

# 17 | PSALM 17

## HOPE FOR THE HURTING

*God cares deeply for the abused.*

### Outline

1. **HEAR ME** (17:1-6)  
The Hurting Want to be Heard (1-2)  
*There is a Real Fear of Speaking Out*  
The Hurting Want to be Believed (3-4)  
The Hurting Did Nothing Wrong (5-6)
2. **HEAL ME** (17:7-9)  
God Heals Us with His Love (7a)  
*His Love is Protective (7b)*  
God Heals us with His Presence
3. **HELP ME** (17:10-15)  
Trust God with Your Trauma (10-12)  
Trust God with Justice (13-14)  
Trust God with Your Identity (15)  
*Present Healing*  
*Complete Healing*

### Call to Worship:

REVELATION 3:20 | Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.

### Songs, Psalm 17: Hope for the Abused

Love Ran Red / Blessed be Your Name  
Come Thou Fount  
Broken Vessels (Amazing Grace)  
I am Who You Say I Am

### ***Introduction***

Open your Bible if you will to Psalm 17. The title of our message is “Hope for the Hurting”.

#### *Harriet Tubman’s Escape*

Harriet Tubman is an American hero who escaped from slavery and abuse to rescue many slaves (including her own family) and set them free in the “Underground Railroad”. She was a godly Christian, an amazing hero, and a justice seeker who got to live through a movement that climaxed with the American civil war and the eventual end of slavery in America.

Harriet’s desire for justice became apparent at age 12 when she spotted an overseer about to throw a heavy weight at a fugitive slave. Harriet stepped between the slave and the overseer—the weight struck her head. She was the female Moses of her day.

She later said about the incident, “The weight broke my skull ... They carried me to the house all bleeding and fainting. I had no bed, no place to lie down on at all, and they laid me on the seat of the loom, and I stayed there all day and the next.”

Harriet’s good deed left her with headaches and narcolepsy the rest of her life, causing her to fall into a deep sleep at random. In spite of her trials, she not only served God, but put a stop to great injustice.

Harriet Tubman suffered so much abuse, but never let it slow her down. She used the pain of slavery and horrible abuse to become a true American hero and a woman of God that we all look up to. She never let slavery and horrific abuse define her. She was defined by her faith in Christ.

Our text in Psalm 17 is a message of hope for the hurting and abused. Like Harriet, no one has to be defined by the injustice that has been done to them. Harriet’s identity was in Christ, and that identity compelled her to do great things for God.

Today’s message is a message of hope. Many of us have suffered abuse in our lives. Some of us when we were younger. Some have suffered abuse when they were older. Some may be going through some kind of abuse right now.

What can we do to help the abused? The truth is a great many people in our church and in our society have suffered abuse and are hurting deeply. There are deep scars that come from being abused, and it leads to all kinds of behavior if it’s not dealt with properly.

If you have been abused, suffered intimidation, been violated physically or sexually by another person, then there is hope for you today.

If you are an abuser, there can be forgiveness, but you must be completely honest, forthright, and repentant. That doesn’t mean there is reconciliation. For that there must be trust. But there can be forgiveness. And those who are hurting and who have been hurt need to know that God is a God of love and hope and healing.

This message is also being put forth to awaken anyone who is being abused to seek help. You must not stay silent. It will be hard to speak up, but you must have courage and do the right thing for yourself and for God. You should never allow anyone to hurt you and control you through fear and intimidation.

This is a heavy and weighty subject, but there is joy when evil is exposed. Ephesians 5:11 tells us: “Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.” That’s what this message is about.

### ***Scripture Reading***

Let's stand and read Psalm 17:1-15.

