

*The following is an uncorrected transcript generated by a transcription service. Before quoting in print, please check the corresponding audio for accuracy.*

**Sarah:** Hello and welcome to Word Fuelled Hearts. This episode is sponsored by 10offthose.com, an online retailer of the best Christian book at discounted prices. Do check them out after the episode at 10offthose.com.

**Felicity:** Hello. Welcome to word fuelled hearts. This is Sarah and she's in the UK.

**Sarah:** Hi.

**Felicity:** And I'm Felicity. And I'm in the US. And Sarah, what have you got in your cup today?

**Sarah:** Well, I'm very excited, actually, because I took your advice last week and I've gone for Yorkshire Gray today. I know.

**Felicity:** How is that happy mixture?

**Sarah:** I think it might be a grower. What made me more excited is I did make a tea part of it. I didn't quite know whether I meant to put two tea bags in one mug or not. How interesting.

**Felicity:** Well, you see, my husband really likes Yorkshire tea and I really like El Grey tea, so I just always offer him a cup of tea when I want a mixture, and then I just do a sort of sweep through with both tea bags. I've never made a tea part of it. I mean, I feel like you've jumped into the big time there.

**Sarah:** Well, it was very exciting, actually. It made me really excited about talking to you because I've got a teapot. I even got myself a milkshake here, and I've got a shortbread, a chocolate covered shortbread today. What have you gone for? Hang on while I have a sip and munch of my biscuit. Tell us what you've gone for. And also, we thought it'd be good idea to just give people an idea of when we first started reading the Bible for ourselves. So why don't you kick us off with that?

**Felicity:** Well, I mean, I feel a little envious of your Yorkshire, actually. I've just gone for Straight up Yorkshire tea, which is serving me well, and I'm quite proud of my biscuit today. I mean, it's not very English. We're going for the European kind of biscuit. It's called a caramel stroop waffle, and it's kind of like a lattice waffle caramely thing. And what's really good is if you put it on top of your cup of tea and let it just melt a bit intimately.

**Sarah:** But I don't want to bring this up, but actually, I'm going to bring it up. Just called it a waffle. Is it technically a biscuit?

**Felicity:** Well, I mean, I hadn't even thought about that confusion. But it is a biscuit in this instance, because I'm drinking it. I'm not drinking it, I'm eating it with a cup of tea. So I think it qualifies. I mean, you're right, but it's not a waffle in a kind of waffling sense.

**Sarah:** You can't say, I'm eating some cheese with the cup of tea. So they're a biscuit.

**Felicity:** Yeah. I appreciate the logic doesn't work, but just take it as a biscuit this time. We can debate it on Instagram or something.

**Sarah:** Oh, yeah.

**Felicity:** The question of when did I start reading the Bible? It's a good question. I came to my own personal faith in Jesus when I was at university, through a friend actually. And as I was kind of investigating, working out whether I thought what the Bible said was true, whether Jesus really was who he said he was, I really noticed that my friend was reading the Bible in order to kind of work out those answers. It sounds kind of crazy, but that was a bit surprising to me. I'd never really seen someone properly reading the Bible in a kind of everyday kind of sense. So I think quite soon after I came to faith, so in my second year of university, I then began to think, well, I really should start reading the Bible for myself. And I mean, I really didn't know how to when I started. And I was grateful for this friend actually sitting down with me and we read through Mark's gospel together and various people along the way, just helping me kind of work out what it is to read the Bible. I think that's reason that both of us, we're not actually experts in reading the Bible. We have just kind of over the course of time read the Bible as much as we possibly can. And so what about you, Sarah? How did you start or when did you start?

