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**Sarah:** Hello, everyone, and welcome to Word fuelled hearts. I'm Sarah, I live in the UK and this is my sister Felicity and she lives in the US. Now, Felicity, you seem to have an interesting contraction going on in your mug there, as far as I can see. Can you tell me what you've got going on?

**Felicity:** Yes. Hello, everyone. Yeah, I have entered just a new sort of plane of tea making here. I got given a kind of tea strainer and some tea leaves, and so I've gone for the kind of Earl Gray steep. You leave it for three minutes and then you take it out and it's not a tea bag, it's kind of leaf. I was thinking, you said last time you don't like El gregg is a bit floral. I mean, this is definitely floral. You can literally see the flowers.

**Sarah:** I wouldn't like that. But do you love it? How great compared to the tea bag?

**Felicity:** Well, I just like the whole process and it probably is a bit more delicate. I feel like I'm in some kind of posh London cafe. So, all in all, probably more about the experience than the taste being that much different.

**Sarah:** And I have a quite a delicate.

**Felicity:** Biscuit to go with it, actually. It's just a short break covered in chocolate, but it's been decorated very nicely. What about you? What's in your refreshment?

**Sarah:** Well, I got a hot ribena today.

**Felicity:** You might have to explain, Rabina. It's not a common thing over here.

**Sarah:** Okay. Ribena is a hot squash, which, again, squash, I know is a vegetable. Over there, it's a hot juice black current. If you're going to get a black currant juice, this is the one to go for.

**Felicity:** I totally agree. It's so good. We miss it a lot, actually, over here.

**Sarah:** Interestingly. It's much better hot than cold. I think I got hot ribena. I've gone for a good biscuit today. It's a custard cream cream biscuit, because I don't like custard or cream custard cream biscuit. It's two layers with white filling in the middle. I don't know what it is about Costa cream. It's like this really average biscuit that just like yeah, it is the biscuit.

**Felicity:** You get after church most Sundays, isn't it? It's like that and the chocolate bourbon and all that for the Americans listing. It's kind of like in many ways, it's the cheapest biscuit you can get, but it really has some high quality.

**Sarah:** In Aldi, this was 23p for a pack of 40 or something.

**Felicity:** Wow. And you're still enjoying it. That is impressive.

**Sarah:** Anyway, last week's passage with you, I feel like it's been in my head. What have you been running on?

**Felicity:** Yeah, I was running on, I was thinking, Habakkuk, ask the question Lord, what are you going to do about the injustice we see around us? And then God's answer is, I am going to do something. I am going to bring justice. And then the people he speaks about as the means of that, the tool of that, are the kind of walking examples of injustice. So it's all pretty confusing, but underneath it all, or kind of overriding it all, we know that God is doing something even though it looks like injustice is kind of almost being increased because the Babylonians are going to come in under God's kind of sovereignty. They're going to sweep in and essentially destroy Habakkuk's world and all that he sees. That doesn't seem very just, but actually God is doing it.

**Sarah:** Yeah, that's what I've been thinking about as well, actually. Just the kind of the complete knownness of it. This isn't a surprise to God because actually he's decided to use the Babylonians and this terrifying nation, but a tool in his toolbox to bring about justice and

justice that isn't going to feel comfortable in any way for God's people. And I think that's been really sobering, just realized.

**Felicity:** Yeah, really helpful.

**Sarah:** Should we come with Habitat's answer? Because obviously he's got another question to throw out God, because of what God is doing.

**Felicity:** And I love this because I do think it is the question that we kind of edged towards as well. It's kind of happy cooks and our thinking go hand in hand. So he says. So we're reading chapter one, verses twelve through to two, verse one. Are you not from everlasting? O Lord, my God, my holy one, we shall not die. O Lord, you have ordained them as a judgment, and you, oh rock, have established them for a proof. You who are of pure eyes, than to see evil and cannot look at wrong? Why do you idly look at traitors and remain silent when the wicked swallows up the man more righteous than he? You make mankind like the fish of the sea, like crawling things that have no ruler. He brings all of them up with a hook, he drags them out with his net, he gathers them in his dragnet, so he rejoices and is glad. Therefore he sacrifices to his net and makes offerings to his dragnet, for by them he lives in luxury and his food is rich. Is he then to keep on emptying his net and mercilessly killing nations forever? I will take my stand at my watch post and station myself on the tower and look out to see what he will say to me and what I will answer concerning my complaint.

**Sarah:** Thank you. It's the question as you're saying, it's the question we want to know, isn't it? What is he essentially asking?

**Felicity:** Yeah, well, I think he's basically saying, lord, you're holy, you're perfect, you're pure than me, than us. And yet verse 13. Why do you idly look at traitors and remain silent when the wicked swallowed the righteous? So how can you kind of look on and even be behind what's going on when you are holy and perfect and pure? It just doesn't make sense, does it, for holy, perfect God to be using these just ugly, cruel, treacherous people to bring about justice.

