



Bringing Light to The

Chains Of A Broken Heart

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Chains of a broken heart.

The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit (Psalms 34:18).

We often wish we could escape troubles—the pain of grief, loss, sorrow, and failure, or even the small daily frustrations that constantly wear us down. God promises to be "close to the brokenhearted" and to be our source of power, courage, and wisdom, helping us through our problems. Sometimes he chooses to deliver us from those problems. When trouble strikes, don't get frustrated with God. Instead, admit that you need God's help and thank him for being by your side.

God is the strength of my heart.

Psalms 73:26 my flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

Asaph declares his confidence in God's presence and guidance. From birth to death, we are continually in God's grip. But far more, we have the hope of the resurrection. Though our courage and strength may fail, we know that one day we will be raised to life to serve him forever. He is our security, and we must cling to him.

God will strengthen and uphold you.

Isaiah 41:10 fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

Although God chose the Israelites to represent him to the world, they failed to do this; so God punished them and sent them into captivity. Now all believers are God's chosen people, and all share the responsibility of representing him to the world.

One day God will bring all his faithful people together.

We need not fear because

- (1) God is with us ("I am with you"),
- (2) God has established a relationship with us ("I am your God"), and
- (3) God gives us assurance of his strength, help, and victory over sin and death.

Come unto the Lord and find rest for your soul.

Matthew 11:28-30 Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

A yoke is a heavy wooden harness that fits over the shoulders of an ox or oxen. It is attached to a piece of equipment the oxen are to pull.

A person may be carrying heavy burdens of

- (1) Sin,
- (2) Excessive demands of religious leaders (23:4; Acts 15:10),
- (3) Oppression and persecution, or
- (4) Weariness in the search for God.

Jesus frees people from all these burdens. The rest that Jesus promises is love, healing, and peace with God, not the end of all labor. A relationship with God changes meaningless, wearisome toil into spiritual productivity and purpose.

In what sense was Jesus' yoke easy? The yoke emphasizes the challenges, work, and difficulties of partnering with Christ in life.

Responsibilities weigh us down, even the effort of staying true to God. But Jesus' yoke remains easy compared to the crushing alternative.

Jesus doesn't offer a life of luxurious ease—the yoke is still an oxen's tool for working hard. But it's a shared yoke, with weight falling on bigger shoulders than yours.

Someone with more pulling power is up front helping. Suddenly you are participating in life's responsibilities with a great Partner—and now that frown can turn into a smile, and that gripe into a song.

Do not be troubled or afraid.

John 14:27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.

The end result of the Holy Spirit's work in our lives is deep and lasting peace.

Unlike worldly peace, which is usually defined as the absence of conflict, this peace is confident assurance in any circumstance; with Christ's peace, we have no need to fear the present or the future.

Sin, fear, uncertainty, doubt, and numerous other forces are at war within us. The peace of God moves into our hearts and lives to restrain these hostile forces and offer comfort in place of conflict. Jesus says he will give us that peace if we are willing to accept it from him.

If your life is full of stress, allow the Holy Spirit to fill you with Christ's peace (see [Philippians 4:6, 7](#) for more on experiencing God's peace).

As God the Son, Jesus willingly submits to God the Father. On earth, Jesus also submitted to many of the physical limitations of his humanity ([Philippians 2:6](#)).

Although Satan, the ruler of this world, was unable to overpower Jesus ([Matthew 4](#)), he still had the arrogance to try. Satan's power exists only because God allows him to act. But because Jesus is sinless, Satan has no power over him. If we obey Jesus and align ourselves closely with God's purposes, Satan can have no power over us.

God's power is made perfect in weakness.

2 Corinthians 12:9 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

Although God did not remove Paul's affliction, he promised to demonstrate his power in Paul. The fact that God's power is displayed in our weaknesses should give us courage and hope. As we recognize our limitations, we will depend more on God for our effectiveness rather than on our own energy, effort, or talent.

Our limitations not only help develop Christian character but also deepen our worship, because in admitting them, we affirm God's strength.

When we are strong in abilities or resources, we are tempted to do God's work on our own, and that can lead to pride. When we are weak, allowing God to fill us with *his* power, then we are stronger than we could ever be on our own. God does not intend for us to be weak, passive, or ineffective—life provides enough hindrances and setbacks without us creating them.