**Sarah:** That's an interesting question. I remember we went on holiday together when I just finished a level and I remember you taking time out from me basically to read your Bible. I thought, Whoa, this is important. And you must have recently kind of really started reading the Bible for yourself then because I remember thinking, wow, this is a big deal and you want to hang out with reading the Bible rather than hang out with me. That was the first time it really struck me. I started reading the Bible by myself in secret because I didn't want you to know because you were talking to me about Jesus a bit and I thought this is really important to you and I didn't want to let you down if I didn't think this was true. So I started reading it in secret in my what was it? Third year at Uni.

**Felicity:** Yes, I remember.

**Sarah:** And then I gave you a call one day.

**Felicity:** You did very good on the secret because I don't think I knew for both of us. That was a fair number of years ago, wasn't it? So over the course of 15 years or so, yeah.

**Sarah:** But I've really enjoyed going to the beginning of Habitat. Have you?

**Felicity:** Absolutely. It's just weighty relevant, really enjoying just dwelling on it. Should we get going then and dig in?

**Sarah:** Should I read?

**Felicity:** Yes, go for it. So we are reading chapter one, verses five through to eleven.

**Sarah:** Okay. Look at the nations and watch and be utterly amazed. So I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe even if you were told I am raising up the Babylonians, that ruthless and impetuous people who sweep across the whole earth to seize dwellings not their own. They are a feared and dreaded people. They are a lore to themselves and promote their own honor. Their horses are swifter than leopards, fiercer than walls at dusk, their cavalry gallops headlong, their horsemen come from afar. They fly like an eagle swooping to devour. They all come intent on violence. Their hordes advance like a desert wind and gather prisoners like sand. They mock kings and scoff at rulers. They laugh at all fortified cities by building earth and ramps. They capture them, then they sweep past like the wind and go on guilty people whose own strength is their God.

**Felicity:** Great. We should probably just have a quick recap of the question. So the structure of Habakkuk is kind of question and answer, isn't it? And then ending chapter three on this kind of song poem. And so the first questions we've had so in Habakku is kind of direct questioning to God. He's saying, Lord, are you not hearing, seeing, doing anything about what's going on in front of us? And we have injustice and iniquity and wickedness and the righteous of being persecuted. And it all is very distressing as he looks around and that's happening not just in the world as a whole, but actually in amongst God's people as well, isn't it? What we've got here is God's answer.

**Sarah:** Interestingly though, it doesn't actually say and God answers, does it? So I've been struck by that as I just read it through this week, thinking, well, I'm really thankful for that little subtitle that the Bible gives me saying the Lord's answer. And I think as you read on, you begin to see that this is God's answer, but later we get the Lord replied, or the Lord answers, but actually at this point it doesn't say that, but we do know that it is the Lord's answer in the way that this first bit starts off. And it starts off with saying, I as in I am God. I'm going to do something extraordinary that you wouldn't even believe if anyone told you. It's so out of the realm of what you think is capable and worth considering, I think, isn't it?

**Felicity:** Yeah, absolutely. So you said I am. He says I am a couple of times there, doesn't he? Verse five and verse six, I am. So God is most definitely doing it, you can imagine. Habakkuch is waiting, what's he going to do? Oh, he's using the Babylonians, or the Caldeans as they're called in my translation, and the Babylonians. And we get a picture of them here, don't we? They seem to be the most despicable of people. There's not many redeeming features about the Babylonians.

**Sarah:** It's such cruel language, isn't it? The nature of these words. I've just kind of highlighted some of these words. Ruthless seized seared, dreaded, fiercer, devour, violence, prisoners, mock, scoffs, laugh, guilty sweep, all that kind of describing language of who these people are, who this nation is. It's absolutely terrifying, isn't it?

**Felicity:** Yeah, I think that's exactly and all the more terrifying, actually, I think for Habakkuk at the time, he would have seen kind of all heard of in other nations. The Babylonians have

gradually been sweeping through lots of different nations, so they would have been a kind of a rumor on the wind, I think, of those horrifically cruel Babylonians, and God is saying, I'm using them to sort out the injustice that you see around us. I mean, it just doesn't make sense, I'm sure, to Habakkuk interpretation. American English lipsy.

