



AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY

THE LORD IS NEAR TO THE BROKENHEARTED

Comfort and Hope
from the Scriptures
for Grieving Souls

SATURATE BIBLE RESOURCE

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..... from the Scriptures
..... for Grieving Souls

GOOD NEWS TRANSLATION



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The LORD is Near to the Brokenhearted

NEW REVISED STANDARD VERSION

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Contents

A Special Message for You in Your Sorrow	4
Introduction	7
Shock and Disbelief	9
“It can’t be true!”	
Anger and Resentment	15
“Why is this happening to me?”	
Guilt and Pain	25
“I should have done more!”	
Loneliness and Fear	35
“What will I do now?”	
Recovery and New Life	43
“I will be filled with hope!”	
Acceptance and Peace	53
“I will offer praise to God”	
Scripture Index	61

A Special Message for You in Your Sorrow

Dear Friend,

It is our sincere hope that the Scriptures in this booklet will bring you comfort in your sorrow. To help and guide you in your reading, we offer the following suggestions:

Begin with prayer. Ask God's Spirit to comfort and strengthen you with the words from the Holy Scriptures.

Check the Contents page. Find the section that addresses what you are feeling, and read those passages that speak to your needs at the moment.

Reflect on the questions in the section you have read.

Allow yourself to express and release the emotions you are feeling—anger, frustration, despair, fear, loneliness, guilt, relief, self-pity, or any other emotion. Acknowledging your feelings will help you cope with them.

Keep a journal of your thoughts and feelings.

Close your reflection time with prayer, asking God to bless what you have read. Read one of the prayers of blessing on page 59.

Copy onto 3x5 cards those Scripture verses or passages that are especially meaningful to you and carry them around with you. Take time during the day to pause and read them.

Record (or ask a friend to do this for you) on your phone all your favorite Scripture passages from *THE LORD IS NEAR TO THE BROKENHEARTED* so that you can listen to these words of comfort in quiet moments, perhaps before you go to sleep. When you awaken in the morning, lie quietly and listen to the recording again, asking God to give you strength to face the day.

Meet regularly with someone you trust to discuss what you are experiencing during your time of grief. Reflect together on what you believe to be God's message for you in the Scripture readings.

Find reassurance in the words of Jesus who said,

“Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.”

Matthew 5.4

Introduction

Someone you love has died. In your sorrow, a wave of emotions may overwhelm you—disbelief, resentment, fear, guilt, deep anxiety. These feelings may not occur in any particular sequence. All are part of your grieving process. Grief is part of the human experience and a natural reaction to loss, particularly as you mourn the death of a loved one.

Acknowledging your feelings and allowing your emotions to be released will be helpful. Finding a safe way to express your grief is a healthy response to the loss you feel. Put your hope and trust in God who will give you the strength to carry on and face each new day.

When the righteous cry for help,
the LORD hears,
and rescues them from all their troubles.
The LORD is near to the brokenhearted,
and saves the crushed in spirit.

Psalm 34.17,18

Jesus, the apostle Paul, King David, Naomi, Job, the prophets, the psalm writers—all are among the companions you will meet on the following pages. Like you, they have known grief and will be at your side as you “walk through the darkest valley.”

God, who came to earth in the person of Jesus Christ, knows the pain that comes when death separates you from a loved one. But this same Jesus Christ is here to assure you that this separation is not permanent, and he says to all who trust in him, “I will never leave you or forsake you” (Hebrews 13.5b). Jesus is now extending his arms to you in love—waiting to embrace you, console you, and heal your pain.

Shock and Disbelief

“It Can’t Be True!”

In the early stages of grief, one of your first reactions may be that of shock and disbelief. Denying the reality is a normal response to the unwelcome news that your loved one has died.

God, whose own beloved son died on a cross, understands what you are feeling. Lean on God’s ever-present love.

My heart throbs, my strength fails me...

O LORD, all my longing is known to you;
my sighing is not hidden from you.

My heart throbs, my strength fails me;
as for the light of my eyes—it also has
gone from me.

My friends and companions stand aloof
from my affliction,
and my neighbors stand far off.

. . .

Do not forsake me, O LORD;
O my God, do not be far from me;
make haste to help me,
O LORD, my salvation.