**17:1-15 | A Prayer of David.** <sup>1</sup>Hear a just cause, O Lord; attend to my cry! Give ear to my prayer from lips free of deceit! <sup>2</sup>From your presence let my vindication come! Let your eyes behold the right! <sup>3</sup>You have tried my heart, you have visited me by night, you have tested me, and you will find nothing; I have purposed that my mouth will not transgress. <sup>4</sup>With regard to the works of man, by the word of your lips I have avoided the ways of the violent. <sup>5</sup>My steps have held fast to your paths; my feet have not slipped. <sup>6</sup>I call upon you, for you will answer me, O God; incline your ear to me; hear my words. <sup>7</sup>Wondrously show your steadfast love, O Savior of those who seek refuge from their adversaries at your right hand. <sup>8</sup>Keep me as the apple of your eye; hide me in the shadow of your wings, <sup>9</sup>from the wicked who do me violence, my deadly enemies who surround me. <sup>10</sup>They close their hearts to pity; with their mouths they speak arrogantly. <sup>11</sup>They have now surrounded our steps; they set their eyes to cast us to the ground. <sup>12</sup>He is like a lion eager to tear, as a young lion lurking in ambush. <sup>13</sup>Arise, O Lord! Confront him, subdue him! Deliver my soul from the wicked by your sword, <sup>14</sup>from men by your hand, O Lord, from men of the world whose portion is in this life. You fill their womb with treasure; they are satisfied with children, and they leave their abundance to their infants. <sup>15</sup>As for me, I shall behold your face in righteousness; when I awake, I shall be satisfied with your likeness.

*This is God's Word.*

#### *Outline*

Three prayers for the suffering

1. Hear me (1-6)
2. Heal me (7-9)
3. Help me (10-15)

#### *Defining Abuse*

When we deal with the issue of abuse, we have to first define abuse. There are various forms of abuse. For the purpose of this message, we are going to define abuse as:

**Physical Abuse** includes any intentional act of physical violence against someone (Acts 16:19), threats of physical violence (Eph 6:9), persecution (Mt 5:44).

**Sexual Abuse:** This includes any kind of sexual mistreatment (Jdg 19:25). It's also referred to as molestation, which is abusive sexual behavior by one person upon another. It is often perpetrated using force or by taking advantage of another. It also includes introducing minors to sexual material or experience. When force is immediate, of short duration, or infrequent, it is called sexual assault.

**Verbal & Emotional Abuse:** includes extreme verbal manipulation (Lk 6:28; 1 Pet 2:23; Jas 4:11) or using words to intimidate, control, or manipulate another person or group of people (Gen 16:6; 1 Sam 2:16; Ezra 5:12).

The Bible would recognize all of these as aspects of what we would modernly call abuse.

There are likely abusers among us. No one who is abused should put up with it. You should seek help. There are levels of abuse. Not all abuse is criminal, but it still does great harm.

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## 1. HEAR ME (17:1-6)

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The one who is suffering abuse needs to be heard.

### THE HURTING WANT TO BE HEARD (1-2)

The person who is abused cries to God: I'm telling the truth! I'm not lying. You see it all! **Vindicate** the charges I am bringing. One of the things you see here with David, is he first cries out to God.

17:1-2 | Hear a just cause, O Lord; attend to my cry! Give ear to my prayer from lips free of deceit! <sup>2</sup>From your presence let my vindication come! Let your eyes behold the right!

Listen to this painful **prayer of David**. This prayer could have come at a number of times in David's life when he was being persecuted and abused by Saul. Saul was a bully. He used his place of authority to intimidate and bully David. David did nothing wrong. Yet he was suffering. He was pushed out of his home, far from his wife, and on the run for his life. We look at him now as a great king, but before he was a king, he underwent great abuse at the hands of King Saul. David, like so many who are abused, had a deep desire to be **heard**.

Our Lord encourages the cries of the oppressed. The sheer number of psalms that call out for God's protection indicate that we serve a loving Lord who never tires of listening to and acting on the groanings of the needy. God is the righteous judge who hears injustice and hates oppression, but he is more than a judge. He is the one who, in **unfailing love**, comes close to his oppressed people. His listening occurs in a relationship between the weak one and the compassionate Hearer-Shepherd.

### *There is a Real Fear of Speaking Out*

David cries out to God. **God understands**. Often the victim of abuse feels trapped. They know something is wrong, but they are totally afraid to speak out. They want God to hear and validate / **vindicate** that this abuse is wrong.

### ***Fear of Retaliation***

To underscore the importance of **hearing**, realize that some victims of violence or other kinds of abuse are reluctant to speak openly. They may fear that openness will lead to retaliation by the perpetrator; they may feel ashamed that they contributed in some way to the abuse (though they are not responsible for the violence done to them); they may consider their problems unworthy of an elder's or friend's attention; or they may feel ashamed that their loved one could dislike them to the point of violence.