When those obstacles come, we must depend on God. Only his power will make us effective for him and will help us do work that has lasting value.

The Lord brings deliverance and healing.

Psalms 55:22 cast your burden on the LORD, and he will sustain you; he will never permit the righteous to be moved.

God wants us to give our burdens to him, but often we continue to bear them ourselves even when we say we are trusting in him. Trust the same strength that sustains you to carry your cares also.

God sent his word to heal and deliver.

Psalms 107:20 He sent out his word and healed them, and delivered them from their destruction.

Fools and rebels surely bring trouble upon themselves. This psalm offers hope for those who have made a mess of their lives. By receiving God's free gift of forgiveness (Micah 7:18-20; 1 John 1:9), anyone can begin a new life and break with the past (see Romans 3:23-26; 2 Corinthians 5:17). By faith in Christ, we can break addictions, heal memories, and restore broken relationships.

If we ask Christ to take control of our lives, he will answer us. His love reaches even those who have rebelled against him.

Those who have never truly suffered may not appreciate God as much as those who have matured under hardship. Those who have seen God work in times of distress have a deeper insight into his loving-kindness. If you have experienced great trials, you have the potential for great praise.

God heals the broken hearted.

Psalms 147:3 He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.

Sometimes we feel as if we don't understand ourselves—what we want, how we feel, what's wrong with us, or what we should do about it. But God's understanding has no limit, and therefore he understands us fully. If you feel troubled and don't understand yourself, remember that God understands you perfectly. Take your mind off yourself and focus on God. Seek to become more and more like him. The more you learn about God and his ways, the better you will understand yourself.

We may spend a lot of effort trying to sharpen our skills or become physically fit. There is nothing wrong with doing so, and, in fact, our gifts can be used to glorify God. But when we use our gifts with no regard for God, they are indeed worth little. It is our honor and trust that God desires. When he has those, then he will use our gifts and strengths in ways far greater than we can imagine.

Acknowledge God and he will direct your paths.

Proverbs 3:5-6 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

When we have an important decision to make, we sometimes feel that we can't trust anyone—not even God. But God knows what is best for us. He is a better judge of what we want than we are! We must trust him completely in every choice we make. We should not omit careful thinking or belittle our God-given ability to reason; but we should not trust our own ideas to the exclusion of all others. We must not be wise in our own eyes but be willing to listen to and be corrected by God's Word and wise counselors. Bring your decisions to God in prayer; use the Bible as your guide; and then follow God's leading. He will direct your paths by both guiding and protecting you.

To receive God's guidance, said Solomon, we must seek God's will in all we do. This means turning every area of life over to him. About a thousand years later, Jesus emphasized this same truth (Matthew 6:33).

By the stripes of Jesus, we are healed.

1 Peter 2:24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

Christ died for *our* sins, in *our* place, so we would not have to suffer the punishment we deserve. This is called "substitutionary atonement."

Entrust your soul to God, our faithful creator.

1 Peter 4:19 therefore let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.

Everywhere the Bible counsels that we trust God—in good times and bad, during sunny skies and thunderclouds, when we have a pocket full of change and a pocket full of sawdust.

How does trust work?

Trust overcomes fear. Genuine trust in God says, "Whatever mess I'm in, my heavenly Father will lead me."

Trust overcomes depression. No matter how overwhelming the situation or how low it makes you feel, God can draw you back to the light.

Trust overcomes hate. When careless or cruel people hurt you, sometimes irreparably, you can hate forever or you can trust God, but you can't do both. God is there to steady even the worst situation—always with a promise, always with hope. Commit your life to him for safekeeping. Rely on him when you face your worst circumstances.

You are facing a better future.

Isaiah 43:18 remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old.

A new Exodus would take place through a new wilderness. The past miracles were nothing compared to what God would do for his people in the future.

A sacrifice required both giving up a valuable animal and pleading with God for forgiveness. But the people presented God with sins instead of sacrifices.

Impossible tasks can be done through faith.

Mark 11:23 Truly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and thrown into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him.

The kind of prayer that moves mountains is prayer for the fruitfulness of God's Kingdom. It would seem impossible to move a mountain into the sea, so Jesus used that illustration to show that God can do the impossible. God will answer your prayers but not as a result of your positive mental attitude.

