

# When God Breaks Me, He's Breaking New Ground

by Sandeep Poonen

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**Scripture:** Psalms 34:18, Isaiah 57:15, Luke 15:25, Romans 3:27, Matthew 11:28, Romans 10:10, Micah 7:18

**Topics:** "Understanding Brokenness", "Embracing Humility"

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## Description

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## Transcript

I want to share a few thoughts that I had on being broken. We hear a lot in our church of being broken, being humble, being contrite. I'll show you a couple of verses.

Psalms chapter 34 verse 18. Psalm chapter 34 verse 18. We may know this verse, the Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

He's close to the brokenhearted. Wouldn't we want to be close to God? Wouldn't we want God not sitting in a big room and we have a tap on our shoulder and God says, hey can I sit next to you? God's sitting next to me and God's saying I'm going to save, salvation, those who are crushed in spirit. There's another verse in Isaiah chapter 57.

Isaiah chapter 57 verse 15. For thus says the high and exalted one, Isaiah 57 verse 15. For thus says the high and exalted one who lives forever, whose name is holy, I dwell in a high and holy place and also with

the contrite, the broken, the lowly of spirit, in order to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite.

There's another one. This is an incredible verse where God is saying, let me introduce who I am. I live in forever, this land called forever, eternity, where there is no time and my name is holy.

That's where I live. I live in the high and lofty place. You know that about me but I want to tell you one other place where I live.

I live in the broken and in the contrite place. And I don't know what comes to our mind when we think about broken. A lot of things change if we have the right perspective of things.

Like we've talked about, if we have the right perspective of God our relationship will change. If we think of God as a strict task master, our interactions with him will be that way. If we interact with God as a father, we'll interact with him as God has shown us as a loving father.

A lot of it changes once we see God in the right light. What comes to your mind, dear brothers and sisters, if I say the word broken? What's the emotion that is associated with the word broken? A lot is riding on this because as we showed, God taps you on the shoulder and says I want to sit next to you if you're broken. He says I live in high and holy place, you know that.

But I also live in the broken, with the broken and the contrite. So a lot of us is riding on the word broken and contrite. The problem, I'll tell you what I found in my life, whenever I hear a message on brokenness or God's breaking me, I think of it as there's something wrong with me.

God's breaking me because something's wrong with me and God's gotta fix me and God's got a problem with me and he's gotta fix me and so he's breaking me and God can't use me unless I'm broken and God can't live with me unless I'm broken. So the net feeling I have is I guess I'm just not that good yet. I guess I'm not fit enough because God needs to break me some more and he's continually breaking me.

A lot of it can change if I have the right attitude towards breaking. There's an expression that we know in the English language, all of us may not know, which helped me understand how I could see breaking in a new light. When you have a plot of land and I don't know if it is in this country but in many other countries, if you buy a plot of land and now you're going to build a house on it, what happens is you'll invite somebody famous, you'll invite somebody important, you'll invite somebody loved or beloved in your life to come to the plot of land.

This is what they'll do. They'll invite the prime minister, they'll invite some head of state, they'll invite some governor and they'll give them a little shovel or a little ax and they'll ask him to take the first hit into the ground and the expression that is used for that is called breaking new ground. That's the expression.

He's breaking new ground. He's going to establish something new. Now if I see breaking that way, it changes my perspective on what I'm looking at this breaking to be about.

I don't have to look at me and say well I'm a pretty pathetic person. No, no, no. When God is breaking me, he's breaking new ground.

He's trying to go from a two-bedroom house to a three-bedroom house. That's a good thing. It's a compliment.

When God says I'm going to come near to you and I've got my shovel, I'm breaking new ground. I want to expand the house in which you're living in and there's hardness there but I'm going to break new ground. I don't think that God is saying I'm going to break you down.

I'm trying to break new ground. See that's what I think a lot of breaking is. I'm like Lord, you're breaking me down.

God's not breaking you down. He's breaking new ground. Big difference and if I embrace all of God's breakings, a difficult trial, a difficult situation in my life and look at it and say Lord you're breaking new ground in my life to establish a new cathedral for you, a new monument for praise to you, I can approach it very differently.

God says I live in a high and a lofty place but also with the people I'm trying to break new ground with and I have to change. I've seen that as a wonderful opportunity for me to look at the breakings of God to be breaking new ground because there's an emotion associated with that which I also know I need to adjust in my life. I want you to ask yourself, do you think God shuns and rejects his children? Any one of his children.

