

# Habakkuk 2:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Shall they not rise up suddenly that shall bite thee, and awake that shall vex thee, and thou shalt be for booties unto them?

## Analysis

**Shall they not rise up suddenly that shall bite thee, and awake that shall vex thee, and thou shalt be for booties unto them?** The rhetorical question expects the answer: yes, absolutely. Those you oppressed **shall rise up suddenly** (יעקומו/yaqumu feta)—will arise unexpectedly, without warning. **That shall bite thee** (נשׁקיכָה/noshkheikha)—literally your 'biters,' using imagery of creditors extracting payment with interest (the verb נשׁחַק/nashakh means both 'bite' and 'charge interest').

**And awake that shall vex thee** (וַיִּקְצֹה מְזַעֲזֵעַךְ/yiqtzu meza'ze'eikha)—your 'shakers' or 'tormentors' will awaken from sleep. The oppressed, once passive victims, become active agents of judgment. **And thou shalt be for booties unto them** (לְמַשְׁאָתֶיךָ וְלְפִיכָּת/vehayita limshissot lamo)—you will become plunder for them, suffering the same fate you inflicted. This is the lex talionis (law of retaliation) on a cosmic scale—oppressors become the oppressed, plunderers become the plundered. The principle is clear: violence breeds violence, oppression creates the conditions for future revolt. Those who live by the sword die by the sword (Matthew 26:52).

## Historical Context

Babylon fell exactly as described—suddenly and from within. In 539 BC, Cyrus the Persian diverted the Euphrates River and entered Babylon while its king Belshazzar feasted (Daniel 5). Former subject peoples within the Babylonian

Empire welcomed Persian rule as liberation. Some former Babylonian territories became Persian satrapies; others gained independence. The plunderers were plundered, the enslavers enslaved. History repeatedly demonstrates this principle: colonial powers face independence movements, slave societies face revolts, oppressive regimes face revolutions. Judgment comes through the very mechanisms of injustice employed—the oppressed rise against oppressors.

## Related Passages

---

**1 John 4:8** — God is love

**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

## Study Questions

---

1. How does injustice create the conditions for its own judgment through eventual backlash and revolt?
2. What does this passage teach about the self-defeating nature of oppression and exploitation?
3. How should awareness of this principle affect how individuals, businesses, and nations treat those with less power?

## Interlinear Text

---

מִזְרָחָ יְבָקֵשׁ וְלֹא יִתְבַּשֵּׂשׁ כִּי שְׁאַלְמָנָה יְמִינָה יְבָקֵשׁ

H3808

**suddenly**

H6621

שְׁאַלְמָנָה יְבָקֵשׁ

H6965

כִּי שְׁאַלְמָנָה יְבָקֵשׁ

H5391

H6974

**that shall vex**

H2111

וְתַּבְנִיתָ יְמִינָה

H1961

לְמִשְׁפֵּת וְתַּבְנִיתָ יְמִינָה

**thee and thou shall be for booties**

H4933

לְמִינָה

H0

## Additional Cross-References

---

**Proverbs 29:1** (Parallel theme): He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.

---

From KJV Study • [kjvstudy.org](http://kjvstudy.org)