Psalm 38.9-11, 21, 22

... my soul refuses to be comforted

I cry aloud to God,
aloud to God, that he may hear me.
In the day of my trouble I seek the Lord;
in the night my hand is stretched out
without wearying;
my soul refuses to be comforted.
I think of God, and I moan;
I meditate, and my spirit faints.

You keep my eyelids from closing;
I am so troubled that I cannot speak.
I consider the days of old,
and remember the years of long ago.
I commune with my heart in the night;
I meditate and search my spirit:
“Will the Lord spurn forever,
and never again be favorable?
Has his steadfast love ceased forever?
Are his promises at an end for all time?
Has God forgotten to be gracious?
Has he in anger shut up his compassion?”

And I say, "It is my grief
that the right hand of the Most
High has changed."

Psalm 77.1-10

Pause and ask yourself...

**What am I feeling? Am I afraid to talk
about what I am feeling? Do I sometimes
feel abandoned when I can't experience
God's presence?**

...a time to mourn

*Everything has its time. You are mourning now, and
the grief you are experiencing is very real. You may
be wondering, "How will I cope? To whom can I
turn?"*

For everything there is a season, and a
time for every matter under heaven:
a time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up
what is planted;
a time to kill, and a time to heal;
a time to break down, and a time to
build up;
a time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance.

Ecclesiastes 3.1-4

You turn us back to dust...

Death is part of the natural created order.

Lord, you have been our dwelling place
in all generations.
Before the mountains were brought forth,
or ever you had formed the earth and
the world,
from everlasting to everlasting
you are God.

You turn us back to dust,
and say, "Turn back, you mortals."
For a thousand years in your sight
are like yesterday when it is past,
or like a watch in the night.
You sweep them away; they are like a dream,
like grass that is renewed in the morning;
in the morning it flourishes and is renewed;
in the evening it fades and withers.

For we are consumed by your anger;
by your wrath we are overwhelmed.
You have set our iniquities before you,
our secret sins in the light of your
countenance.

For all our days pass away under your wrath;
our years come to an end like a sigh.
The days of our life are seventy years,
or perhaps eighty, if we are strong;
even then their span is only toil and trouble;
they are soon gone, and we fly away.

Psalm 90.1-10

Pause and ask yourself...

**Where do you think sorrow and trouble
come from? Where is God when I feel sad
or depressed about my loss? What is my
understanding of God's anger?**

Teach me the way I should go...

Answer me quickly, O LORD;
my spirit fails.
Do not hide your face from me,
or I shall be like those who go down
to the Pit.
Let me hear of your steadfast love in
the morning,
for in you I put my trust.
Teach me the way I should go,
for to you I lift up my soul.

Psalm 143.7, 8

Anger and Resentment

“Why Is This Happening to Me?”

In your grief, you may be feeling angry or resentful. Perhaps you are angry with God because death has separated you from someone you love. Perhaps you resent being left alone to carry on and you want to blame someone for the loss of your loved one. “Why?” you may ask yourself repeatedly.

Whatever you are feeling, God understands what you are going through. Such feelings are a normal part of grief. Trust in God who is with you and who will help you work through these feelings.

...I am in distress

Be gracious to me, O LORD, for I am in
distress;

my eye wastes away from grief,
my soul and body also.
For my life is spent with sorrow,
and my years with sighing;
my strength fails because of my misery,
and my bones waste away.

I am the scorn of all my adversaries,
a horror to my neighbors,
an object of dread to my acquaintances;
those who see me in the street flee
from me.

I have passed out of mind like one who
is dead;
I have become like a broken vessel.

. . .

But I trust in you, O LORD;
I say, "You are my God."

Psalm 31.9-12, 14

I am shut in so that I cannot escape...

O LORD, God of my salvation,
when, at night, I cry out in your
presence,
let my prayer come before you;
incline your ear to my cry.

For my soul is full of troubles,
and my life draws near to Sheol.
I am counted among those who go down
to the Pit;
I am like those who have no help,
like those forsaken among the dead,
like the slain that lie in the grave,
like those whom you remember no more,
for they are cut off from your hand.
You have put me in the depths of the Pit,
in the regions dark and deep.
Your wrath lies heavy upon me,
and you overwhelm me with
all your waves.

