crashing down on him, so grace could come flowing out to me. And wouldn't you know it: it's a fountain . . . of living water!

(3) The Renewal

Two Changes

- A. And you know what, when you start to drink it in, it changes you. You start to walk in a new way. You don't have to live like the Babylonians anymore. You can live like Jesus.
- B. I'll give you just two changes this can work in your life . . .

Change #1: We Learn to Be Silent

- A. We learn to be silent.
 - 1. But not like the Babylonians here—not in the way of judgment.
 - 2. But in a way of humble submission and anticipation, expectation. We're quiet not because we're muzzled under God's wrath, but because we're attending to him and his word first and foremost.
 - a. Like Mary in [Luke 10](#), she's at Jesus' feet listening. He's the one we run to. He's the one we listen to. We want him to shape us, not the other way around. "I want to be renewed in your image, not try to make you into mine." Because we've come to trust him. We see he's good, even when we don't initially feel it to be so, we know it deep down to be true.
- B. He's the God of the cross. He's the God of grace. He's in his holy temple. He's on his heavenly throne. So we can be quiet. We can let him speak.

Change #2: We Learn to Sing!

- A. The silence here in the last verse of [Hab. 2](#) gives way to the song that erupts in [Hab. 3](#). The whole chapter is framed as a song, did you realize that?
 - 1. But do you want to know why Habakkuk is singing now? Because he learned to be quiet and contemplate the God who is over all, who loves him, who has revealed himself to him.
 - a. So the whole thing begins there in [Hab. 3:2](#): "O LORD, I have heard the report of you, and your work, O LORD, do I fear." And he goes on to sing about the Exodus and things he's heard of God from the Scriptures.

B. But you see he only heard these things because he was first quiet enough before God to hear them.

1. The silence gives way to song. Because it's in the silence that you let God speak.
2. And when God speaks, when you attend to his word, when you see what he's done for you now in Jesus, it sets your heart on fire.
 - a. You truly worship. You sing!