

#4: Break My Heart (The Compassion Song)

Listen to track 4 of *Songs of Justice and Peace*.

Scripture:

"A bruised reed God will not break, and a smoldering wick God will not snuff out. In faithfulness God will bring forth justice." Isaiah 42:3

Devotions:

In this world that warns us to ready ourselves for the danger around the corner, it seems weak to ask for a tender heart. The world would challenge: "Is it not wiser to ask for strength of heart to stand up to the next enemy?" But we hear that still, small voice beckoning us to respond in love, to live in hope, to be open rather than closed.

Perhaps that voice within is the one that needs no invitation, and needs not wait for our permission; the voice that calls us not to be unwilling servants, but to be partners with God, to live on this earth as if in heaven; the voice that assures us that come what may, we are not alone.

Daily we listen to this voice -- not in empty repetition, but in sincere devotion, longing to go deeper still, living as God's lovers in this world. As such, we have not so much broken hearts, but open hearts, willing to see pain as well as unexpected beauty. We trust in God who seeks not to crush us, but to uphold us and strengthen us to walk alongside others who also need reassurance that they are not alone, that their strength will be renewed, their faith restored.

Prayer:

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

Cast me not away from your presence and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

Restore to me the joy of your salvation and uphold me with your free Spirit. Psalm 51:10-12

Reflection:

- Hold a stone tightly in your hand. Feel its coolness. Feel its hardness. Consider the stone wall you have allowed to build round your heart for protection. Ponder for a time. Consider how God has been your protection even in the hardest times.
- Hold the stone in your open hand. Envision more fully what it is like for you to dwell safely, upheld by God's own hand. Ponder for a time. Thank God for being your true safe place, your rock. Might you ask God to open your heart more fully? To "break" your heart?
- Place the stone in front of you. Allow it to represent those whom God longs to love through you: the sick, the poor, the ones who need tenderness, the lost, the lame, the suffering.
- As a sign of your longing and openness, lift the stone to your heart. Speak the words of Psalm 31:3, "Since you are my rock and my fortress, for the sake of your name, lead and guide me."

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The Lutheran Deaconess Association prepares people for ministries of service to those in need in the church and the world; supports deaconesses in their varied ministries; encourages the whole people of God in their own Christian service; and assists the church in its diaconal mission.

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