What about the hard ones? What about the unbroken ones? What about the unbroken children? I can have this attitude about God that God shuns me and there's another expression that I can think about this. God's putting me on the shelf. I don't know how it worked in the Old Testament but as I see this, if God is my loving heavenly father, that's not what loving fathers do to their children.

They don't put them on the shelf. Now the children may want nothing to do with the father, that's different but if I'm coming to God, I'm sitting here and say God are you breaking new ground? God never shuns his children. God never puts his children on the shelf.

I'll tell you, I've wondered that many times about myself. Lord are you putting on my shelf? Are you just setting me aside and say let's let him figure it out and let him come back to me. I don't believe that's the heart of the father.

God does not put his children on the shelf. My favorite story if you don't know it is Luke chapter 15. I get so much out of that story over and over again.

Luke chapter 15. What is the end of the story? What is the end of the story of the prodigal son? Luke chapter 15. It's a long story.

The longest story that Jesus ever spoke was the prodigal son. Luke chapter 15 from 11 all the way to 32. That's that picture we have of the prodigal son coming home and the father receiving him.

But what is the end of the story? The end of the story for the prodigal son is that he's celebrating with the father in the house. But this is the good news for those of us who feel that we're unbroken in areas. We are like the elder son in some areas.

The end of the story is not that the father celebrates with the son, younger son. The story goes on from verse 25 onwards to say there's a problem with the elder brother and the father wants to break new ground with the older brother. This older brother has not been horribly bad.

He's obeyed all the commands of the father. He has been a faithful laborer with wrong attitudes in many ways like Joe. Having done a lot of good things but having trouble in his spirit.

We know a lot of negative things about the elder brother. But I want to pull it back just a little bit as it relates to the elder brother to see that the father goes out to the elder brother. He doesn't say elder brother I'm putting you on the shelf.

If you can't have the humility to come inside the house why don't you stay where you are. That's how I can think about God in my unbroken areas. All of us know that we're unbroken in some areas.

Anybody figured it all out to we're completely broken? No. We all find areas in our life we're like God I need to be, it feels like you're breaking me. And what the father is saying I'm not breaking you down.

I'm trying to break new ground. I'm trying to expand your lot. Don't look at me negatively.

This is the father. This is the time you should be embracing it. And I know it's hard.

And I know that acts going to the root is difficult but the only one intention for it is to break new ground. And so we see in the prodigal son story the father comes out to meet the older brother who's proud. Can you relate? Can I? I can relate.

And it's a great comfort in our areas of unbrokenness that God says I'm going to come out and have a conversation with you. He's not just going to excuse it just like he didn't excuse the unbrokenness of Job. God said no we're gonna have to deal with this.

I'm gonna have to break new ground in your heart Job. I'm not telling you you're such a horrible person. I'm trying to break new ground in you.

I'm trying to establish a bigger monument for you for my glory. And that's what he did with the older son. He's out there and that's the end of the story.

The end of the story is the father's not left the son. The end of the story is the father's having a conversation with the unbroken elder son. It's great hope for me.

Verse 28 is that one word. The boy became angry and was not willing to go in and his father came out and began pleading. I looked up that word pleading.

That's the word parakleo. That's the same word used for the Holy Spirit. The comforter.

The encourager as we heard. The exhorter. This is the Holy Spirit coming out to say I'm here to draw you back in.

And he's pleading the ministry of the Holy Spirit to come out to the older brother and saying come on in. Because this boy had done a lot of good things but needed to break new ground. And that's what God's going to keep doing in your life.

He's not putting you on the shelf. He's not shunning me. He's not shunning us.

And this is how we can look at the breakings in our lives and welcome it and consider it joy. When we see these breakings saying God you don't think of me as being a horrible. He's not he's putting me on the shelf.

I want to make sure you understand the right balance. God's not welcoming him back into the house. He's not saying you're ready to come into the house.

But the father is going out to the older brother's son and saying I'm going to meet with you and we're going to talk with you and we're going to deal with it. And we'll have the conversation as long as it's going to take. I'm going to resist this attitude you have in you.

It says God resists the proud. He's like look you can't come into the house with this attitude. But I'm not leaving you on the shelf.

I'm going to engage with you. I don't know how God was in the old covenant but I know God as a loving father engages with his children in all of our brokenness. So let's look at breaking in a new way.

Let's look at breaking and saying God you're trying to establish something new. So let me partner with you. Let me invite you Prime Minister of India, President of the United States.

Break new ground. You could use the word crushing too. What are you crushing? You're crushing me? Are you crushing the olive? Are you crushing the grape? These words can make a massive difference if I look at these words breaking and crushing in the right way.