### ***Fear of Premature Reconciliation***

Some are reluctant to speak because of the tendency of some shepherds to move quickly to the refrain, “Forgive and forget.” They are afraid reconciliation will be rushed, when sometimes reconciliation is not possible or advisable.

Since biblical hearing is coupled with action, you might determine that hearing (especially if the violence has been personal and dangerous) means taking the victim for a medical examination, calling the police, or providing a temporary safe place.<sup>1</sup> In fact, if any kind of serious abuse has occurred with a child, the law requires certain people like pastors, church leaders, doctors or counselors to report abuse to law enforcement under the mandatory reporter laws.

It is vital for anyone who is suffering abuse to know that you will be heard, and you will be protected. If you come forward, we will take you seriously. Those who may have hurt you will be held accountable. So the hurting desperately want to be heard, as we see with David’s prayer.

#### **THE HURTING WANT TO BE BELIEVED (3-4)**

No human being is perfect, so there is tremendous guilt at times because of how abused people are manipulated by their perpetrator. They often feel a false guilt. David went to God and basically has come to realize, that though he may not be perfect, he is blameless. He’s very mature in his prayer. He knows he is not lying, and he wants to be believed. Listen to his prayer in verses 3 and 4.

**17:3-4** | You have tried my heart, you have visited me by night, you have tested me, and you will find nothing; I have purposed that my **mouth** will not transgress. <sup>4</sup>With regard to the **works of man**, by the word of your lips I have avoided the ways of the violent.

David says he’s blameless with his **language** (his **mouth**), his **life** (**the works of man**), and his **legacy** (“you have tested and you will find nothing”). This is a powerful testimony. Not everyone has a blameless testimony like David, but you have to understand that if you come forward, you will be believed.

David knows that King Saul is a bully who is completely unstable. A person with a serious anger problem has probably deceived himself. An abuser is willing to abuse, and therefore they are likely quite willing to lie about it.

My heart is that if you have suffered abuse, you will have the courage to come forward and be heard. **You will be believed. You will be taken seriously.** Whenever there are allegations of abuse It is absolutely necessary to take time to gather information and establish the testimony as to vet out false accusations.

By the way, when David says, “I have avoided the ways of the violent” (vs 4b), he’s likely talking about when he had the opportunity to take the life of his bully and abuser.

So hear this, we don’t have the right if we are abused to punish our abuser. But we do have the right to call the police, or to let a pastor or church leader know who will call the police.

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<sup>1</sup> Edward T. Welch, “Helping the Victim,” ed. David A. Powlison, *The Journal of Biblical Counseling*, Number 2, Winter 1997 15 (1997): 51.

## THE HURTING DID NOTHING WRONG (5-6)

You can see in verses 5-6 how David knows he has been persecuted, but he did nothing wrong to deserve this. Listen to more of David's prayer:

17:5-6 | My steps have held fast to your paths; my feet have not slipped. <sup>6</sup>I call upon you, for you will answer me, O God; incline your ear to me; hear my words.

David's not perfect. We know this. But in regard to his persecutor Saul, he knows he's done nothing wrong.

Listen, if you have suffered abuse, you may have fought against your abuser and tried to defend yourself. That is absolutely fine. But listen, you have done nothing wrong. You need to have the courage to expose any kind of abuse for a couple reasons:

1 – You need to be able to move on and heal and help others. 2 – Your abuser needs to be completely exposed so that they can repent and get right with God, and that they may be kept from abusing you again or others.

What a good prayer from David, when he's being bullied and persecuted and abused: Hear me! Those who are suffering abuse today need to be heard. And you need to know that you will be heard. You will be taken seriously. The bully in your life will be held accountable.

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## 2. HEAL ME (17:7-9)

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In order to heal, we must know that through the pain and suffering of our lives, we can reach out to others who are hurting. Some of the greatest healing in our own lives occurs when we help others in their healing. **We must not let pain paralyze us.** We must let it motivate us to help others who are hurting.

### ***Abuse is Not Normal***

The abused person needs to take refuge in God. Often an abused person is so used to the abuse, that they don't even know that it's not normal to be constantly yelled at. It's not normal to be constantly intimidated. And for those suffering sexual abuse, especially children, many don't even know that it is not normal, but it's all they know. We need to have the courage as a church to be the refuge for the broken, and to say: abuse is not normal. Abuse is evil.

