

Habakkuk 2:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it.

Analysis

For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it. This poetic image personifies creation itself as witness against injustice. **The stone shall cry out** (כִּי־עַן מִקְּרִי תִצְאֹק/ki-even miqqir tiz'aq)—even inanimate stones in the wall will cry out in testimony. The verb צִאֲקָה (za'aq) means to cry out in distress, often used for victims crying for justice (Exodus 22:23, James 5:4). **And the beam out of the timber shall answer it** (וְכַחֲפִיס יַעֲנֶנָּה/me'etz ya'enenah)—the wooden beam will respond, confirming the testimony.

This recalls Abel's blood crying from the ground (Genesis 4:10) and anticipates Jesus's statement that if disciples were silent, the stones would cry out (Luke 19:40). The image is both poetic and profound: buildings constructed through oppression—with blood money, slave labor, stolen materials—testify against their builders. The very structures built to memorialize greatness become witnesses for prosecution. Every stone laid through injustice, every beam installed by exploited labor, cries out for judgment. Creation itself maintains moral memory when humans forget or suppress truth.

Historical Context

Babylon's magnificent architecture—the Ishtar Gate, Hanging Gardens, palace complexes—was built with slave labor and plundered materials. The very splendor meant to glorify Nebuchadnezzar testified against him. When archaeologists excavated Babylon, they found inscriptions of Nebuchadnezzar's pride but also

evidence of the suffering required to build such monuments. Throughout history, oppressive architecture speaks: Egyptian pyramids built by forced labor, colonial mansions built on plantation slavery, monuments erected by totalitarian regimes. These structures, meant to proclaim power, instead testify to injustice. The principle applies beyond literal buildings: corporations built on exploitation, fortunes gained through fraud, reputations based on lies—all eventually exposed as their 'stones cry out.'

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How do the fruits of injustice—wealth, buildings, reputations—eventually testify against those who gained them through evil means?
2. What does it mean that creation itself bears moral witness, maintaining memory of injustice even when humans forget?
3. How should this reality affect how believers think about the origins and ethics of their possessions, careers, and achievements?

Interlinear Text

כִּי	אֶבֶן	מִקַּיִר	תִּזְעַק	וְכִפֹּיֶם	יֵעָן
H3588	For the stone	of the wall	shall cry out	and the beam out	of the timber
	H68	H7023	H2199	H3714	H6086

יַעֲנֶה:

shall answer

H6030

Additional Cross-References

Luke 19:40 (Parallel theme): And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.

Joshua 24:27 (Parallel theme): And Joshua said unto all the people, Behold, this stone shall be a witness unto us; for it hath heard all the words of the LORD which he spake unto us: it shall be therefore a witness unto you, lest ye deny your God.

Revelation 6:10 (Parallel theme): And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?

Hebrews 12:24 (Parallel theme): And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

Genesis 4:10 (Parallel theme): And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.

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