And God says you're a valuable olive. You're going to be the product of you is going to be sitting on my table as I feast. It's going to be your crushing that's going to feed me and feast me.

All right men. All right I'll lean into the crushing then a little bit more. I'll embrace the crushing a little bit more now.

I didn't realize that that was the purpose that you wanted me to produce some olive oil out of me. I didn't realize that you were trying to produce wonderful new wine out of me. Changes my perspective on breakings and crushings.

Back to Isaiah chapter 57 verse 15. Dear brothers and sisters, I've realized that oftentimes a part of my problem is I don't read the rest of the verse or the rest of the chapter. And so in Isaiah 57 verse 15 we read that he's near the brokenhearted and the contrite and he's near us in our breakings.

But for what? Isaiah 57 verse 15 in order to revive them to bring them to life. The only way God's going to bring them to life is for him to draw near to me in my areas of crushings and bring it to life. I want to show you a picture that came to my mind.

I want to show you a video that came to my mind when I think about how God revives the broken. It may not be something that you may get right away, but it blessed my heart to get a new view of how somebody can be brokenhearted and how God can revive them. So let's watch this one minute video.

We can put it on the screen. I want that picture to be the picture you see of what God wanted the elder brother to do. We see the picture of the younger son.

Saying that's what the younger son did. But what was God trying to do with the older son? And if there's no audio on that, but if you heard, if you looked at the audio, there was no, he didn't say anything. The boy didn't have any words and he, to be revived, that's what it meant to be revived.

And I saw that picture of a boy who had been broken. This was a boy who probably didn't understand why his mother had left him. Why his mother had not been there for his eight-year-old birthday.

I don't know how old that boy was. Why she seemed to prioritize some other things more than him. She'd been gone for months.

So there's a lot of questions and I'm sure he was brokenhearted and this life had been breaking him. But this was a picture to me of saying this is what the elder brother needed to do. It wasn't complicated.

He just needed to interact with God without words and just be reunited with the Father. I love the fact that there are no, he didn't even, he wasn't even crying. We don't even have to have tears, brothers and sisters.

We don't even need to have an apology speech. But the question is can we lay all of our agendas down? Can I lay all of my feelings down and say God I don't understand all the things you've allowed in my life as you're breaking me. But I want to be with you.

And to me this was the miracle of the older brother. I'd like to hope that this boy probably was too big to be held by that mother, eight, nine, ten years old. But this was what he needed.

There's the hug that the younger brother needed but the elder brother also needed to reset. And dear brothers and sisters, when you are being broken and when God is breaking you, you don't have to do some big act. No words, even if there are no tears.

We have to come back to drawing on the love of God and saying God I'm opening up my arms to receive your embrace. And to me this video meant a lot more when I put the picture of the older brother. When I think about God breaking me, I have such a negative attitude about myself.

That much I know. Ask yourself, dear brothers and sisters, when you know that God is breaking you, do you have a positive view of yourself or a negative view of yourself? And I really want to encourage us that we have a God view of ourselves. And God has great plans for us.

And even in the areas of our unbrokenness, that elder brother, if you look at what God was saying, the father was saying to the elder brother, he was saying all that I have is yours. You don't understand what I'm throwing the feast as yet. All that I have is yours.

I have to celebrate for this other brother of mine who's come home. And I've had the wrong view of God in breakings, in the difficult situations of life. I spoke about that last week.

But even if you feel, dear brothers and sisters, when we feel that God is breaking us down, it's not true. He's breaking new ground to establish us in the faith. I want to show you another couple of thoughts.

A lot of us, we read a lot of commands in scripture about humility. God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble. Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God.

Is that what you have to do? How do you humble yourself? Does anybody have some tips and tricks? How do we humble ourselves? Especially if somebody comes and tells you, I think you're proud. Go humble yourself. Okay.

What does that mean? Is humility an action or a reaction? Is humility an action or a reaction? Humility is a reaction. We used to think, we can often read the verses and the commands and saying that humility is an action. Humility is a reaction.

Hebrews chapter three, sorry not Hebrews, Romans chapter three. This is the very introduction to the gospel. We'll see here that humility is a reaction.

We know Romans chapter three, which is the conclusion of Paul's introduction, which is all have sinned. Verse 23. All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, being justified as a gift by his grace, being counted as totally righteous, being given 100% on the quiz, even though my track record and the way it looks at is saying I got 0.2%. All have sinned but we are justified and considered totally righteous as a gift by his grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.

And we can read that passage, but verse 27 is where I build this truth that humility is a reaction, not an action. Because then he says, where then is boasting? Where then is pride? It is excluded by the law of faith. It is the reaction to the faith that gives us justification.

