

More Than Your Pain

Companion to "More Than Pain" · Bible Connections with Joseph

A word before anything else. If you are in the middle of something heavy right now, you do not have to work this whole thing. Take one verse. Leave the rest. This is a tool, not an assignment, and nothing here is a test you can fail.

Eight passages, and none of them tell you to feel better. That is worth saying at the start, because a lot of what gets handed to hurting people is a verse used as a way to end the conversation. These eight do the opposite — they name the pain first, and then show that the story does not end there.

The eight

Psalms 34:18 · Lamentations 3:22–23 · Isaiah 43:2 · 2 Corinthians 12:9 · Romans 8:18 · Romans 8:38–39 · 2 Corinthians 1:3–4 · Revelation 21:4

◆ **Read all eight first, slowly, in your own Bible. Which one did you least want to read? Start there — that is usually the one doing the work.**

1 · Read It — the passage and what's around it

Read each one with the verse before and the verse after. Every single one of these gets quoted alone, and in more than one of them the surrounding sentence changes the weight of it.

◆ **Lamentations 3:22–23 is the famous one — mercies new every morning. Now read 3:1–20, the lament in front of it. What is the man saying about God there?**

◆ **Does knowing that make verse 22 weaker or stronger? Sit with it before you answer.**

- ◆ Read 2 Corinthians 12:7–10 in full. What does Paul ask for, and how many times?

2 • Cross Over — who wrote it, to whom, and what was happening

None of these were written from comfort. Lamentations is written over a destroyed city with the bodies still in the streets. Psalm 34 comes from a man who had just escaped by pretending to be insane. Isaiah 43 is addressed to people going into exile, not being spared it. Revelation 21 is written to churches under pressure, promising that everything that empire could do to them would one day be undone.

- ◆ Pick one of the eight and find out what was happening when it was written. What did you learn?

- ◆ Isaiah 43:2 says when you pass through the waters — not if, and not around. Why does that preposition matter?

3 • Stand in Their World — hear it the way they heard it

- ◆ Choose the passage that speaks least to you. Who was it first spoken to, and what would they have needed it to mean?

◆ Psalm 34:18 says the LORD is near to the brokenhearted, and in the same verse that he saves the contrite in spirit. The nearness comes first — he does not wait for you to pull yourself together. What changes when someone comes close before anything is fixed, and have you ever been on the receiving end of it?

The two words under Psalm 34:18. “Broken” is shabar, used of a jar breaking or a bone breaking — not a mood. “Contrite” is dakika, which carries being crushed small. Neither word is mild, and neither is a rebuke. The Hebrew suggests a person genuinely in pieces, and the verse puts God next to them and says he saves them.

4 • Verify It — hold it up against the fullness of Scripture

Here is the honest problem with any list like this one, including the one in the video, and I would rather say it than let you find it. Eight passages chosen on a theme can turn into proof-texting — deciding what you want Scripture to say and gathering the verses that say it. The way to keep it from doing that is to test it.

Scripture also contains Job’s friends talking for twenty-two chapters and being told at the end that they were wrong, Psalm 88 ending in darkness with no resolution, and Paul asking three times and being told no. A version of this that only comforts is not telling you the whole thing.

◆ Read Psalm 88 all the way to the end. What does it do that these eight do not?

◆ Does anything in Scripture make you uneasy about how these eight get used? Name it.

5 • Come Back — put what you found into today’s language

The Hebrew word behind “His mercies” in Lamentations 3:22 is rachamim, and it comes from the same root as the word for a mother’s womb. The Hebrew suggests — suggests, not proves — a gut-level, protective compassion, the kind a mother has for her child, rather than a distant, official kind of mercy. I would not build a doctrine on one word. But it is worth knowing that the writer, standing in a ruined city, reached for that one.

◆ In your own words, without any church language: what do these eight passages actually say about pain?

◆ Which of the eight have you had quoted at you in a way that did not help? What would have helped instead?

6 • Carry It Home — what it asks of you, and how it points to Jesus

paraklēsis — the word behind “comfort” in 2 Corinthians 1:3–4. It is built from a word meaning alongside and a word meaning to call: someone called to your side. The same family gives the name Jesus uses of the Spirit. The Greek suggests presence rather than a message sent from a distance — worth holding lightly, but it fits what Paul then asks of the comforted.

◆ 2 Corinthians 1:4 says comfort travels — we comfort with the comfort we received. Where have you received something you could pass on?

◆ Is there someone you have been handing verses to, when what they needed was you sitting there?

◆ One passage to keep where you will see it this week, and why that one. And how does it point you to Jesus?

And if working through this stirred up more than you expected — that is not a failure of the study. Tell somebody — a pastor, a teacher, a mentor, someone you trust — today rather than later.

Open your own Bible for every passage — this companion quotes only a short line where a point turns on the wording, and leaves the rest to you, because reading it is your step. Scripture quotations are from the Berean Standard Bible; the video reads a different translation, so some wording will differ — same passages, same references. If you are in crisis, please reach out to someone today; a workbook is not a substitute for a person. Bible Connections with Joseph · bibleconnectionswithjoseph.com