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Psalm of the Liberty Bell Prayer

Ed Hays | Jun. 25, 2009

Psalm of the Liberty Bell Prayer
Hear, O Lord, the sound of my liberty bell,
along with my prayer that rings out
my personal declaration of independence,
the liberty I seek from all that now enslaves me.

O God, rally all your forces
as I now seek to be freed
from the crippling chains that enslave me,
the shackles that hold me tightly bound.

Ring out boldly, O bell of the brave,
so I may heed your call to courage.
Give me a heart of strength and of faith
to know that I don?t stand alone.

With you, my Beloved, ever at my side,
on my left and on my right,
going before me and following behind,
I will escape my slavery.

Reflection: As you pray this psalm, think of a particular present slavery that holds you bound. I say ?present,? because on one level life is a continual emigration, an escape from one prison after another. All of us human

beings, in more or less subtle ways, embrace successive forms of slavery.

These forms of enslavement are countless: negative attitudes, fears, the need for social approval, low self-esteem, drugs, alcohol, work, TV and various forms of entertainment ? not to mention institutional and corporate colonization of the individual. Blessed are those who spend their entire lives escaping from one prison, one enslavement, after another.

The true independence and the glorious freedom of the children of God, spoken of by Paul in Romans (8:21), is a liberty found in being exclusively a prisoner of love.

From *Psalms for Zero Gravity* by Ed Hays

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A Lost Lover?s Psalm

My love was the gravity field
firmly holding my small world in place,
keeping all the pieces of my life
securely tied together.
My love was the great magnetic force
to which work and leisure,
meaning and purpose, clung together as one.

O my Beloved Friend, now my whole world
is turned suddenly upside down.
For gone is my love, the anchor of my life,
and I feel so alone, in bed and in life,
adrift in some vast dark sea with no moon;
gone is the compass of daily routines
that gave direction and substance to my life.

In my pain I reach out toward you, my God,
to grab your hand as if reaching out
for a fence post in a tornado ?
for I fear you?ve also fled.
In life my love sometimes overshadowed you,
and I?ve never felt your absence so keenly
as now when I?ve lost the love of my life.

O my God who is Love, let me feel your presence;
please shout or stamp your feet.
Better yet, hammer on my heart so I will know
you have not left me too.

Reflection: The great power of human love to fascinate and engage us can easily seem to eclipse God. Yet God doesn?t mind, since God is Love. Tragically, however, the I-G of love?s gravity is destroyed by divorce, a broken friendship, or any love relationship ended by death.

A God of blessings grounds us in gratitude, and a God of departures challenges us to move on, to pilgrimage toward new loves and a new relationship with God. Separation from those we deeply loved is truly painful; it can cast us into the zero gravity of loneliness, regret and deep dejection. Yet in the process of grief, along our lonely pilgrimage of pain, we can emigrate to a new homeland. There the zero gravity of loss, like all true
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poverty of spirit, becomes a blessing because at its core there is love. With eyes of love we can see that what appeared to be an eclipse of God was only a faint passing thin cloud illuminated by the sun. God of blessings and of disappointments, God of abundant love and broken hearts, be with us always.

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Prayer action suggestion:
Raise your voice in support of those who have lost loves through the violence of war.

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