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FROM A NEGATIVE PAST AND THE
ACCOMPANYING EMOTIONAL
HELLHOLES

OLAWUNMI BRIGUE

Break free from a Negative Past and the accompanying Emotional Hellholes

There was a time, a long season in my life, when I was held captive by what I considered to be a negative, unfulfilling and regrettable past. Every thought, sight or smell reminded me of my “undesirable” past and it was difficult to move forward into the future God had for me. More worryingly, I didn’t know *how* to move forward.

Then, one day God showed me how to break out of that destructive cycle. He used this scripture to show me exactly what I needed to do.

Ezekiel 40:1-5 NLT

On April 28, during the twenty-fifth year of our captivity—fourteen years after the fall of Jerusalem—the Lord took hold of me. In a vision from God he took me to the land of Israel and set me down on a very high mountain. From there I could see toward the south what appeared to be a city. As he brought me nearer, I saw a man whose face shone like bronze standing beside a gateway entrance. He was holding in his hand a linen measuring cord and a measuring rod. He said to me, “Son of man, watch and listen. Pay close attention to everything I show you. You have been brought here so I can show you many

things. Then you will return to the people of Israel and tell them everything you have seen.”

Notice some important truths from that scripture:

- Ezekiel started by documenting that the children of Israel were in captivity (and had been for 25 years), after Jerusalem had been captured and destroyed.
- On that day, he had a vision in which God took him to the land of Israel and showed him a very detailed picture of a glorious new city and temple. It is important to note that in reality, Jerusalem was still in ruins; so anything Ezekiel saw, he saw with the eyes of his heart.
- Ezekiel was then given a specific instruction to ‘...look with your eyes and hear with your ears, and fix your mind on everything I show you.’”

From these 3 points, God taught me the life-changing strategies that helped me let go out the past and embrace the future:

- 1. If you want to break out of the past, understand that you must turn to God and seek him from where you are – right in the middle of the mess.** Don’t allow yourself to think: “Once I’ve sorted myself out, then I’ll go to God.” Self-condemnation is the enemy’s most effective tool in keeping people in

bondage. He wants you to believe that God will not accept you until your life is “squeaky clean”. That’s not true. God tells us clearly in his word to come to him, even at our lowest point:

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” Matthew 11:28-30

Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Hebrews 4:14-16

2. Amid the negative emotions and feelings of disappointment, regret and bitterness, cry out to your Father for help. **Pray and ask him to open your eyes so that you can see the future he has for you.** The truth is, until you begin to “see” the glorious future God has for you, it is impossible to let go of the past.

Hebrews 11:15 says: "If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return."

What you focus on is what you become. So be unrelenting in seeking God. As you ask, expect God to show you beautiful images of your future. Believe that it pleases him to lead you into prosperity.

- 3. As God begins to show you the future (e.g. through scriptures that come alive when you read them or hear a sermon), focus on them until they become established in your heart.** To focus in practical terms means setting aside time consistently (at least 15 minutes a day) to pray in the spirit and confess those scriptures out loud. This is possibly the most crucial step. The Israelites, for example, were given clear details about their future in the Promised Land. They saw the grapes. They heard about the fertile land flowing with milk and honey. But they insisted on clinging to who they were in the past – slaves with no might or strength. To break out of the past, you must redirect your focus from what's behind to what's ahead. As you focus on the future God has shown you, you will find those strongholds slowly but surely begin to crumble and the negative feelings associated with the past will lose their hold on you.

4. **Finally, adopt a lifestyle of gratitude.** During the process of transformation into the image God has shown you, many times you will still need to deal with feelings of frustration, anger, depression etc. There will be days when you feel like nothing is going right for you, or that it is too difficult to forgive the person that caused you pain. This is where gratitude comes in. Create a Gratitude List, which is a list of every major miracle, blessing, breakthrough that God has done in your life – as many as you can remember right from your childhood till now. Very importantly, it should also include the benefits that person or situation that caused you pain has directly contributed to your life, at least when things were good. Then take that list and thank God for those blessings every day. This simple act of faith is guaranteed to work for unforgiveness, resentment, bitterness, guilt and every other emotional hellhole because you cannot genuinely thank God for someone or something and harbour negative feelings towards them at the same time.

Confessions and Prayers

Ephesians 1:17-19

Regarding (name the situation), Father I ask that you give me the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that I may know your will. I pray that the eyes of my heart are enlightened in order that I may know the hope to which you have called me, the riches of your glorious inheritance in me, and your incomparably great power that is at work in me and for me.

John 16:33

"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world, you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

Confession

Father I thank you because in Christ Jesus I have perfect peace. Jesus has overcome the world, along with all the trials, tribulation and pains I experienced in my past. He has also deprived them of the power to harm my new life. As I follow the leading of the Holy Spirit, he brings me and establishes me in my new life that is characterised by perfect peace.

Haggai 2:9

"The glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house,' says the LORD Almighty. 'And in this place, I will grant peace,' declares the LORD Almighty."

Hebrews 12:24

"To Jesus the mediator of a new covenant and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel."

Confession

Abel's blood called for revenge, but Jesus' blood calls for mercy. The blood of Jesus was shed for me and it speaks mercy over me. His blood cleanses me from every sin and releases me from the effect of every mistake in my past.

Hebrews 9:11-15

Confession

Christ with his own blood—not the blood of goats and calves—entered the Most Holy Place once for all time and secured my redemption forever. The blood of Christ purifies my conscience from sinful deeds so that I can worship the living God freely. For by the power of the eternal Spirit, Christ offered himself to God as a perfect sacrifice for my sins. Christ died to set me free from the penalty of every sin I committed in my past. He is the mediator of the new

covenant between God and me. Through that covenant I freely receive the eternal inheritance God has promised me.

Matthew 5:43-45

“You have heard the law that says, ‘Love your neighbour’ and hate your enemy. But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven. For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust alike.

Confession

I pray for (insert names) and everyone that has hurt me in the past. As I have received mercy from God, I have mercy on them. I forgive them with all my heart and release them from any obligation to right the wrong they did to me. Right now, I speak blessings of increase and abundance into their lives.

About the Author



Hi, I'm Olawunmi.

As a Transformational Coach, I help Christians overcome stagnation, problematic life areas and destructive habits that have defied their every move using an inside-out approach founded on biblical principles. If you feel weighed down with obstacles that are stopping you from living a highly-impactful and enjoyable life, and you want help from a Spirit-Led coach who has a catalogue of personal and client success stories using biblical principles, then I'd love to hear from you!

Visit my website: OlawunmiBrigue.com

Send me an email: contact@olawunmibrigue.com