**Sarah:** It's more than that, isn't it? Because he's actually asking why. Well, he's saying, Why are you silent? But he's saying, why are you choosing to use this despicable people when they're more wicked than us? He's kind of accusing him almost of not to delighting an injustice, but what's the phrase? Choosing to ignore the injustices that they're about to commit. And that just seems completely contrary to what yeah.

**Felicity:** So piling on injustice, on the injustice in order to supposedly bring about justice. And that just doesn't seem to make sense. And he kind of follows it through. He says, well, this picture is interesting, the image he uses of almost like a fisherman who's capturing people in his dragnet and almost the net and the power and the kind of gathering and the destruction that is the thing which is the picture of what the Babylonians are doing. And then he says at the end, what, are you just going to let it carry on and on and on? Is this just how it's going to be? Is the fisherman just going to keep on spilling his net and emptying it?

**Sarah:** It's very interesting, that picture, isn't it? I've been struck by that this week, thinking about that just the kind of namelessness of it. Yeah. If you're officially in the sea, you're just one of many thousand fish. There's no choosing which one is going to pick or not. But that's just the nature of the dragon, that's the nature of fishing.

**Felicity:** And I think for the fishermen, and probably more so, they probably get it more than we do. In some ways, a fisherman, that's just his daily task. That's just what he does. He catches fish. He throws us now every day, probably twice a day, throws us now and catches it. And so there's a kind of unendingness to that. This is just what's happening. And so Habakku rightly says, that could just keep on happening. Is that just what's going to happen? It's going to go on and on and on. The phrase at the end of verse 17, and as he's doing it, he's mercilessly killing nations forever. I mean, those words yeah.

**Sarah:** Big, isn't it? I think verse 16 is very interesting. Therefore, he sacrifices to his net and burns incense to his dragnet. So before last week, we had eleven where it says their own strength is their God, and there are seven. And now we've got a sacrifice to their net and burning incense to their dragnet. So again, this kind of image of the net is to be worshipped. Is that what it's saying the net is the thing that they are sacrificing to. The net is the strength.

**Felicity:** That's right. I think the net kind of almost represents their strength, doesn't it? So when he was saying, as you say in verse eleven earlier yeah, that's what they're worshipping and so in the same way they're worshipping what they do. And I think in a way it's quite a helpful reminder on the Babylonians, like what's at the root cause of what they're about. They are all about themselves. They don't have a vision beyond themselves, they're not looking up, they're not seeing God. And that then well, this is a really ugly scene. I think then it really helps us then to have two verse one and have a cook is different to them. I will stand at my watch post station myself and I will look out to see what God will say to me. And the Babylonians are not looking out to anyone but themselves. So while this is horrific injustice going on, then actually there's more to the picture than what they're seeing.

**Sarah:** Yeah, definitely. It's interesting, two versus one is key, isn't it? But I think for me it's been looking at this whole passage and it's bookended with that posture that Habakkuk has, because again, the way that he asks his question, he frames it with almost proclaiming who he knows God to be.

**Felicity:** Yeah, that's really true.

**Sarah:** Everlasting my God, my holy one, you will never die. Actually, your translation is different on that, wasn't it? What was your translation?

**Felicity:** Yeah, mine said we shall not die, but I think maybe yours is clearer, obviously.

**Sarah:** Kind of like disagreement, isn't there, to some extent of what that is? But I think you will never die. Links with you from everlasting you Lord, have appointed them to execute judgment. You, my rock, have ordained them to punish. Like he's starting with truths he knows about God and he's reiterating what he's heard God saying. And again it's bookended at the end. I will wait. I'm going to wait for your answer because I'm trusting you to bring perspective on what a nightmare situation for God's people. And I think that's just extraordinarily. It's amazing to kind of just see how's perspective and how he chooses to frame his question.

**Felicity:** That's really helpful. I hadn't really dwelt on that. You have the bookends of this is who God is, which is actually true of the last bit as well. Wasn't he stared off the whole thing, as you say, he's kind of echoing that same posture. I am going to bring these questions to God. She's such a wonderful thing about this whole question and answer thing that he is directly speaking to and therefore waiting on God to do it.

**Sarah:** Yeah. I stand at my watch, yours watch post. Mine's watched. That's kind of waiting for the enemy, isn't it? That language is waiting for the enemy to come. You're on watch, you're on guard. So you're standing at the watch post. I feel like it's both. I'm waiting for the Babylonians to come because you said they're going to come, but also I'm going to stand and wait for your answer because I'm completely confident that you will answer me.

**Felicity:** Yes.

**Sarah:** I want to grow in my perspective of why choosing to use the Babylonians in this terrifying way.

**Felicity:** Yeah, absolutely. I think that's really helpful. I think so. Then as we kind of think, how does this then relate to us and our view? So I think there's an echo for us of needing to have that same posture, of asking God, speaking directly to God and then trusting His Word, waiting on that word, remembering who he is. As we look around us and see maybe not this exact thing, but we see injustice, and you begin to wonder, is this outside of God's kind of sovereignty? Is this outside of what God intended to happen or what he is thinking is a part of his plan? And I think as we hear that and see this, then it's a really good reminder. Habakkuk is still waiting, he's still trusting God, even though this is a really graphic picture of the cruelty and the people that are being used to bring about the injustice. But that's not flooring him. He's still looking up, he's still testing God.

