

Hope for uncertain times

Sometimes life throws curve balls at us. Sometimes it feels like we're wading through a pit full of curve balls. In the midst of certain uncertainty, the Bible offers us surprising words of comfort, that tell us of God's promise to never leave us or forsake us.

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**BIBLE
SOCIETY**

Live light

Scripture taken from *The Holy Bible: (NIV)*

Day	Readings	Reference	Reflection/Question	Prayer
1	"I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."	Genesis 12:2-3	God makes some huge promises to Abram. As he tells Abram to leave behind his country and head into the land the he will show him, He promises that he will be the one who will change Abram's fortunes. Four times he repeats "I will". He will make him into a great nation, he will make his name great, he will bless those who bless him and he will bless all peoples on the earth through him. While God is calling Abram to a huge exercise of faith, he promises that he will be at work in it all and remain faithful to his promises. Do you find comfort in the promises God makes to Abram?	Father God, thank you for being a God who not only makes promises, but one who keeps them. Help me have faith like Abram, who took you at your word and trusted you to provide for him. Amen.
2	Then Moses summoned Joshua and said to him in the presence of all Israel, "Be strong and courageous, for you must go with this people into the land that the Lord swore to their ancestors to give them, and you must divide it among them as their inheritance. The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged."	Deuteronomy 31:7-8	When faced with an overwhelmingly big and difficult task, it is our natural response to be scared and afraid. As God used Moses to prepare Joshua to head into the Promised Land, he reminds his people of what he is like. He is the Lord who promised the people of Israel to give them the Land. He is the Lord who remains with his people, who goes with them and will not forsake them. Joshua needed to be reminded to be strong and courageous. This didn't come easily or naturally to him, but the Lord has a track record that can be relied upon. Do you find it easy or hard to remember God's promises?	Gracious Father, Thank you that you always remain faithful to your promises. Help me to remember that, and give me the strength and courage to trust you even when I am afraid. Amen.

Hope for uncertain times (continued)

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3	May your unfailing love come to me, Lord, your salvation according to your promise; then I can answer anyone who taunts me, for I trust in your word. Never take your word of truth from my mouth, for I have put my hope in your laws.	Psalms 119:41-43	<p>God gives us his word to show us the way of salvation. The word equips us to know how to respond to others, especially those who will taunt us and mock our trust in his goodness and faithfulness to his promises.</p> <p>How do you think God wants you to respond to those who mock and taunt you?</p>	<p>Loving Lord, thank you for your word of truth that shows me the way of salvation. Help me Lord to keep your word on my lips.</p> <p>Amen.</p>
4	Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.	Proverbs 3:5-6	<p>It's not easy to trust someone else, even God! We are naturally suspicious and self-protective, wanting to think that we are somehow clever enough to not need anyone else. But we are dependent upon God for everything, and that we can cry out to him for guidance and direction. He cares for us, and promises to make our paths straight.</p> <p>Do you find it hard to trust God? Will you ask him to help you trust him?</p>	<p>Gracious father, thank you for being trustworthy. Please help me to trust you with my whole heart and acknowledge you in everything.</p> <p>Amen.</p>
5	Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom. He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.	Isaiah 40:28-31	<p>Isaiah 40 is full of words of comfort for a weary soul. The prophet reminds us of what the Lord is like – he is the everlasting God, who has no beginning or end. Nothing can tire or frustrate him, he possesses all knowledge and wisdom. He is so different to us, who so easily grow tired and weary, who stumble and fall. For those who turn to the Lord in hope, he will care for them, providing them with strength and power. He not only never lacks anything for himself, but he shares it with us. If we hope in him, we will soar on wings like eagles.</p> <p>Are you feeling tired and weary? How can you place your hope in the Lord?</p>	<p>Everlasting Lord, creator of all, I praise you for your endurance, wisdom and understanding. I am tired and weary. Help me to place my hope in you. Give me your strength and power.</p> <p>Amen.</p>

Hope for uncertain times (continued)