You have caused my companions to
shun me;
you have made me a thing of horror to
them.
I am shut in so that I cannot escape;
my eye grows dim through sorrow.
Every day I call on you, O LORD;
I spread out my hands to you.

Psalm 88.1-9

Pause and ask yourself...

**Are people avoiding me? Have friends,
neighbors, relatives forgotten me?**

...the Almighty has dealt bitterly with me

After the death of her husband and two sons in the land of Moab, Naomi believed that God had turned against her. She decided to leave Moab and return to Bethlehem in Judah. She urged her daughters-in-law, Ruth and Orpah, to remain in Moab and to return to their families. Ruth, however, decided to return to Bethlehem with Naomi.

When they came to Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them; and the women said, "Is this Naomi?" She said to them,

"Call me no longer Naomi,
call me Mara,
for the Almighty has dealt bitterly with me.
I went away full,
but the LORD has brought me back
empty;
why call me Naomi
when the LORD has dealt harshly with me,
and the Almighty has brought calamity
upon me?"

Ruth 1.19b-21

Pause and ask yourself...

How do I feel about Naomi's statement that God had dealt harshly with her? Do I find myself sometimes blaming God for the death of my loved one?

"I will complain in the bitterness of my soul"

Job, a good man who lost all his children and his property, openly expressed his anger to God.

"Remember that my life is a breath;
my eye will never again see good.
The eye that beholds me will see me no more;
while your eyes are upon me,
I shall be gone.
As the cloud fades and vanishes,
so those who go down to Sheol do not
come up;
they return no more to their houses,
nor do their places know them any more.

"Therefore I will not restrain my mouth;
I will speak in the anguish of my spirit;
I will complain in the bitterness of my
soul.

Am I the Sea, or the Dragon,
that you set a guard over me?
When I say, 'My bed will comfort me,
my couch will ease my complaint,'
then you scare me with dreams
and terrify me with visions,
so that I would choose strangling
and death rather than this body.
I loathe my life; I would not live forever.
Let me alone, for my days are a breath.
What are human beings, that you make
so much of them,
that you set your mind on them,
visit them every morning,
test them every moment?
Will you not look away from me for a while,
let me alone until I swallow my spittle?
If I sin, what do I do to you, you watcher
of humanity?
Why have you made me your target?
Why have I become a burden to you?
Why do you not pardon my transgression
and take away my iniquity?
For now I shall lie in the earth;
you will seek me, but I shall not be."

Job 7.7-21

Pause and ask yourself...

Do Job's feelings, in any way, match my own? Do I want to complain to God? Am I having nightmares and trouble sleeping? Is there anyone who would be willing to listen to me express my feelings?

I pour out my complaint...

With my voice I cry to the LORD;
with my voice I make supplication to
the LORD.

I pour out my complaint before him;
I tell my trouble before him.

When my spirit is faint,
you know my way.

In the path where I walk
they have hidden a trap for me.
Look on my right hand and see—
there is no one who takes notice of me;
no refuge remains to me;
no one cares for me.

I cry to you, O LORD;
I say, "You are my refuge,
my portion in the land of the living."
Give heed to my cry,
for I am brought very low.

Psalm 142.1-6a

Pause and ask yourself...

**Do I feel uncared for? Do I feel neglected by
friends, neighbors, and relatives?**

...the Spirit intercedes...

*The Scriptures say that the Holy Spirit will help you
pray even when you don't know what to pray for.
God understands your needs.*

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

Romans 8.26, 27

Pause and ask yourself...

Do I sometimes want to pray but don't know what to say? Have I tried not saying anything, but listening for God's voice?

Guilt and Pain

“I Should Have Done More!”

In your grief, the pain and sorrow you feel may lead you to blame yourself. Statements that begin with “If only...” or “I should have...” may begin to surface. “If only I had done this!” or “I should have done that!”

Sometimes it may be too painful to acknowledge those things that are beyond your control or, in some cases, what you may feel to be acts of omission on your part. Whatever the circumstances, God is with you as you work through these feelings of guilt. Allow healing to begin by turning to God who loves you and who has already forgiven you.

...my heart is pierced within me

But you, O LORD my Lord,
act on my behalf for your
name's sake;
because your steadfast love is good,
deliver me.

