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Felicity: Hello, and welcome to word fuelled hearts. We're really glad that you can be with us for this episode. This podcast is sponsored by Tenofthose.com 10ofthose.com handpick the best, best Christian books that point to Jesus and then sell them at discounted prices. So the more you buy, the cheaper they get. Do check them out at 10ofthose.com after the episode is over.

Sarah: Hello and welcome to Word Fuelled Hearts. I'm Sarah and this is my sister felicity. She lives in the US in Illinois and I live in the UK in Newcastle. Now felicity, tell us today, what biscuit have you gone for? You're a little bit disappointed by your choice last time. What have you gone for today?

Felicity: Sure a much stronger choice today, I've got to say. This is I can't remember what they're called in the UK. It's like a chocolate covered butter biscuits. They've got a picture of a cow on in the UK. I can't what they're called, but Aldi do a very good imitation and so I'm enjoying it with a couple of Earl Grey today. Actually, last time Yorkshire gone for Earl Grey. How about you?

Sarah: I do think Earl Grey was your favorite, actually. Is it? Does it from Yorkshire?

Felicity: Well, do you know what I really are? My favorite is actually a mixture between the two. I call it Yorkshire Gray.

Sarah: Okay. I don't really like her Gray. I don't know. It's a perfumey for me, actually. Right now I've got a hot water, but I did have Yorkshire before this one and I've gone for a chocolate chip cookie today. We got given two massive boxes of chocolate biscuits from both sets of neighbors this year and we're still working our way through that. So I'm very excited about my chocolate chip cookie. It's looking good. It's not like the big baked ones that you do.

Felicity: Yeah, because over here in America, I mean, Christmas cookies are a thing, definitely. They're probably as big as mince pies. Over with you over here, everyone makes Christmas cookies and they are big. They're good.

Sarah: Actually, this is about, I don't know, 3 CM.

Felicity: Good guess to be. So we obviously love to have a cup of tea or hot water. We're not coffee drinkers, but we appreciate that many might be picking up a cup of coffee.

Sarah: The parents do drink coffee.

Felicity: Yeah. Love a good biscuit or cookie. And also do love to get into the Bible and I just thought it would be helpful if we just kind of talked a bit about how we get into a Bible book. So we've merrily said we're just going to get into Habakkuk. I mean, what does that even look like to get into a Bible book?

Sarah: That's a really good question and I think on the last episode we discovered that not only we were working for different Bible translations, but you had a study Bible and I didn't. Now what I do have is a journal Bible here and mostly I really like that. I've only got into using it this year, but it just gives me freedom to actually write on the page and I can actually start scribbling and highlighting and underlining and circling on the actual text itself, which normally I would just print that off. But actually having a journal Bible this year, it's been really great. So how I get into or how I have got into Habakkuk in the last few weeks is with a pen in one hand and a very big box of highlights in the other. And I do love a bit of color. In fact, I find it quite hard when things aren't colorful. We'll probably show this on our Instagram feed at some point, but mine is very colorful right now. Got a lot of different colors going on as I've highlighted different words and I've just been reading slowly and just trying to highlight what seems important, what seems repeated, what seems surprising or what have I got questions about and just reading for what's there. How about you?

Felicity: What is it like? I do have a journaling Bible as well, which I prefer to use as a kind of starting point for getting into the book. I have my study Bible kind of encyclopedic things that I need to look up things, but I do similarly. I do read and read and read really slowly with a pencil in hand. No colors here, pencil choice.

Sarah: I love a bit of stationery.

Felicity: One of those clicky pencils and I go for all those things that you were saying. Looking at the repetitions and the surprises, I actually have a bit of paper by my side at the same time I'm jotting down any questions I've got and then every time I come back to the book, I'm actually going over those questions thinking what do I know the answer now? Or have I got any thoughts on what the answer could be? And that's how I get. I think our Bibles would look quite different, actually. I quite like a bit of kind of structure to what I'm doing, so I might then try and break it up into chunks. So like how's the author maybe shaped his argument and what are the themes. And I like to have a few lists going on which I'm not sure that fits with your kind of color coded kind of thing, but I'm sure.

Sarah: I don't really have an order to how I do things. I think maybe my brain is a bit more scappy than yours, I'm not sure, but I think I'd see where it takes me and see how long my concentration lasts as well. I'm not very good at sustained periods of time. I'm more likely to kind of come back time and time and again rather than have like a good yeah.

Felicity: And I mean, in reality, both of us have got small children, so we have a limited length of time, to be honest, doing this podcast together. It's probably the longest time we've had talking without children.