So when God tells me I need to humble myself, when I hear a command in scripture, when I read a command in scripture, when I know that I need to humble myself and these breakings are a way for me to humble myself, my humility is a reaction. It's a response to me embracing the law of faith. The law of faith which says that God calls you totally righteous because of Jesus and what he did.

Yes, you're a sinner, but humility is kicked out, it's excluded. Humility, sorry pride, pride is excluded. Pride is kicked out at the very outset of our Christian faith and the way to get rid of pride is to embrace the law of faith which is to say, God you accept me because of Jesus.

No matter how horrible I am, the only entrance into God's presence is by the law of faith. That is what kicks pride out. That is the master secret to all humility.

So yes, there are commands that go humble yourself, but how do I humble myself? Embrace justification by faith, embrace what Jesus did for me on the cross. That is always my secret and God's going to show me how much he loved me by increasing how big that sacrifice was. How much it took for him to come down to this earth, how much it took for him to remain faithful on this earth, how much it took for him to be separated from the father and on and on.

These are the things that God will expand our heart for and as we see the greater sacrifice of Jesus, we'll grow in our confidence in the law of faith and as a result of that, pride will get kicked out or excluded. I'm absolutely convinced of Matthew 11 28, come to me you who are weary and heavy laden with all these rules of religion and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon me because my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

Dear brothers and sisters, that verse spoke hit me like a thunderbolt over a decade ago and I've been trying to find in over and over again in all of these marvelous truths, in the red lines of life, how is this an easy yoke? How is this burden light? When God takes me through breakings, how is this the easy yoke? How is this the light burden? And it's there when God tells me to go humble myself. When I hear the commands in scripture, humble myself in the crushings. How do I do it? Go and sit at the foot of the cross.

Go and sit at the fountain of life and take in and don't rush. There's no time frame for which you need to get it in one minute, one day, in one hour. We stay at the cross.

We sit at the feet of Jesus and we say, Lord, this is my spot. This is my resting ground until the caterpillar becomes a butterfly. I'm going to wait upon you and you stitch the wings when it's ready.

But here's what I need to do. I got to remain here. I got to tie myself in to the love of God and say, God, I'm going to remain here.

There's no other subject on the agenda except to drink in the love of God, the law of faith. And then humility comes more easily over time. One final truth about salvation.

The whole point of God breaking me is to save me, to save me. We heard that he's near the broken hearted and he saves those who are contrite. I am absolutely convinced, dear brothers and sisters, why I have experienced more salvation in the last 10-15 years than in the years before that.

Was my interest in salvation greater before in the 15 years before 15 years? No. I've had an interest in being saved from my sin from at least the age of 17 and I'm 47 now. For 30 years, I've had an equal interest in being saved from sin.

On that, I'm 99% sure. But something changed in the last 10-15 years. I'll show you this verse.

It's something you may know. Romans chapter 10, verse 10. It is right there in Scripture, but we don't obey it because we lack courage.

We'll find some other excuse. We'll shed tears. We'll weep.

We'll do anything, but we won't obey Romans 10-10. And I wish I could have a megaphone. I wish I could have a loudspeaker in which I can say the reason we don't have salvation, many of us, like we should, me included in the areas of my life, is because I don't have a Romans 10-10 conviction of this is the prescription from the master doctor to get salvation.

We hear a lot of truths in this church. Accurate, pure truths. But here's what we don't do and that's why we don't get salvation.

Romans chapter 10, verse 10. If you've read it, you probably have already figured it out. For with the heart, a person believes resulting in righteousness.

So we have that. A lot of us, I'm sure as you read God's Word, as you listen to the truths of God's Word, we've received truth and we've gotten righteousness. And God says, I look at you as if you've never sinned.

You're righteous, but that's in the heart. But Lord, I'm not saved as yet. I'm righteous, but not saved.

What do I need to do? It's right there. What do you need to do to get salvation? Open your mouth and confess with your mouth what you believe in your heart. That's why we don't have the salvation and that's what changed in the last 10 to 15 years.

We heard about the midweek groups. Why is that so critical? Why is that so much more critical than even the Sunday meeting? Because that's when I get to confess with my mouth, not spout out ideas and share opinions and share all these different studies about the verse. It is where I get to confess, speak with my mouth, resulting in salvation.

I'm not after attendance. We're not after attendance and all these things. The question is, where are those avenues where we are confessing with our mouth over and over again? It could be to our spouses.