For I am poor and needy,
and my heart is pierced within me.
I am gone like a shadow at evening;
I am shaken off like a locust.
My knees are weak through fasting;
my body has become gaunt.
I am an object of scorn to my accusers;
when they see me, they shake their
heads.
Help me, O LORD my God!
Save me according to your steadfast
love.

Psalm 109.21-26

Pause and ask yourself...

Am I depriving myself of sufficient nourishment? Does my heart feel like it's broken? Are people critical of me because I am still grieving?

“Would I had died instead of you...”

King David's son, Absalom, wanted to become king of Israel and had plotted to kill his father. David was aware of this plot, yet he grieved openly when he learned of Absalom's death.

The king was deeply moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept; and as he went, he said, “O my son Absalom, my son, my son, Absalom! Would I had died instead of you, O Absalom, my son, my son!”

It was told Joab, “The king is weeping and mourning for Absalom.” So the victory that day was turned into mourning for all the troops; for the troops heard that day, “The king is grieving for his son.” The troops stole into the city that day as soldiers steal in who are ashamed when they flee in battle. The king covered his face, and the king cried with a loud voice, “O my son Absalom, O Absalom, my son, my son!”

2 Samuel 18.33—19.4

Pause and ask yourself...

What are the conflicting feelings I am experiencing over the death of my loved one? How can I best express all that I am feeling?

“Ask, and it will be given you”

Jesus assures you that God wants to give you good things.

“Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. Is there anyone among you who, if your child asks for bread, will give a stone? Or if the child asks for a fish, will give a snake? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him!”

Matthew 7.7-11

Pause and ask yourself...

What would I like to ask God at this moment? Can I believe that God hears and answers my prayers, even when I don't experience getting what I ask for?

... I cry to you, O LORD

Out of the depths I cry to you,
O LORD.

Lord, hear my voice!
Let your ears be attentive
to the voice of my supplications!

If you, O LORD, should mark
iniquities,
Lord, who could stand?
But there is forgiveness with you,
so that you may be revered.

I wait for the LORD, my soul waits,
and in his word I hope;
my soul waits for the Lord
more than those who watch for
the morning,
more than those who watch for
the morning.

Psalm 130.1-6

Have mercy on me, O God

Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your steadfast love;
according to your abundant mercy
blot out my transgressions.

Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
and cleanse me from my sin.

. . .

Let me hear joy and gladness;
let the bones that you have crushed
rejoice.

Hide your face from my sins,
and blot out all my iniquities.

Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and put a new and right spirit
within me.

Do not cast me away from your
presence,
and do not take your holy spirit
from me.

Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and sustain in me a willing spirit.

. . .

O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth will declare your
praise.

For you have no delight in sacrifice;
if I were to give a burnt offering, you
would not be pleased.

The sacrifice acceptable to God is a
broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart, O God,
you will not despise.

Psalm 51.1,2, 8-12, 15-17

Pause and ask yourself...

Do I sometimes feel cast away by God? Are there things I feel I have or have not done that I want God to forgive? Can I look forward to being a joyful person again? Am I ready to praise God again?

The LORD is merciful...

The LORD is merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in
steadfast love.

He will not always accuse,
nor will he keep his anger forever.
He does not deal with us according to
our sins,
nor repay us according to our
iniquities.

For as the heavens are high above the
earth,
so great is his steadfast love toward
those who fear him;
as far as the east is from the west,
so far he removes our transgressions
from us.

As a father has compassion for his
children,
so the LORD has compassion for

those who fear him.
For he knows how we were made;
he remembers that we are dust.
As for mortals, their days are like grass;
they flourish like a flower of the
field;
For the wind passes over it, and it is
gone,
and its place knows it no more.
But the steadfast love of the LORD is
from everlasting to everlasting
on those who fear him,
and his righteousness to children's
children,
to those who keep his covenant
and remember to do his
commandments.

Psalm 103.8-18

Pause and ask yourself...

Can I accept God's unconditional love and forgiveness? Can I work at being as loving and forgiving toward others as God is towards me?

...goodness and mercy shall follow me...

The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not
want.

He makes me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters;
he restores my soul.
He leads me in right paths
for his name's sake.

Even though I walk through the
darkest valley,
I fear no evil;
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff—
they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and mercy shall
follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the
LORD
my whole life long.

