



Bible Promises



for parents of children with
SPECIAL NEEDS

AMY E. MASON

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with Special Needs*

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Introduction



Caring for someone with special needs is an incredible journey. At times the road can be lonely and difficult to navigate, while at other times it brings joy and victory. The unique situations you face as a parent of a child with special needs may leave you wondering, *Is the Bible relevant for me?* The answer is an overwhelming *yes!*

Hidden within the pages of Scripture are beautiful stories of people with special needs. Jesus met children and adults with all kinds of disabilities, and we find comfort in the way he noticed their condition and responded with compassion. His attention to each situation shows the intrinsic value of every person with special needs. These stories offer hope because God notices and pursues you and your child too, and he walks with you on this awesome adventure.

Bible Promises for Parents of Children with Special Needs is a topical guide to God's promises. Each topic was selected for its relevance to parents or caregivers of a person with special needs. You will find Scripture promises that speak to the uniqueness of special needs parenting—both the joys and the struggles. These promises offer you comfort and

encouragement. They are truths to celebrate, and they lay a foundation for hope. Claim them as your own. Pray them over your family and over your children. Let them guide you into the presence of Jesus.

Does your heart ever ache with questions, confusion, or discouragement? Caring for a child with autism, Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, ADHD, emotional or behavioral disorders, physical disabilities, or learning disabilities can be all-consuming. Do you ever feel you have no margin in your schedule and no emotional reserves? Do you long for encouragement, rest, and refreshment? Scripture speaks hope into your weariness and struggles.

While there are times of difficulty on your journey, there are also times of great joy! When your heart is full of love and bursts with pride for your child, when your child reaches a new milestone, achieves a new skill, or exceeds all expectations—go to Scripture, which speaks of celebration, joy, and gratitude as well.

Focusing on God's promises ushers you into his presence. Claiming God's promises for your everyday life helps you become aware of his passion for you and for your child. Jesus came to offer an abundant, satisfying life filled with joy (John 10:10). As you explore these promises, my prayer is that you'll discover God's provision for you in every moment.

ABANDONMENT

When you feel like God has abandoned you . . .

- PSALM 9:10 | Those who know your name trust in you, for you, O LORD, do not abandon those who search for you.
- 2 CORINTHIANS 4:9 | We are hunted down, but never abandoned by God. We get knocked down, but we are not destroyed.
- JOHN 14:16 | I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you.

As a parent of a child with special needs, do you ever feel alone? In your difficult times, some of your closest friends may neglect or even desert you, but God never will. He is always pursuing you, trying to get your attention. Are you aware of him? If you are sincerely looking for God, you are sure to find him because he will never abandon anyone who wants a relationship with him. In fact, your difficulties can help you look more intently for God so that you can see him—right by your side.



ABILITIES

When you feel unqualified to meet your family's needs . . .

- 2 CORINTHIANS 3:5-6 | It is not that we think we are qualified to do anything on our own. Our qualification comes from God. He has enabled us to be ministers of his new covenant. This is a covenant not of written laws, but of the Spirit. The old written covenant ends in death; but under the new covenant, the Spirit gives life.

When you come to the end of your own abilities . . .

- ISAIAH 40:29-31 | He gives power to the weak and strength to the powerless. Even youths will become weak and tired, and young men will fall in exhaustion. But those who trust in the LORD will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint.
- ZECHARIAH 4:6 | It is not by force nor by strength, but by my Spirit, says the LORD of Heaven's Armies.

When people focus on what your child may never do . . .

- MATTHEW 19:26 | Jesus looked at them intently and said, "Humanly speaking, it is impossible. But with God everything is possible."

- EPHESIANS 3:20 | Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think.

Parents of children with special needs often talk about abilities. You are probably keenly aware of both your child's ability level and your own. However, the end of your abilities may be when you're able to see God's power and strength most clearly. When others focus on what your child cannot do, see it as an opportunity to focus on who God is and what *he* can do through you and your child. Sometimes inability is the vehicle for experiencing the blessing of God's powerful presence and provision.



ABUNDANCE

When you need more than others can give . . .

- EPHESIANS 3:18-19 | May you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love is. May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God.

When it feels as if everything is being taken away . . .

- ROMANS 5:20 | God's law was given so that all people could see how sinful they were. But as people sinned more and more, God's wonderful grace became more abundant.
- PSALM 36:7-9 | All humanity finds shelter in the shadow of your wings. You feed them from the abundance of your own house, letting them drink from your river of delights. For you are the fountain of life, the light by which we see.
- JOHN 10:10 | The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life.

When you need confidence that God loves you abundantly . . .

- 1 JOHN 4:9-10 | God showed how much he loved us by sending his one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. This is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins.

The more stressful life is, the harder it is for us to be generous. Not so with God. When the human heart starts tightening under pressure, God's heart releases love and grace. There

is more than enough in God's economy. His love is wide and deep and full, and it overflows upon you. It overflows upon your child, as well. So open your heart to him and let his love fill you up. He is ready to offer you a purposeful, abundant life!

ACCEPTANCE

When you're having trouble accepting your situation . . .

- 1 CORINTHIANS 7:17; ROMANS 8:18, 23 | Each of you should continue to live in whatever situation the Lord has placed you, and remain as you were when God first called you . . . [for] what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will reveal to us later. . . . And we believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from . . . suffering. We, too, wait with eager hope for the day when God will give us our full rights as his adopted children, including the new bodies he has promised us.

When your family has trouble accepting your child's diagnosis . . .

- ROMANS 15:7 | Accept each other just as Christ has accepted you so that God will be given glory.

When your child isn't accepted by his peers . . .

- GALATIANS 2:20 | I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.
- PSALM 25:14 | The LORD is a friend to those who fear him.
- PSALM 23:6 | Surely your goodness and unfailing love will pursue me all the days of my life.

Special needs may present you and your child with some challenging circumstances. Coming to grips with this reality is a constant process of embracing your situation while maintaining hope in God and his promises. It's okay to struggle to accept your circumstances, and it's okay when other people struggle with this too. We live in a fallen world where everybody faces unbelievably hard situations. In fact, the Bible says difficulty is to be *expected*. Times of challenge are when you need hope, and hope comes both from looking forward to heaven and also realizing that God brings good from your adversity here on earth. Each day you live in the continuing

trials of life. When you keep eternity in mind, you can grow from the trials you experience, knowing that your difficult circumstances will end with this earthly life.



ADOPTION

When adopting a child with special needs becomes part of your family's story . . .

- EPHESIANS 1:4-5 | Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure.
- PSALM 113:7-9 | He lifts the poor from the dust and the needy from the garbage dump. He sets them among princes, even the princes of his own people! He gives the childless woman a family, making her a happy mother.

When people question your decision to adopt . . .

- PSALM 127:3 | Children are a gift from the LORD; they are a reward from him.

- MATTHEW 18:5 | [Jesus said,] “Anyone who welcomes a little child like this on my behalf is welcoming me.”

When I forget that God has adopted me . . .

- GALATIANS 3:26 | You are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus.
- JOHN 1:12 | To all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God.
- GALATIANS 4:4-5 | When the right time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman, subject to the law. God sent him to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law, so that he could adopt us as his very own children.

Adoption is a wonderful expression of God’s love. You, too, are God’s adopted child. He thought of you before you came to him. He loved you, chose you, sacrificed for you, and has given you all of the rights and privileges of being his child. God’s children have all kinds of strengths and needs. You and your child are part of God’s amazing love story.

