

Broken Hearts
He Heals the Brokenhearted
Psalm 147

We will soon be starting a new series from the book of Hosea entitled, *Broken Hearts*. In preparation for that study, let's look at Psalm 147.

Did you know that the last five psalms all have something in common? Each of these psalms begin and end with the Hebrew term, "Hallelujah!" Should one call these the *Hallelujah Chorus*?

Like a referral to a good physician, Psalm 147 is going to point us toward the Great Physician since only He *"heals the brokenhearted and binds up the wounds"* (v. 3).

Let's look closely at the medical charts of this amazing Doctor. But who had a broken heart in this passage? The Septuagint is a Greek version of the Hebrew Bible made for Greek-speaking Jews who lived in Egypt back in the 3/2 BC. This version was adopted by some during the years of the Early Church, but for the most part, many have rejected the Septuagint since it has passages that suggest one can give money to atone for sins, one can pray for the dead or even pray to deceased saints, etc.

Thus, acknowledging the obvious discrepancies found within the Septuagint, we still might find something of truth in there. One such consideration might be the authorship of Psalm 147. The Septuagint ascribes this psalm to Haggai and Zechariah. They were writing to encourage the people to complete the construction on the temple in Jerusalem after their return from exile. There are clues within the text that would suggest that perhaps this was the time period when it was written (147:2, 13-14).

It can be difficult to know when someone's heart is breaking. For example, back in 2014 comedian Robin Williams took his own life. The nation was shocked that one who could make them laugh was actually crying on the inside.

The widow of Nain had already suffered loss in her life when her husband passed away, but in Luke 7:11-17 we learn that her only son had just died. Jesus interrupted the funeral procession as He looked at her pain and sorrow with compassion. He spoke to her these words, *"Do not weep."* He then turned to the coffin and said to her son, *"Young man, I saw to you, arise!"* Imagine the healing of his mother's broken heart between the lines of verse 15. *"And the dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother."*

This is why it is my distinct pleasure to introduce you to the only One who can heal the brokenhearted. Whatever it is that is weighing heavy upon you, He can lighten the load in your heart as you read through Psalm 147.

The Great Physician uses at least seven instruments to heal a broken heart.

1. The Lord Uses Praise to Heal Broken Hearts, 147:1, 7, 12, 20

"Praise the Lord! For it is good to sing praises to our God; for it is pleasant, and praise is beautiful." v. 1

"Sing to the Lord with thanksgiving; sing praises on the harp to our God," v. 7

"Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem! Praise your God, O Zion!" v. 12

"He has not dealt thus with any nation; and as for His judgments, they have not known them. Praise the Lord!" v. 20

The writer of another psalm was experiencing internal pain when he wrote Psalm 42. His name was Korah. Although he was sad as he began writing that psalm, he anticipated that he would praise the Lord again. He proclaimed that personal praise and worship was going to help him climb up out of the emotional pit that he was in.

2. The Lord Uses People to Heal Broken Hearts, 147:2

"The Lord builds up Jerusalem; He gathers together the outcasts of Israel." v. 2

In this same location where the psalmist speaks of healing of a broken heart, he writes of community. Why would God gather the people together? One reason is that we heal through healthy, nurturing relationships not through solitary confinement.

Several examples come to my mind about spiritual healing that took place in Scripture through the encouraging and comforting words and actions of others within the Body of Christ. Let me share one of those examples with you. Paul was a powerful man of God, but he still became downcast at certain times in his life. One of those times was in 2 Corinthians 7:5-7. He found comfort through a brother in Christ named Titus. Titus brought good news to Paul of the love of the church in Corinth. It just lifted him up. It wasn't praise this time. It was a person that God used to bless him.

3. The Lord Uses Providence to Heal Broken Hearts, 147:4, 16-18

"He counts the number of the stars; He calls them all by name." v. 4

"He gives snow like wool; He scatters the frost like ashes; He casts out His hail like morsels; who can stand before His cold? He sends out His word and melts them; He causes His wind to blow, and the waters flow." vs. 16-18

Sometimes the reason our hearts break is because we don't see how circumstances could ever change for the better. All looks gloomy from where we sit. But, how about from the holy place where God sits? Does it look gloomy from the Throne? Hmmm.

We forget that God controls it all. We assume that He is just as weak and as helpless as we are. But the truth is He is not like us. In His providence, He can move anything that He wants to move as long as it fits within His purposes and plans. I suspect this is why He told us to have the kind of faith that could move mountains (Mt. 17:20).

Someone may reply, "Yea, but this is the real world! He doesn't shake things up in the real world!" The historical account of Job would beg to differ with you on that one. Job lost all of his kids in a tornado, all of his livestock to bandits and eventually his health to some mysterious illness. His losses were real and his despair was real. But if you read the last few chapters of his story you will see what God did to bring some healing to this man (Job 38-42). What convinced him? What comforted him? Only one thing! The providential moving and control of God!