Psalm 23

Pause and ask yourself...

Do I feel God's presence as I "walk through the darkest valley?" Is my fear lessened by the presence of my Shepherd and by the presence of family and friends?

Loneliness and Fear

“What Will I Do Now?”

In your grief you may be feeling very much alone and abandoned by God. While it is beneficial to spend time alone as you sort through your feelings, loneliness and fear may lead you to withdraw into yourself for prolonged periods of time and to isolate yourself from those who want to offer their help and support.

Depending on your medical history, you may also be experiencing physical symptoms of distress such as loss of appetite, lack of interest in things around you, sleeping disorders, headaches, intestinal disorders, high blood pressure, shortness of breath, anxiety, suicidal thoughts. While it is important to seek medical help if you are having any of these symptoms, it may also be helpful to talk about what you are feeling with someone you trust.

God feels your pain, even in the depths of your despair.

“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

In his final hour on the cross, Jesus himself felt abandoned by God.

When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?” which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, “Listen, he is calling for Elijah.” And someone ran, filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink, saying, “Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down.” Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last.

Mark 15.33-37

I cry by day but you do not answer...

My God, my God, why have you
forsaken me?

Why are you so far from helping me,
from the words of my groaning?
O my God, I cry by day, but you do not
answer;
and by night, but find no rest.

Yet you are holy,
 enthroned on the praises of Israel.
In you our ancestors trusted;
 they trusted, and you delivered them.
To you they cried, and were saved;
 in you they trusted, and were not put
 to shame.

But I am a worm, and not human;
 scorned by others, and despised by the
 people.
All who see me mock at me;
 they make mouths at me, they shake
 their heads;
“Commit your cause to the LORD; let
 him deliver—
 let him rescue the one in whom he
 delights!”

Yet it was you who took me from the
 womb;
you kept me safe on my mother's
 breast.
On you I was cast from my birth,
 and since my mother bore me you
 have been my God.
Do not be far from me,
 for trouble is near
 and there is no one to help.

. . .

I am poured out like water,
and all my bones are out of joint;
my heart is like wax;
it is melted within my breast;
my mouth is dried up like a potsherd,
and my tongue sticks to my jaws;
you lay me in the dust of death.

For dogs are all around me;
a company of evildoers encircles me.
My hands and feet have shriveled;
I can count all my bones.
They stare and gloat over me;
they divide my clothes among themselves,
and for my clothing they cast lots.

But you, O LORD, do not be far away!
O my help, come quickly to my aid!

Psalm 22.1-11, 14-19

Pause and ask yourself...

Do I feel alone? Do I feel surrounded by people who don't understand or care about me? Am I feeling that people don't want to deal with my grief? Am I feeling low as though my humanity has been taken away? Are people talking about "who gets what"?

...my soul longs for you, O God

As a deer longs for flowing streams,
so my soul longs for you, O God.
My soul thirsts for God,
for the living God.
When shall I come and behold
the face of God?
My tears have been my food
day and night,
while people say to me continually,
“Where is your God?”

Psalm 42.1-3

The Lord will not reject forever

For the Lord will not
reject forever.
Although he causes grief, he will have
compassion
according to the abundance of his
steadfast love;
for he does not willingly afflict
or grieve anyone.

Lamentations 3.31-33

...I will be with you

But now thus says the LORD, he who
created you, O Jacob,
he who formed you, O Israel:

Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by name, you are
mine.

When you pass through the waters, I will
be with you;
and through the rivers, they shall not
overwhelm you;
when you walk through fire you shall not
be burned,
and the flame shall not consume you.

Isaiah 43.1, 2

...you will find refuge

Feel secure in God's promises for you.

You who live in the shelter of the Most
High,
who abide in the shadow of the
Almighty,
will say to the LORD, "My refuge and
my fortress;
my God, in whom I trust."
For he will deliver you from the snare of
the fowler
and from the deadly pestilence;
he will cover you with his pinions,
and under his wings you will find
refuge;
his faithfulness is a shield and buckler.

You will not fear the terror of the night,
or the arrow that flies by day,
or the pestilence that stalks in darkness,
or the destruction that wastes at
noonday.

. . .