**Sarah:** And that's so crucial, isn't it? We're going to see through the book of Habakkuk that Habakkuk himself is this example of faith, isn't he example of trusting the Lord? But the example we get of that isn't just blindly trust. It's not stiff upper lip trust. That means have questions. And I can't come back and I can't bring my heart to the Lord and say, I don't understand, why me? Why us? Why have you chosen to work in this way? Yeah, I don't think we can get enough of that in terms of how we think about this for ourselves. I don't think we can get enough of that kind of reiteration that it's okay to come to the Lord like

this. It's okay to bring our frustrations, it's okay to bring our kind of laments and grief over injustice that we see and wrongdoing that we feel, and just a lack of understanding and our lack of there's so many things in the world that you go, I just don't understand how I can possibly be happening.

**Felicity:** Yeah, I think no, that's right.

**Sarah:** Justice in this life for that and to have this bigger perspective that are not from everlasting. We're looking to be eternal God. His view of justice is just so much bigger than what we can yeah.

**Felicity:** What a gracious thing I've got in Habitat to give Habakkuk two questions like that. He did come back that second time with a second question. And so, as you say, that's really helpful. This is the right thing. This is a good thing to come to God with our heart cry, is this really it? Because in reality the Babylonian invasion might have been the last thing that Habakkuk saw. That was kind of how it was within his sight. That was God's. Justice was the Babylonians. And we're going to see as we go on in the book, there's a greater, bigger justice to come. But for Habakkuk himself, I don't think he would have seen much more than this. And so for him to then wait on that, trust the Lord in that even if you don't see the kind of the perfect justice that you think or that you long for, then actually he's still waiting on the Lord. I think that is true for us as well, isn't it? So we are also waiting for a greater, bigger justice. But in our lifetime. Right here. Right now. We might not see that come about as would be perfect. As we would love it to be. But we wait on the Lord. We trust the word of the Lord. We look to Him and we keep bringing our questions and our laments and bearing our hearts. Laying our hearts bare before the Lord.

**Sarah:** And listening as weather on top of that. As we bring our questions. The heart posture of habit cook is really important here in terms of I know that I can bring my questions to God and I can be grumpy and I can be frustrated. I'm not really wanting to pray, I just feel like I'm not really willing to get out of my grump. And I think my heart can be very hard towards understanding and really kind of letting this tree change my perspective. Yeah, I know my heart soft as a question was it looked like to repent of the grump, the frustrations, the anger that I might be feeling. I'm thinking that I know better, I know best, I must know more than God on this one, surely. Yeah.

**Felicity:** And I think probably a part of that is actually helpful here. That's a dialogue. So we also need to be part of the dialogue and that we speak, we ask questions, but we also listen. And that's where the soft heart in listening to and being open to hearing what God says, even if we don't entirely see how it all works or if we don't really think that's the best way, but trusting that God is God and we're not, because as you say in verse twelve, are you not from Everlasting? Oh Lord my God, my holy one. O'Rourke, this is who you are. And remembering that, I think we need.

**Sarah:** To it's really challenging, isn't it? I feel big, but it's good. It's good for our hearts to feel like this, but I feel like I need to go away and really properly pray for this and really ask the Lord to help my heart keep soft towards me.

**Felicity:** Yeah, well, could you pray for us now?

**Sarah:** Yes.

**Felicity:** Get us going on that hard work.

**Sarah:** By the way. Thank you so much for this Word. Thank you so much for your Bible. We thank you that it is living and active, that your Spirit uses it to enlarge our perspective, to change our perspective, to deepen our perspective. And we thank you that we've needed that. I've needed that today. We thank you that you do that through Your Word. And we thank you so much what we've seen of you today and your character. We thank you for having honest questions and come back to your answer from last week we just asked. Lord, please, would you use this Word to grow our trust in you, to grow our faith in waiting for your judgment and your justice, even when we don't see it in this lifetime? Would you help us have a perspective that is eternal, that is focused on you who do not lie, who is not evil, who is perfect in every way and will bring about that ultimate justice even when we don't see it? Father, please help us to grow in our perspective as we continue along in Habakkuk. We pray all this in Jesus's name. Amen.

**Felicity:** Amen. Well, I've really enjoyed my delicate Earl Gray tea. It's almost finished, actually. That means it was really good.

**Sarah:** Very good. My rabin is nearly finished as well, actually. And custard. Queen went very quickly.

**Felicity:** Great. All right, we'll see you. I'll see you. And others will hear us.

**Sarah:** We're getting it. We're getting it. Thank everyone again for listening along. We really appreciate doing this together with others, even though not obviously chatting with others, but the community of people following along with us. And we look forward to getting started. Chapter two, which is a belter next week, isn't it?

**Felicity:** Absolutely. A total belter. I agree.

**Sarah:** Looking forward to it.

**Felicity:** All right, thanks, everyone.

**Sarah:** Bye bye.

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