We also need to be able to say: there is healing for the abused. This is part of your story, but it doesn't need to define you. God makes all things new in Christ and He can free you from all of it. The scars will still be with you, but just like Jesus' nail scarred hands they will testify to how God has turned your greatest suffering into a testimony of God's salvation.

Instead, your story can direct you to others who are hurting. You need healing not just for yourself, but so that you can lead others to the healing only God can give.

### ***The Hurt of Abuse Can Lead to Trauma***

By the way, **wonderful healing is available** in the Lord. With abuse, you may struggle with serious mental illness, like PTSD or even serious questions about your

identity, but through the Word and godly counsel and the fellowship of the saints, you can make great progress in healing.

There are many who have been abused sexually who think that turning to a homosexual lifestyle or a transgender lifestyle is the answer. So many who have gone that route have said, it was a complete waste of time. There are so many coming out of that deviant lifestyle who have said, just because I was abused doesn't mean I am damaged goods.

And I want to testify that if you have been abused, and so many of us here in this church have been abused and treated like complete trash, yet I want to testify that you are supremely valuable to God. God wasn't asleep. He didn't forget you. His own Son was the most egregiously abused person in the universe. Listen, if you've been abused, you need to know that many of the most righteous people suffer on this earth. Look at the Son of God. By his stripes we are healed. God wants to heal you and demonstrate that he can heal the broken.

You don't have to go around carrying around someone else's sin and defilement. I remember when I was younger, I never wanted to talk about the abuse and ugliness I had to go through. It's defilement. But now I know, the pain that I suffered is designed to show that if God can heal me, he can heal you.

So how do we open the fountain of God's healing? Through God's love and through his presence.

### **GOD HEALS US WITH HIS LOVE (7A)**

God's love is unrelenting. His love heals us.

17:7a | Wondrously show your steadfast love...

Often there are great questions the abused have: Will anyone ever love me? Can I ever be normal? Can I really heal from this?

First of all, every single one of us is tainted by sin and we will all ultimately be healed completely when Jesus comes again.

Second, there is pain and memories that go along with abuse that though they cannot be erased, they can be motivation to help serve others. Sometimes there is anger that you need to turn into energy to help others.

Most of all, you need to understand that only the love of God can begin to heal you and make sense of your pain. God's love means that God's Son literally took part in being the one who was abused and violated.

God promises that he can bring "beauty from ashes", and he can

God's Son underwent unimaginable violence. **Jesus knows our sufferings**. In his own body Jesus experienced violence at the hands of his own people. In fact, his experience surpasses our own because he suffered even to death. And he suffered vicariously, in our place, on behalf of every one of us. When we see this suffering, it can actually begin to lighten, or outweigh, the abused person's grief. Looking at the cross of Jesus is where healing begins.

For the sufferer who feels forsaken by God, the sufferings of Jesus can be a great comfort. It is a comfort that exceeds the sympathy and comfort extended by other women and men who have endured similar experiences. In the church, you can find others who

have suffered and been abused. In the throne room of God, you will be embraced by One who understands perfectly, grieves deeply, and loves you perfectly and completely.<sup>2</sup>

### ***God's Unrelenting Hessed Love***

When David says, “Wondrously show your steadfast love...” (17:7a), he’s talking about God’s unrelenting, covenant love. He is bound to you unconditionally. He’s taken all conditions upon himself. Can you testify that God’s love is amazing?

The word, “steadfast love” is *hesed*. It’s God’s covenantal promise to you that he will never leave you or forsake you. It’s based completely on Christ. All you need to do is put your faith and trust in Jesus, and God binds you to himself. He gives you his righteousness and promises you “no condemnation.” It’s amazing. All that you can ever have or will ever be is found in Jesus Christ. God is ready to pour out his steadfast love to you.

### ***His Love is Protective (7b)***

God is the only refuge that can make sense of the abuse suffered. He is a refuge. Specifically, the only way we can understand the abuse we have gone through is to see the most abused person in the universe: the Savior, Jesus Christ. He was wounded and abused on that cross. He can give the abused and hurting a refuge.