Those who love me, I will deliver;
I will protect those who know my name.
When they call to me, I will answer them;
I will be with them in trouble,
I will rescue them and honor them.
With long life I will satisfy them,
and show them my salvation.

Psalm 91.1-6, 14-16

Pause and ask yourself...

**What promises of God give me comfort?
Do I feel protected and shielded by God?**

“I will not leave you orphaned”

Jesus assures his disciples that he will never abandon those who follow him.

“I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. On that

day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them.” Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, “Lord, how is it that you will reveal yourself to us, and not to the world?” Jesus answered him, “Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.”

John 14.18-23

“Do not let your hearts be troubled”

Jesus promises to send the Holy Spirit to help you.

“I have said these things to you while I am still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.”

John 14.25-27

Recovery and New Life

“I Will Be Filled with Hope!”

The deep grief you are experiencing has no set timetable. Feelings of disbelief, anger, guilt, fear, loneliness may last several weeks or many months. Fully experiencing your grief will help to heal your pain. Cherish your fond memories of your loved one while allowing your grief to run its course, and recovery will begin. Surrender your grief to God who will bring you hope for each day and the strength to carry on.

“The LORD is my portion”

The steadfast love of the LORD never
ceases,
his mercies never come to an end;
they are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness.
“The LORD is my portion,” says
my soul,
“therefore I will hope in him.”

Lamentations 3.22-24

...rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit

But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Titus 3.4-7

...walk in newness of life

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be

enslaved to sin. For whoever has died is freed from sin. But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. The death he died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Romans 6.3-11

Pause and ask yourself...

Do I feel God is giving me an opportunity for renewal and new life? What adjustments do I need to make in my life?

“...I go to prepare a place for you”

Put your hope in Jesus who is the way, the truth, and the life.

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you,

I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going.” Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”

John 14.1-7

Pause and ask yourself...

How do Jesus' words make me feel? What kinds of feelings am I having about the future?

...all will be made alive in Christ

The apostle Paul offers the assurance that the dead will be raised to life because Jesus Christ has conquered death.

Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead?

If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation has been in vain and your faith has been in vain.

. . .

But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died. For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human being; for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ.

1 Corinthians 15.12-14, 20-22

“Death has been swallowed up in victory”

What I am saying, brothers and sisters, is this: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Listen, I will tell you a mystery! We will not all die, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For this perishable body must put on imperishability, and this mortal body must put on

immortality. When this perishable body puts on imperishability, and this mortal body puts on immortality, then the saying that is written will be fulfilled:

“Death has been swallowed up in victory.”

“Where, O death, is your victory?

Where, O death, is your sting?”

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 15.50-57

Pause and ask yourself...

Have I thought about when I will be raised to life? Does such a thought change, in any way, how I want to live now?

The Lord GOD will wipe away the tears from all faces...

There is a time when death will be destroyed forever.

On this mountain the LORD of hosts will
make for all peoples
a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged
wines,

of rich food filled with marrow, of
well-aged wines strained clear.
And he will destroy on this mountain
the shroud that is cast over all peoples,
the sheet that is spread over all
nations;
he will swallow up death forever.
Then the Lord GOD will wipe away the
tears from all faces,
and the disgrace of his people he will
take away from all the earth,
for the LORD has spoken.
It will be said on that day,
Lo, this is our God; we have waited
for him, so that he might save us.
This is the LORD for whom we have
waited;
let us be glad and rejoice in his
salvation.
For the hand of the LORD will rest on
this mountain.

Isaiah 25.6-10a

Pause and ask yourself...

What do I see when I read about the vision described here? As my personal sorrow is lifted, are there activities that I would like to participate in with others? What can I do to make this happen?

**...mourning and crying and pain
will be no more...**

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,

“See, the home of God is among mortals.
He will dwell with them as their God;
they will be his peoples,
and God himself will be with them;
he will wipe every tear from their eyes.
Death will be no more;
mourning and crying and pain will
be no more,
for the first things have passed away.”

And the one who was seated on the throne said, “See, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.” Then he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the

spring of the water of life. Those who conquer will inherit these things, and I will be their God and they will be my children.”

Revelation 21.1-7

Pause and ask yourself...

How do I wish to live knowing my future home is with God?

Who will separate us from the love of Christ?

The love of God in Christ Jesus will help you overcome every adversity.