**Sarah:** What stood out for me particularly is the difference. So in the first book of chapter one, we had the law is paralyzed amongst God's people. And then in verse seven here we've got the Babylonians are a law unto themselves. Yeah, for me that's really stuck out this week as I've been dwelling on this, just wow, what does that mean? They don't even consider God's law as something to be followed. Like they're complete law unto themselves where the law is used, and then right at the end, their own strength is their God. And you can see that in the way that language is used, as to how they treat other nations and people and just the rooflessness.

**Felicity:** Yeah, that seems to be the kind of the root of who they are, isn't it? So verse eleven, I think really helps with that. Whose own might is their God? So very much they orientate around themselves. And I think the verse you were talking about, the justice and dignity go forth from themselves and they're all about themselves. So if we just pick up a few of the things, the kind of characteristics of them, they're bitter and hasty as they march through the breadth of the earth. Their kind of habit seems to be that they invade, they take things that aren't theirs. You see. I think it was really striking in verse ten, they laugh at every fortress, but they pile up earth and take it. It's like a fortress is nothing to them. They just take the earth, like they just take whatever is in front of them. And you can imagine if they feel that about fortresses, then people are nothing in that kind of a real callousness.

**Sarah:** And the way the language is used, they sweep past like the wind, like it's just nothing, is it? It's not brutal. And it's that kind of insignificant that they would wipe out nations, they would wipe out people in front of them who are in their way. And that makes it all the more surprising and all the more extraordinary that the Lord is choosing to use them, doesn't it?

**Felicity:** Yeah, absolutely. And what is so surprising is that he's then saying Habakkuk has been crying out for justice. And God's answer to that is actually. This is what I'm going to use to bring about justice. These people who are not just are going to be used to bring about justice. Which really made me think. As I was dwelling on it this week. We are not to expect God's plans. God's justice and what that looks like. To maybe look like what we would expect. The way that he's going about. That may well be surprising and mainly not make sense to us at the time. Mr. Watson?

**Sarah:** Absolutely. It is such surprising justice, isn't it? And it's so much bigger than we can imagine and we can fathom in terms of what we think should be happening, because you look back to this question and go, okay, is God answering them? Habitat was saying, you're not listening. Well, is God listening? Yes, he is. He's answered and he's saying, you're not saving, you're not doing anything. And he's saying, well, actually, wait, I am going to ask what was the other one? Why did you tolerate what I'm doing? And it's very interesting, this answer, isn't it? Because he's not tolerating, although it looks like he is.

**Felicity:** Yeah, you're kind of edging into Habitat's next question, which I think is naturally where our mind goes, and we're not going to go there now, but that is kind of where Habakkuk is heading, really. This is really what you're doing. And I think I was thinking about it in relation to us. I know we've talked about this, haven't we? We want to be really careful about how we draw the lines between us now and then and what it looks like to kind of conceive of God's judgment and bringing justice. We're not thinking that we can just place ourselves straight into this, are we? We're not going to go into great detail on that now because what we want to do is really sit with the people who are listening to Habakkuk, sit with Habakkuk, let's really kind of dig into where they're at. And then in a later, as the book unfolds, then we'll consider more what it looks like this side of the cross, but for the people at the time they are called to wait on God's justice. And this is what it looks like at this moment, god's justice looks like using an unexpected, horrible means of bringing about justice. And I wonder whether for us then, it's a similar kind of like wait, we can still hear the weight and know that the kind of I am versus five and six is very much that God is doing something.

**Sarah:** Yeah, I think sometimes applying the Bible to us simply means broadening our view of who God is, doesn't it? And what we understand of Him and his purposes. And this does do that, doesn't it? Because you look at on the ground, Habakkuk and God's people, and those who are reading this later would think, well, this is a really confusing answer. This doesn't feel like salvation, this doesn't feel like I'm being saved here. This is going to be brutal and quite frankly, I don't want this to happen, but it's so forceful, the language of, I am doing this, I am raising it, I am going to do. You cannot help but be struck by the Lord's hand, not hand in producing evil, but hand in controlling events in order to bring justice.