Maybe we're doing that. It could start there, but are we complaining about our issues? Are we saying we're struggling with our issues? We believe in our heart and we confess with our mouth, not confess with our mind, not agree with our mind. Confess with my mouth and that's what changed in the last 10 to 15 years.

I was speaking in public churches before that too, but in the last 10 to 15 years, I have had been forced to week after week after week after week to confess with my mouth, to confess my hope of what was not really true just yet, but what I believed had to be true and I couldn't stop. I didn't stop. You know that and what has happened out of that is I've started to experience salvation in a fresh new way from some of the things that used to have a hold over me.

What's different? I was faithful to take the prescription, to confess with my mouth what I believe in my heart, that God is always good, not some fancy complicated theology, that God is good, that God is on my side, that the devil is a liar, that the enemy is residing within me and that God's not given up on me, God's not put me on the shelf and he's going to complete what he started in me, and that I have faith that God will help me to live a life of overwhelmingly conquering life over and over again. No evidence of it, no evidence of it, but by faith I keep saying it. Lord I need my attitude to change at work, still not changed five months later, 15 months later, Lord it's going to be a different attitude.

I need my attitude to be different towards my spouse, towards my children over and over again. Lord I'm too caught up with unforgiveness, I'm too caught up with bitterness, I'm too caught up with anxiety. We think that, we pray about it, we weep about it, but we don't confess with our mouth, and we all wonder why we don't have salvation.

It's right there, Romans 10.10, and I honestly experienced it before I realized Romans 10.10 was telling me that all along. It's the hardest thing. A number of people who say we're so afraid, and I don't blame you, I've heard that public speaking is one of the greatest fears that ever exists.

I hope dear brothers and sisters you're finding ways to confess with your mouth and experiencing salvation, and I hope this church will get an A-plus grade in that, in Romans 10.10. I really, really do, and the reason I say that, and I'm so passionately believing in that, because I saw the difference. Dear brothers and sisters, for 30 years I've been seeking victory over sin in so many different years, so many different ways, and in the last 10 to 15 years I've seen a massive increase. We can close with Micah chapter 7. I'll just paraphrase some of the verses in Micah, this prophet, and put a little bit of a new covenant twist on it.

Verse 18 and 19, and then verses 7. Who, O God, is like you who pardons iniquities, and passes over, and justifies even my rebellious acts, because you consider me a remnant of your possession. You do not retain your anger towards me forever. These are the things I need to confess with my mouth, dear brothers and sisters.

Verses like this, Lord Jesus, you don't retain your anger over me forever, because you have unchanging love. No, you delight in unchanging love, and you're compassionate, verse 18, over and over again towards me, and you'll tread my sins underneath your foot, and you'll take all of my sins and put it into the depths of the sea. Lord Jesus, that's your word.

So then, verse 7, I will wait expectantly, and watch, and open my mouth to praise the God of my salvation, because my God hears me. Do not rejoice over me, O my enemies, because though I fall, I will get up. Though I live in darkness, though there may be dark around me, the Lord is my light, and when the Lord disciplines me, I will bear it, because he's pleading my case for me, and he executes justice for me, and he brings me from darkness into light, and he shows me my righteousness, and he'll show my enemy his righteousness too.

He'll show his enemy my righteousness too, and he'll show me that he crushes my enemy under my feet like the filth of the ground. That's Micah chapter 7. These are the kinds of words that we have to speak to our heart and share. Not, I've heard the sermon, and I'm so convicted, and I see my need.

It's not faith. We have to proclaim faith, the evidence of things not seen. God has a great plan for us.

God has salvation available for us, but we have to take the medicine. Dear brothers and sisters, if all will share encouraging words, the ungifted, the unbelieving will sit in this, in the midweek groups and say, God is there. If all will share words of faith.

Let's open up our mouths, dear brothers and sisters in the midweek groups. Let's speak words of faith. I've, we've been beating this drum for 12 years.

We'll continue to beat the drum, and we'll get from better to better, but we have to consider getting this an A plus in this. God's not breaking you down. He's breaking new ground, and his plans are for good.

He's coming out to meet you, even if you're the older brother. He's coming out to meet you. He's talking to you, and he says, I'm here to revive you.

I'm here to bring life into you. There's some debt in there. Let's break new ground now.

Let's start a new life, and he wants to do that, and I hope we'll open up our mouths and start experiencing salvation. It may not happen today. It may not happen next month, but it's guaranteed in God's word that it'll happen.

I've experienced it. Brothers and sisters in this church have experienced it. We got everything we need to do.

Keep doing this till all of us are life ahead. May God help us.

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