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship or

distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written,

“For your sake we are being killed all day long;

we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.”

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8.31-39

Pause and ask yourself...

How can I best celebrate the victory described here?

“I am the resurrection and the life”

“I am the resurrection and the life.

Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.”

John 11.25, 26a

Acceptance and Peace

“I Will Offer Praise to God!”

However long the season of your grief, it will pass. Beyond your sorrow and pain, life awaits you. The community of faith lovingly welcomes you with open arms.

If you feel stronger because of your suffering, there may be ways in which you will want to help others in your church or community as they experience loss. Let God's compassion rule your heart, guide your thoughts, and give you peace.

...with you is the fountain of life

How precious is your steadfast love,
O God!
All people may take refuge in the
shadow of your wings.
They feast on the abundance of your
house,

and you give them drink from the
river of your delights.
For with you is the fountain of life;
in your light we see light.

Psalm 36.7-9

“I came that they may have life...”

Jesus, your loving shepherd, offers you abundant life.

Jesus said to them, “Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.

“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the

Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.”

John 10.7-18

“...they will never perish”

“My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand. What my Father has given me is greater than all else, and no one can snatch it out of the Father’s hand. The Father and I are one.”

John 10.27-30

Pause and ask yourself...

How would I describe my life now? What occupies most of my time? How am I dealing with filling the void I may be experiencing?

...do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus...

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in

word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Colossians 3.12-17

Pause and ask yourself...

Can I think of things I may wish to thank God for at this time? What does being part of the “body of Christ” mean to me?

...we ourselves are consoled by God

You can be a source of comfort to others. Share your feelings and your experiences with others who are grieving.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation, who consoles us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to console those who are in any affliction with the consolation with which we ourselves are consoled by God. For just as the sufferings of Christ are abundant for us, so also our consolation is abundant through

Christ. If we are being afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation; if we are being consoled, it is for your consolation, which you experience when you patiently endure the same sufferings that we are also suffering. Our hope for you is unshaken; for we know that as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our consolation.

2 Corinthians 1.3-7

...joy comes with the morning

Sing praises to the LORD, O you his
faithful ones,
and give thanks to his holy name.
For his anger is but for a moment;
his favor is for a lifetime.
Weeping may linger for the night,
but joy comes with the morning.

. . .

You have turned my mourning into
dancing;
you have taken off my sackcloth
and clothed me with joy,
so that my soul may praise you and not
be silent.
O LORD my GOD, I will give thanks to
you forever.

Psalms 30.4,5,11,12

God's blessings and peace are yours.

The LORD bless you and keep you

The LORD bless you and keep you;
the LORD make his face to shine
upon you, and be gracious to you;
the LORD lift up his countenance
upon you, and give you peace.

Numbers 6.24-26

...abound in hope...

May the God of hope fill you with all joy
and peace in believing, so that you may
abound in hope by the power of the Holy
Spirit.

Romans 15.13

Scripture Index

Old Testament

Numbers

6.24-26 59

Ruth

1.19b-21.....18

2 Samuel

18.33—19.4 27

Job

7.7-21 19

Psalms

22.1-11, 14-19 36

2333

30.4, 5, 11, 12 58

31.9-12, 1415

34.17, 18.....7

36.7-9.....53

Psalms

38.9-11, 21, 22.....	9
42.1-3	39
51.1, 2, 8-12, 15-17	29
77.1-10	10
88.1-9	16
90.1-10	12
91.1-6, 14-16	40
103.8-18	31
109.21-26	25
130.1-6	29
142.1-6a	21
143.7,8	13

Ecclesiastes

3.1-4	11
-------------	----

Isaiah

25.6-10a	48
43.1,2	39

Lamentations

3.22-24	43
3.31-33	39

New Testament

Matthew

5.4.....	5
7.7-11	28

Mark

15.33-37	36
----------------	----

John

10.7-18	54
10.27-30	55
11.25, 26a	52
14.1-7	45
14.18-23	41
14.25-27	42

Romans

6.3-11	44
8.26, 27	22
8.31-39	51
15.13	59

1 Corinthians

15.12-14, 20-22	46
15.50-57	47

2 Corinthians

1.3-757

Colossians

3.12-1756

Hebrews

13.5b 8

Titus

3.4-744

Revelation

21.1-750