17:7b | ... O Savior of those who seek refuge from their adversaries at your right hand

Your personal trouble does not mean that God has forsaken you as his child. Rather, the constant biblical evidence is that God is on the move in response to prayers for deliverance. While we cannot always observe this deliverance immediately, God will, no doubt, deliver his people. The story of God’s work in your life is not over. It’s just begun. Keep your eyes open and look for God’s strong hand in your life. He’s on the move. This very message may be the beginning of his deliverance.<sup>3</sup>

### **GOD HEALS US WITH HIS PRESENCE**

God loves you and holds you close to him. He has drawn you very near to him, in his very presence. In verse 8, David used two images—the eye and the wings—to remind God that he was precious to him.<sup>4</sup>

17:8-9 | Keep me as the apple of your eye; hide me in the shadow of your wings,  
<sup>9</sup>from the wicked who do me violence, my deadly enemies who surround me.

### ***God cherishes you.***

God treasures you in Christ. He has reserved a universe that he has not yet even created. He wants to freely and “graciously give us all things” (Rom 8:32). We are called “the apple of his eye” (Psa 17:8). If you are in Christ, if you have been united to him by faith, then you are loved with an infinite eternal love. “I have loved you with an everlasting

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., Welch, 52.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., Welch, 52.

<sup>4</sup> Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Worshipful*, 1st ed., “Be” Commentary Series (Colorado Springs, CO: Cook Communications Ministries, 2004), 71.

love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you” (Jer 31:3). God is faithful to us because of his unrelenting love for us, not because of our feeble love for him.

17:8a | Keep me as the apple of your eye...

The “apple” of the eye is the pupil, the most delicate part of the eye. If you read it in Hebrew, it actually reads, “You are the little maiden of my eye”, for when you look into someone’s eyes, you can see yourself. Do you know what that metaphor means? It is so deeply touching. It is like you telling the girl you love, “Come close, come closer, come very close, and look into my eyes, and when you can see that little reflection of yourself in my eyes, you will know that you are my precious maiden!” God takes that boundless, relentless love to you and says: “you are that little maiden in my eye, you are the apple of my eye.”

Why has blessed you so abundantly? We enjoy such luxury and comfort. Have you ever asked God: “Why me? Why have you loved me with this kind of an everlasting love?”

### ***God protects you.***

God is there to protect you. He understands. He hides you under the shadow of his wings. He will protect you from those who do violence to you.

17:8b-9 | hide me in the shadow of your wings, <sup>9</sup>from the wicked who do me violence, my deadly enemies who surround me.

The phrase “under the shadow of your wings” sometimes pictures the mother hen protecting her young (Mt 23:37), but often it refers to the wings of the cherubim in the Holy of Holies of the tabernacle (Exo 25:18–20). David asked the Lord to make his hiding place into a Holy of Holies, the place of God’s throne and God’s glory, protected by the angels of God (cf 36:7–8; 57:1; 61:4; 63:7; Ruth 2:12). Because of the heavenly intercession of Jesus Christ, God’s people today can enter into the Holy of Holies and fellowship with God (Heb 10:1–25).<sup>5</sup>

God holds us with cherishes us and holds us. We are as precious as the apple of someone’s eye and as precious to him as if we were under the wings of the cherubim in the Holiest place of all in his very throne.

Nothing can harm you. Nothing can separate you from his love. Though **the wicked want to do you violence**, you can find refuge in God and in those who love God.

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## 3. HELP ME (17:10-15)

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What about long-term help? Is there long-term help for the abused? Yes! How? First, trust God with your trauma.

### **TRUST GOD WITH YOUR TRAUMA (10-12)**

Listen to the ongoing trauma David recalls as he thinks of King Saul and the many who were chasing after David. He can’t feel the peace of safety.

17:10-12 | They close their hearts to pity; with their mouths they speak arrogantly. <sup>11</sup>They have now surrounded our steps; they set their eyes

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., Wiersbe, 71.

to cast us to the ground. <sup>12</sup> He is like a lion eager to tear, as a young lion lurking in ambush.

David is essentially saying: help me! And he's bringing his deepest burdens to the Lord. He feels his abusers' shame. He feels his abusers' ruthlessness. They are like a lion "lurking in ambush."