Sarah: Great. I'm so enjoying it already. It's such a gift to have this time of just chatting through this through I'm really enjoying it. Okay, well, shall we read we're only going to do four verses today, aren't we? We're going to do the first beginning bit of have a cook and the first bit of chapter one. Should I read the verses?

Felicity: Yes, go for it.

Sarah: Great. Okay, so I'm reading from the NIB, and this is what it says. The prophecy that Habakkuk the prophet received. How long, Lord, must I call for help? But you do not listen or cry out to you violence, but you do not say, why do you make me look at injustice? Why do you tolerate wrongdoing? Destruction and violence are before me. There is strife and conflict abounds, therefore the law is paralyzed and justice never prevails. The wicked hem in the righteous, so that justice is perverted.

Felicity: So we were saying last time that there's a clear structure to Habakku, isn't there a question answer, question answer. And then this kind of magnificent song poem from Habakkuk.

Sarah: So I thought what would be helpful.

Felicity: To do is actually just to kind of nail down what he's actually asking. So we've talked already about this kind of honest, frank conversation with God and he's got some questions. Let's just kind of see if we can pull out what those questions are. Exactly.

Sarah: Yeah. I think it's worth going to remind ourselves of how brutally honest these questions are. So as we look at them, we can see that. So what is he accusing God of here? He's saying, how long must he call for help? But you do not listen, guys, you're not listening. I cry out to you violence, but you do not save. That's really big accusations in that first little I know.

Felicity: The idea that he's not listening and he's therefore actually not doing anything.

Sarah: He's not a saving god. That's huge. Why do you tolerate wrongdoing? Why do you make me look at injustice? These are some of the biggest questions you could possibly fire to. Right?

Felicity: I think it's interesting that one in verse three. So why do you make me look at wrong? So in the ESPN, it says, why do you idly look at wrong? It's kind of like, sorry, you said are you not listening? You're not doing are you not seeing? It's just very big suggestion that God is not aware and is not involved in what's going on.

Sarah: Yeah, but in the same kind of way, how encouraging that he's asking these questions to God, that he's asking these questions to him rather than complaining away from him. His heart posture as he says this is to his guard. It's like this kind of balance, isn't it? These massive questions, but he's bringing them to the one who has the answers. And that's really great to read in the day. I'm really encouraging to see that.

Felicity: And I think that the questions actually give us an insight into what Habakkuk is seeing and what his situation is. So clearly there is violence and unrighteous behavior. Wickedness in Nicotine is all around him. And I think that verse four when he says the law is

paralyzed and Justin goes forth the fact he's talking about the law. Which is God's word. I think that means that he's not only seeing this in the unbelievers. In those that aren't God's people. But also amongst God's people as well. Where the law is read and the law should be abided by and the law actually is God's word at work. So it seems that habit is in a situation where everywhere he looks there is violence and there is iniquity and there's wrong and there's the righteous of being kind of battered by the wicked. And.

Sarah: That's really helpful that you said that, because I think it's super easy to skim over that essential word law there. I think we're not in have a good situation right now, are we? So it's very easy for us to skim over, therefore the law is paralyzed. But that phrase is hugely significant for who he's talking about and who he's lamenting over. But it's the people of God who paralyzed the Lord. The word paralyzed is huge, isn't it? It's to stop working. There's nothing about it that's working anymore. It's been completely devastated. Just this never prevails like that's such a claim on what he's seeing around him, isn't it? Yeah. And I think that to be in the people of God that that's going on is so disheartening. Yeah.

Felicity: I think it reflects actually back to that first couple of questions where he's saying god, aren't you doing anything? Aren't you seeing? Because it's through his word that God does in many ways. So to say the law is paralyzed is kind of almost echoing that sense that God isn't doing anything. What is going on? And again, as we've said again and again, it is so heartfelt, isn't it? It's a genuine lament. He's really distressed by what he's seeing and he's crying out to God like lord, please, will you do something about this?

Sarah: I think it's helpful in another translation, chapter one, verse one, the word prophecy is translated as oracle, but also it's translated as burden. That's a really helpful emphasis on that translation of just the burden that he's feeling for the people of God and for the situation around him.

Felicity: That's really helpful, isn't it?

Sarah: What's key is what he does with that burden, isn't it? He can lord with his burden, but with some massive questions.