**Felicity:** Yeah. And I think therefore, trusting that ultimately justice will come.

**Sarah:** Yes.

**Felicity:** And even if we don't understand it now, even if we don't understand what's around us now, we can still trust that God is in control, he is God and he is working out his plans that do bring about justice and salvation and judgment.

**Sarah:** And I think that goes for the really big things happening in our world. And I think it goes for the really small things that happen day by day at home. It's been a hectic week for most people in the UK. A lot of us been thrown into home schooling again, it's been really hard. And yet a bigger view of God and a bigger view of Him behind confusing situations and circumstances, it's just helpful. It lifts your gaze, doesn't it? And we don't know how God's god we will never know the full extent of how God is at work in the season, but we can trust that he is. We can trust his word here and we trust that word for now.

**Felicity:** Do you think that I think that's so helpful. I think you'll write that as we keep our eyes fixed on God, Habecker hasn't left his position, his posture of looking to God, and we see that in the next chunk, we'll see that he's keeping on waiting on God. And I think, as you say in the small and the big and I mean, over here in America, there's a whole host of things going on that make you wonder. But I think in the midst of all that, we keep our eyes fixed on the God who says, I am doing it, I am bringing about justice, this is going to happen, and he is listening.

**Sarah:** I think that, for me, is being really crucial to because Habakkuk had these massive heartfelt questions. They were raw, they were honest, they were really big questions of his. And sometimes I think it can feel like you're praying and nothing's going to happen. You can feel like you're pouring your heart out to God. And actually, this is really challenging. My prayers have been challenged through reading Pamela \*\*\*\*, and yet just the assurance that God is listening, he's there, he's doing, he's saving, he's judging, he's acting, but quite often it won't look like he wanted he.

**Felicity:** Yeah.

**Sarah:** Will we trust God's word to do it's? Work in our hearts when it comes to it?

**Felicity:** That's really big, isn't it? And I think we probably need to wrap up there. And what a great thing to be praying. I know it goes quick, doesn't it? But sure, I will pray. Heavenly Father, we praise you that you are our big God. Thank you for Habitat, giving us such a big view of you here, as we hear you saying that you are at work, even when it looks confusing, even when we don't understand. And we pray that you'd help us to wait on you and to trust your words. And in the small and in the big, would we be those who really do keep our eyes fixed on you. I didn't even take a bite of my biscuit. I mean, it was so compelling. Well, actually, I did remove it from the steam. I thought it might sink in.

**Sarah:** It makes you long for the next bit of habit, doesn't it? He's got more questions as a result of this. And I'm again really excited to dig in next week. What else do we want to say? We wanted to say thank you so much to everyone who has given such encouraging feedback and response and messages and just everything. We've just been blown away by people's enthusiasm for this podcast.

**Felicity:** We're so grateful for all engagement, really. And what we'd love is if you felt like you could if you could put a review for us on whatever, wherever you listen to your podcast, it'd be great if you were to review us so that just more people might hear about what we're doing and how it could be helpful. That seems to be the way that you kind of reach more people.

**Sarah:** So if you can I don't understand it at all. I don't know how that works, but it does. So if you have time, a couple of minutes to leave a review, that would be super helpful for

us as we engage with more people wanting to get stuck in Habitat. And I think that's probably it, isn't it?

**Felicity:** That's it. I think we're out of time. So thanks so much for listening, everyone, and we'll see you. We'll hear you. No, you'll hear us next time. Bye, Sarah.

**Sarah:** Bye bye. You've been listening to word field hearts. If you haven't already, why not hop over to [Tenovous.com](http://Tenovous.com) where you can check out some of the best Christian resources at Viz dance classes? See you next time.