

Sorrow, Lament, & Breath Prayers for Grief

Grief is no stranger to those of us affected by illness and pain. Sorrow is unavoidableand individual—a universally shared journey. Grief is also a precursor of hope and the catalyst for growth.

Sorrow rushes in when our world turns upside down, and it can shake faith like we're standing on river ice cracking beneath our feet. Yet God is with us. He will catch us, hold us, and rescue us.

My God, my soul is so traumatized;
the only help is remembering You wherever I may be...
(Psalm 42:6, Voice)

LAMENT FILLS THE PAGES OF THE BIBLE

Almost a third of the Psalms are laments. The book of Job is filled with sorrow and lament, and the book of Lamentations (a collection of five funeral poems detailing the deep grief of God's people) is the grief book of the Bible . It is filled with raw, honest, dark, and sometimes volatile emotions.

My soul is bereft of peace; I have forgotten what happiness is;
so I say, "My endurance has perished; so has my hope from the LORD."
(Lamentations 3:17-18)

Lament gives us the language to name our pain, creating space for hope without minimizing grief and trauma. Through lament, we learn to speak honestly of loss, sorrow, and grief with God, asking the hard questions without condemnation.

- Why did this happen?
- How could You allow this, God?
- Where are You, God?

Unless we allow ourselves time and space to lament, our wounds and disappointments will turn to bitterness and resentment. Healing comes slowly in grief, and it begins when we learn to lament honestly.

When was the last time you expressed your sorrow or grief to God?

Chronic Joy

11 BREATH PRAYERS FOR GRIEF

(Breath Prayers are adapted from the listed verses.)

Breath prayers can be lifelines in the middle of grief. God is with us. He understands our sorrow. Breath by breath, He meets us.

GIVE ME STRENGTH (Psalm 6:2)
Breathe in: *Give me strength, Lord.*
Breathe out: *I am completely exhausted.*

I AM WORN OUT, LORD (Psalm 6:6)
Breathe in: *I am worn out from groaning.*
Breathe out: *I am flooded with tears.*

COME QUICKLY, LORD! (Psalm 38:22)
Breathe in: *Come quickly, Lord!*
Breathe out: *Help me!*

WHY ARE YOU DISTANT, LORD? (Psalm 10:1)
Breathe in: *Why do You stand far off?*
Breathe out: *Where are You, Lord?*

DEEP CALLS TO DEEP (Psalm 42:7)
Breathe in: *Deep calls to deep in the roar of Your waterfalls.*
Breathe out: *Your waves sweep over me.*

LONELY AND AFFLICTED (Psalm 25:16-17)
Breathe in: *I am lonely and afflicted.*
Breathe out: *Free me from my anguish.*

HEAR MY VOICE (Psalm 130:1)
Breathe in: *Out of the depths, I cry to You!*
Breathe out: *Hear my voice.*

MY SOUL IS DOWNCAST (Psalm 42:6)
Breathe in: *My soul is so downcast.*
Breathe out: *Help me remember You, Lord.*

KEEP MY FEET FROM STUMBLING (Psalm 56:13)
Breathe in: *You keep my feet from stumbling,*
Breathe out: *So I can walk in the light of life.*

HEAR ME, LORD (Psalm 130:2)
Breathe in: *Hear my voice, Lord.*
Breathe out: *I cry out for mercy.*

I WILL PRAISE YOU (PSALM 150:6)
Breathe in: *Let everything that has breath...*
Breathe out: *Praise the Lord!*

Chronic Joy