Other conditions must be met:

- (1) You must be a believer;
- (2) You must not hold a grudge against another person;
- (3) You must not pray with selfish motives;
- (4) Your request must be for the good of God's Kingdom.

To pray effectively, you need faith in God, not faith in the object of your request. If you focus only on your request, you will be left with nothing if your request is refused.

Jesus, our example, prayed, "Everything is possible for you.... Yet I want your will to be done, not mine" (14:36). Our prayers are often motivated by our own interests and desires. We like to hear that we can have anything. But Jesus prayed with *God's* interests in mind.

When we pray, we can express our desires, but we should want his will above ours. Check yourself to see if your prayers focus on your interests or God's.

By faith, we have obtained God's grace.

Romans 5:1-2 Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

We are now at peace *with God*, which may differ from peaceful feelings such as calmness and tranquility. Peace with God means that we have been reconciled with him. There is no more hostility between us, no sin blocking our relationship with him.

Peace with God is possible only because Jesus paid the price for our sins through his death on the cross.

All things will work together for good for those who love God.

Romans 8:28 and we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

God works in "everything"—not just isolated incidents—for our good. This does not mean that all that happens to us is good. Evil is prevalent in our fallen world, but God is able to turn every circumstance around for our long-range good. Note that God is not working to make us happy but to fulfill his purpose.

This promise is not for everybody. It can be claimed only by those who love God and are called by him, that is, those whom the Holy Spirit convinces to receive Christ. Such people have a new perspective, a new mind-set. They trust in God, not in worldly treasures; their security is in heaven, not on earth.

Their faith in God does not waver in pain and persecution because they know God is with them.

Love endures all things.

1 Corinthians 13:7 Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things.

Our society confuses love and lust. Unlike lust, God's kind of love is directed outward toward others, not inward toward ourselves. It is utterly unselfish. This kind of love goes against our natural inclinations.

It is impossible to have this love unless God helps us set aside our own natural desires so that we can love and not expect anything in return. Thus, the more we become like Christ, the more love we will show to others.

We walk by faith, and not by sight.

2 Corinthians 5:6-7 so we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, for we walk by faith, not by sight.

Paul was not afraid to die because he was confident of spending eternity with Christ. Of course, facing the unknown may cause us anxiety, and leaving loved ones hurts deeply, but if we believe in Jesus Christ, we can share Paul's hope and confidence of eternal life with Christ.

Death is only a prelude to eternal life with God. We will continue to live. Let this hope give you confidence and inspire you to faithful service.

Press toward the mark for the high calling in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 3:13-14 Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Paul had reason to forget the past—he had held the coats of those who had stoned Stephen, the first Christian martyr (Acts 7:57, 58, Paul is called Saul here). We have all done things for which we are ashamed, and we live in the tension of what we have been and what we want to be. Because our hope is in Christ, however, we can let go of past guilt and look forward to what God will help us become. Don't dwell on your past. Instead, grow in the knowledge of God by concentrating on your relationship with him *now*.

Realize that you are forgiven, and then move on to a life of faith and obedience. Look forward to a fuller and more meaningful life because of your hope in Christ.

Faith is the evidence of things not seen.

Hebrews 11:1 now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Do you remember how you felt when you were very young and your birthday approached? You were excited and anxious. You knew you would certainly receive gifts and other special treats. But some things would be a surprise. Birthdays combine assurance and anticipation, and so does faith! Faith is the confidence based on past experience that God's new and fresh surprises will surely be ours.

God will dwell with his people.

Revelation 21:3-4 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."

Have you ever wondered what eternity will be like? The "holy city, the new Jerusalem" is described as the place where God will remove all sorrows. Forevermore, there will be no death, sorrow, crying, or pain. What a wonderful truth! No matter what you are going through, it's not the last word—God has written the final chapter, and it is about true fulfillment and eternal joy for those who love him.

We do not know as much as we would like, but it is enough to know that eternity with God will be more wonderful than we could ever imagine.

An invitation is given to open your heart's door to Jesus

Rev. 3:20

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

To ask Jesus to come into your heart, please pray this Prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, I believe you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. I ask you to forgive me of my sins and coming into my heart. I accept you as savior and will follow you as Lord. Amen.

References:

Holy Bible: King James Translation

Additional comments and charts are taken from: *Life Application Study Bible*. Illinois: Tyndale House 2007. Print