Often even after the abuser has been confronted and the sufferer has been set free, there are still PTSD symptoms: Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Because the human imagination is so strong, the sufferer sometimes relives the trauma of the abuse over and over again.

Even though the abuse has stopped, the trauma has left a wound and a scar. On earth, there is still suffering that we need to get through. There are days when we know we are broken, when we are not yet completely healed.

I think Joni Eareckson Tada said it best: "God has chosen not to heal me, but to hold me. The more intense the pain, the closer His embrace. The greatest good suffering can do for me is to increase my capacity for God. Real satisfaction comes not in understanding God's motives, but in understanding His character, in trusting in His promises, and in leaning on Him and resting in Him as the Sovereign who knows what He is doing and does all things well."

### TRUST GOD WITH JUSTICE (13-14)

David now prays for ultimate justice.

**17:13-14** | Arise, O Lord! Confront him, subdue him! Deliver my soul from the wicked by your sword, <sup>14</sup> from men by your hand, O Lord, from men of the world whose portion is in this life. You fill their womb with treasure; they are satisfied with children, and they leave their abundance to their infants.

Ultimate justice is very rarely found in this life. In fact, as David prays, you get the idea that the wicked person does not get justice in this life. Often their womb is filled with treasure and they are rich enough to leave an inheritance to the children and grandchildren. It doesn't seem fair.

But listen, this life has never been about fairness. It's not until the life to come when we face God, that any real justice is meted out.

### TRUST GOD WITH YOUR IDENTITY (15)

As for me, my identity is in Christ. That's what David says. I'm not defined by my abuse or my abuser. I don't have to carry my abuser's sins. I am free from that. I don't get my identity by the trauma inflicted upon me. No. My identity always comes from Christ. I need to behold his face in his righteousness. That's where my present healing comes from. I know who I am and where I've come from.

**17:15** | As for me, I shall behold your face in righteousness; when I awake, I shall be satisfied with your likeness.

### *Present Healing*

One of the greatest things you can do is experience God's healing and then share and minister that healing to others. **Beholding God's face**, knowing you are cleansed from another person's sin and abuse. You behold God's face in righteousness.

It's like David says in Psalm 40.

**PSALM 40:1-3** | I waited patiently for the LORD; And he inclined to me and heard my cry. <sup>2</sup>He also brought me up out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my steps. <sup>3</sup>He has put a new song in my mouth—Praise to our God; many will see it and fear and will trust in the LORD.

God is ready to bring us out of the horrible pit and set our feet on the Rock, Christ Jesus. That's your identity. Yes, your abuse is part of your story. It's there to connect you to a person's pain. It's there to say: God's brought me through this, and you can make it too! It's only possible in Christ!

You know who you are in Christ. You are not defined by another person's sin against you. Let God cleanse you of that by realizing who you are in Christ.

In Christ, I can forgive because I am forgiven.

In Christ...

I am predestined to be conformed to his image (Rom 8:29).

I am a new creation (2 Cor 5:17).

I am the righteousness of God (2 Cor 5:21).

I've been healed by his wounds (1 Pet 2:24).

I've been made rich (2 Cor 8:9).

I am chosen, adopted and accepted (Eph 1:3-7).

I am free from sin (Rom 6:20-22).

### *Complete Healing*

Yet there will one day be a day of complete healing. One day, we will awake in glory. The trumpet will sound. The dead in Christ will rise. We will be completely healed. "When I awake, I shall be satisfied with your likeness" (17:15).

Each day that I awake, I'll be **satisfied** because I'm becoming more and more like Jesus. But one day, I'll awake on the other side, completely conformed to his image. Then I'll be perfectly **satisfied**.

### ***Conclusion: Jesus, the most Abused***

The person most greatly abused in the history of the world, is our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To truly have hope, we must look to him hanging there. He's saying, "Father forgive them." Forgiveness does not mean reconciliation. Often that's not possible. But it does mean we can forgive. We can leave justice to God. Our prayer is that God would have mercy.

When I think back to Harriet Tubman and consider the great abuse that was inflicted upon her through slavery, I am so inspired that she did not cop out of life, but she became a real hero. She looked to her identity in Christ and showed she is an overcomer. We don't have to be defined by injustice. We can rise up and make a difference for those who are hurting.