

PATHWAY BACK TO GOD

A guide for seasons of pain, anger, and lament

Page 1 — When Life Hurts: Finding Your Way Back to God

For the Hurting Person

- Be honest with God. Pray or write your anger, grief, and questions — He can handle it.
- Read laments in Scripture. (See page 2 for guidance.)
- Hold onto one promise. Choose a verse like Psalm 34:18 or Romans 8:38-39 as your lifeline.
- Stay connected. Even if you can't sing or smile, show up — or lean on one trusted person.
- Take small steps. Journal, walk, cry, or light a candle as reminders that God still sees you.

For the Church Assembly

- Make room for lament — include silence, tears, and honest songs.
- Resist judging those who don't 'look happy.'
- Be carriers of hope: hold the harp until others can pick it up again.
- Build safe spaces (small groups, mentors, prayer partners) where honesty is welcomed.

For the Close Loved One

- Give permission: 'It's okay to be angry at God — He can handle it.'
- Avoid clichés like 'It's all part of God's plan.'
- Stay present — presence > answers.
- Protect dignity: don't pressure worship or smiles.
- Pray quietly that God guards their faith and heals their wound.

For the Enemy's Lies

- Recognize whispers: 'God wants you in this pain ... the church will judge you.'
- Replace with truth: God is good (John 10:10), you are loved (Romans 8:38-39), the church supports not condemns (Hebrews 10:24-25).
- Remember: even your worst prayer is still prayer.

Final Word

The existence of Psalm 137 itself is good news: God welcomes lament. You don't have to perform for Him — just come as you are. Honesty is the doorway; God will walk with you all the way home.

Page 2 — Scriptures of Lament for the Hurting Person

Job's Anger and Despair

- Job 3:1–26 — Job curses the day he was born.
- Job 7:11–21 — 'I will not keep silent; I will complain in the bitterness of my soul.'
- Job 10:1–8 — He asks God why He targets him.

Psalms of Lament

- Psalm 13 — 'How long, O Lord? Will You forget me forever?'
- Psalm 22 — 'My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?' (quoted by Jesus).
- Psalms 42–43 — 'Why have You forgotten me?' 'Hope in God.'
- Psalm 73 — The wicked prosper while the faithful suffer.
- Psalm 88 — Ends in darkness to show God hears even unresolved prayers.

Prophets in Pain

- Lamentations 3:1–20 — 'He has broken my teeth with gravel.'
- Jeremiah 15:15–18 — 'Why is my pain unending?'
- Jeremiah 20:7–9, 14–18 — Jeremiah accuses God of deceiving him.
- Habakkuk 1:2–4, 12–13 — 'How long, Lord, must I call for help, but You do not listen?'

New Testament Example

- Matthew 27:46 — Jesus cries, 'My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?'

Page 3 — Scriptures for Recovery & Restoration

A pathway back to God when you feel like running away.

God's Nearness in Brokenness

- Psalm 34:18 — 'The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.'
- Psalm 147:3 — 'He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.'

God's Presence in the Dark

- Psalm 139:7–10 — 'Where can I go from Your Spirit? ... Even there Your hand will guide me.'
- Isaiah 43:2 — 'When you pass through the waters, I will be with you.'

God's Faithfulness Despite Anger

- Lamentations 3:21–23 — 'The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases ... great is Your faithfulness.'
- 2 Timothy 2:13 — 'If we are faithless, He remains faithful.'

God's Invitation to Return

- Joel 2:13 — 'Return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful.'
- James 4:8 — 'Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you.'

God's Assurance of Love

- Romans 8:38–39 — 'Nothing will separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.'
- John 10:28–29 — 'No one will snatch them out of My hand.'

God's Promise of Restoration

- Psalm 23:3 — 'He restores my soul and guides me along right paths.'
- 1 Peter 5:10 — 'The God of all grace ... will restore you and make you strong.'

Summary Pathway

- God is near to the broken.
- God is present in the dark.

- God is faithful when we are faithless.
- God invites us to return.
- God assures us of His love.
- God restores us after suffering