4. The Lord Uses Power to Heal Broken Hearts, 147:5-6

"Great is our Lord, and mighty in power; His understanding is infinite. The Lord lifts up the humble; He casts the wicked down to the ground." vs. 5-6

The power of God can really fix anything! In his book, *Everything You Need*, Dr. David Jeremiah writes about the enormous power of the sun. The sun is so large that one million planets the size of Earth could fit inside of it. It never shuts down and yet every second it produces enough energy to power human civilization for almost five hundred thousand years. Some scientists predict that it has enough nuclear fuel to burn for another five billion years. Yet, it is only one of 100 billion stars in our galaxy. But God is so much larger than our universe! The Hubble Space Telescope suggests based on images from their findings that there could be 2 trillion other galaxies in our universe!

If the Lord can charge up something as large as the sun, and if He can oversee our galaxy and beyond, what is it that is simply too difficult for Him to repair in your life? No wonder the Lord says, "Cheer up! I have overcome the world!" (John 16:33).

5. The Lord Uses Provision to Heal Broken Hearts, 147:8-9, 13-14

"Who covers the heavens with clouds, Who prepares rain for the earth, Who makes grass to grow on the mountains. He gives to the beast its food, and to the young ravens that cry." vs. 8-9

"For He has strengthened the bars of your gates; He has blessed your children within you. He makes peace in your borders, and fills you with the finest wheat." vs. 13-14

Next, the psalmist looks around at the Father's provisions for nature and reminds those who were struggling with discouragement over limited resources to reflect upon His faithful provision of rain for the grass and food for the animal kingdom. Of course, He gives all of this to supply the needs of human beings.

Paul spoke of this in Philippians 4:19 when he was inspired to write one of the most heart-warming promises found in Scripture. *"And my God will supply every need of yours according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus."*

Elijah learned this lesson long before Paul walked the earth. In I Kings 19:1-8 Elijah was discouraged over life and stretched out under a broom tree. He just needed the angels to bring him some bread. God knows what we need to give us a boost.

6. The Lord Uses Passion to Heal Broken Hearts, 147:10-11

"He does not delight in the strength of the horse; He takes no pleasure in the legs of a man. The Lord takes pleasure in those who fear Him, in those who hope in His mercy." vs. 10-11

The Lord is drawn to those who humble themselves before Him in brokenness (Psalm 51:17) and reverence. He delights and takes pleasure when we look to our Creator and Sustainer for hope and mercy. If we could only see the great love and passion that the Father has for us!

Several new songs speak of God's relentless love and pursuit of us. One new song says, *"You will never stop fighting for me when I can't fight for myself Every word is a promise You keep Cause You love me like nobody else You stand up for me In the darkest night When my faith is weak You're still by my side You will never stop fighting for me You will never stop fighting for me!"* Another says, *"And oh, the overwhelming, never-ending, reckless love of God. Oh, it chases me down, fights 'til I'm found, leaves the ninety-nine And I couldn't earn it, and I don't deserve it, still, You give Yourself away."*

This is why we are beginning a new study in the book of Hosea. Hosea is a true account of the amazing, unconditional, forgiving love of God. We will see that God's love still holds to standards, so it is not just mushy sentimentalism. Yet, it is incredibly powerful in how fierce His devotion is to those He loves. His heart is to restore not destroy. Yet, if discipline is necessary, He loves us too much to withhold it so that we might return to Him in repentance and trust. Let His faithful love renew your broken heart. Most times, our hearts are broken by the "Gomers" of this world, but just remember, God has been there through the pain and will see you through it to the other side.

7. The Lord Uses Promises to Heal Broken Hearts, 147:15, 19-20

"He sends out His command to the earth; His word runs very swiftly." v. 15
"He declares His word to Jacob, His statutes and His judgments to Israel. He has not dealt thus with any nation; and as for His judgments, they have not known them. Praise the Lord!" vs. 19-20

The Lord placed some encouraging promises in His Word that will take us back to the place of truth. Sometimes the trauma we experience in life disorients us and causes us to doubt what we once knew to be true about the Lord and life. Everyone needs a recalibration from time to time.

Take some time to renew your mind with the following promises from His Word: Psalm 34:18, Psalm 51:17 and Isaiah 61:1. Jesus came so that He could bring some healing to this broken world with all of our broken hearts. If no one else is on your side, based upon the authority of Scripture I can assure, God is on your side. It may not look like it nor feel like it, but the Bible says that He is for you not against you.

*⁷I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the Lord
And the praises of the Lord,
According to all that the Lord has bestowed on us,
And the great goodness toward the house of Israel,
Which He has bestowed on them according to His mercies,
According to the multitude of His lovingkindnesses.*

*⁸For He said, "Surely they are My people,
Children who will not lie."*

So He became their Savior.

*⁹In all their affliction He was afflicted,
And the Angel of His Presence saved them;
In His love and in His pity He redeemed them;
And He bore them and carried them
All the days of old.*