Felicity: Yeah, so that's kind of the questions that we've got. So let's just quickly recap kind of you're not hearing, you're not doing saving, you're not seeing your laws need to be paralyzed, justice isn't coming about. And even worse than that, the wicked surround the righteous so not even those who are kind of supposedly righteous are kind of exempt from this. There is suffering all around it and just before we it's kind of weird. So we want to really pull our own heart through this, don't we, and apply this to us now, can you, Sarah, just kind of give us a starting point as to how we might begin to do that? You want to be a bit careful, don't you? Because you can't just go straight from Old Testament prophecy to little old us.

Sarah: Where we why not? Why not? Why can't we just immediately apply this to us?

Felicity: So as we get into the book and as we go through it, we're going to see more about what it means to apply it to us and to them and what that will mean. We just want to be a bit careful, I think, because Old Testament prophecy can't just draw a straight line to us. But there are some similarities, I think, between where we're at and where habit of cookies are. For a start, we've got the same God, Habakkuk is speaking to the same God, so I really think that means that I can look at the way Habakkuk is speaking to God and think, I can speak to God in prayer in that way. Does that kind of ring true?

Sarah: Absolutely. I think it's just like one of the big drivers for our own hearts in this is reading this prayer and going, wow, we can pray like this because we're on the other side of the cross and because we're in Jesus, we can come to God like this, we can come to God in faith and we can pray our massive questions. We don't have to fear and we don't have to carry our burden questions with us and think that they're too much. I've got the biggest questions, god, are you listening? Are you saving? Are you doing anything? Are you seeing what's in front of me? And he's coming to God with them. And I think that's huge, isn't it? And that's such an encouragement and also a massive challenge. Do I really pray like this? Am I really on my knees asking these kind of questions and praying in this kind of way to my God? Yeah.

Felicity: And I think with that as well, habakkuk is looking out on a world, but while it's different, also, there are lots of similarities. It's a broken world. It's a world where the

violence and the cruelty and it seems that the good guys are being knocked down by the bad guys and all of that kind of stuff is going on, like as much outside of the church is in the church, sadly. And so I wonder whether we're challenged to be burdened about that ourselves and to lament it in the same way as Habitat does not.

Sarah: Oh, yeah, it's a really awkward challenge, this, isn't it? Because essentially it's challenged me going, is this where my heart? Is my heart in the same line as Habitat here? Am I really feeling the injustice is going on in the church as well, outside of the church? Am I really so upset by them that I'm really nervous at all? Like, I think this do I really pray like this? Am I really seeing with Habitat's eyes.

Felicity: And longing for God to basically come in and sort it out to judge? Yeah, I think that's a real challenge. Isn't it not often that we kind of cry out for judgment. We might long for justice, but do we cry out for justice that also will apply to us and our lives as well? Yeah, I think it's a really challenging kind of posture that Habakkuk has, how he's speaking to God, but also how he's viewing the world and therefore what his burden is as he speaks to the Lord.

Sarah: There's so much, isn't there? There's four verses here. It's so powerful and I feel so much by it. It makes me excited to get into God answer. Right, because there's these massive questions and the next thing we're going to look at next time is God answer. It's exciting, isn't it? Because actually you do want the answers. Like, we've got these big questions, we want some answers and have a cook is going to give them to us in the next part. So I'm excited.

Felicity: Yeah, absolutely. We need it. Don't we need God's answer? We can't just be left with questions. Yes, we have basically run out of time. So Sarah, why don't you pray for us before we wrap up?

Sarah: I'd love to. You pray. Father God, we thank you so much that in these verses we see the real honest and raw nature of having conversation with you. We see this intimate glance into his prayer life and to how ready he is to ask these massive questions because he has confidence in you that you will answer. And we pray the same for our own hearts, Lord. We pray the same for our own prayer lives, Lord, that you would be graciously helping us to see the world as habitats, see that as you see it, and with that translating to how we pray into how we ask our questions and how we come to you in order to pray that you would grow us in all these things.

Felicity: Cup of tea, cup of hot water even.

Sarah: It's kind of cold now. Biscuit. I haven't eaten my biscuit this time.

Felicity: I've only had a bite.

Sarah: Anyway, I'm looking forward to next time and we hope you've been listening, that you've enjoyed this as well and we look forward to seeing you next time.

Felicity: Absolutely. Thank you so much for joining us. We'll see you. No, we won't. You will hear us. You will hear us.

Sarah: See you.

Felicity: Yes. Bye bye.

Sarah: Thanks so much for tuning in today. Why don't you head over to Tenovo's com right now where you'll find a great range of Bible study resources, study Bibles and Journaling Bibles that will help you to get stuck into habitat with us this time. See you next time.