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6	<p>Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. I say to myself "the Lord is my portion; therefore I will wait for him." The Lord is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him; it is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord. It is good for a man to bear the yoke while he is young.</p>	Lamentations 3:22-27	<p>At times daily life can feel all consuming. But with each new day, we are reminded once again of the faithfulness of the Lord – his compassion is new every morning. It is so good to remind ourselves of what God has done in the past, and what he continues to do in the world. We can trust him to deliver upon his promises, especially his promise of salvation. He calls on us to seek him and wait quietly for him to act.</p> <p>Can you think of a time you saw God's faithfulness in action? Does this help you to keep hoping in him?</p>	<p>Gracious, compassionate and loving God, thank you that your mercies are new every morning. Please help me to seek you and place my trust in you. Give me patience and endurance.</p> <p>Amen.</p>
7	<p>But as for me, I watch in hope for the Lord, I wait for God my Saviour; my God will hear me.</p> <p>Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance? You do not stay angry forever, but delight to show mercy.</p>	Micah 7:7, 18-19	<p>In the midst of God's judgement and destruction, the prophet Micah clings to the Lord, watching and waiting for him to act. He knows the one in whom he hopes. He is a God who will judge, who will make things right. But he is also a God who forgives and delights in showing mercy to his people. So Micah cries out to the Lord, knowing that he is the God who hears and listens to his people.</p> <p>What will it mean for you to watch and wait for the Lord to act today?</p>	<p>Father God, thank you that you are the God who hears our cries. Please help me to cry out to you and wait for your salvation.</p> <p>Amen.</p>
8	<p>"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."</p>	Matthew 11:28-30	<p>Sometimes, it all seems too much. Jesus gets it. He calls us to come to him as we are, weary and burdened. We don't need to sort things out first, we don't need an answer to it all. His promise is that in him we will find rest for our souls.</p> <p>Have you brought your burdens to Jesus? Do you believe that he can carry your burdens?</p>	<p>Loving Father, I come to you weary and burdened. Please help me to take Jesus' yoke and learn from him.</p> <p>Amen.</p>

Hope for uncertain times (continued)

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9	And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.	Romans 5:2-5	<p>No one wants to suffer. Much of life consists of options for avoiding or minimising suffering! But Paul reminds us that suffering is not without purpose. Suffering produces perseverance, the ability to keep going when things are difficult. Perseverance produces character, a nature that is more like Jesus in the way that we think and act. Character produces hope, an unshakeable trust in God's goodness and provision. God's promise is that hope will not disappoint us. He has given us his Spirit who lives and works in us and makes us recipients of his grace. He has given us peace with God through Jesus Christ.</p> <p>How have you seen the Lord use difficult circumstances in your life to develop your trust and dependence upon him?</p>	<p>Gracious God, thank you for giving me your spirit and showing me your love. Please help me to keep holding on to the hope that I have in you, especially through the difficult times, knowing that you will use them to develop my character and keep me depending upon you in everything.</p> <p>Amen.</p>
10	But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed.	2 Corinthians 4:7-9	<p>There are times when it feels like we are crushed, despairing, abandoned and destroyed. The walls have come falling down, and there is no light to be seen. But God's promises remind us that the Lord remains with us, and it is his power that is at work. Paul, who is being persecuted, holds on to the hope that in the midst of incredible hardship he is not defeated. He is hard pressed, perplexed, persecuted and struck down, but the Lord is at work in and through him.</p> <p>Do you find it hard to believe that God is at work in your life? How can you encourage yourself with today's verse?</p>	<p>Father God, I am thankful that you have the all-surpassing power. Please help me to remember that when it feels hopeless, I can continue to hope in you.</p> <p>Amen.</p>

Hope for uncertain times (continued)

Day	Readings	Reference	Reflection/Question	Prayer
11	Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.	Philippians 4:6-7	<p>So often our heads can be very busy, with so many cares and concerns turning over and over in our minds. We can be quick to try and sort things out ourselves, and only then turning to the Lord in prayer to ask for his help. Here we are reminded to come to the Lord first, bringing all our anxieties to him. To be thankful, for there is always so much to be thankful for. And the promise is that his peace will guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.</p> <p>What makes you anxious? Do you have a strategy for turning your anxieties into prayers?</p>	<p>Father God, I am thankful for all you do. I bring my prayers and requests to you, handing over all the things I feel anxious about. Please give me your peace, and guard my heart and mind.</p> <p>Amen.</p>
12	Since then you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.	Colossians 3:1-2	<p>Perspective is so very important. Here Paul reminds us that our true reality is that we have been raised with Christ. While we live in this messy and sinful world, Jesus has defeated sin and death and risen to sit down at the right hand of God – his atoning work completed. When the troubles of this life loom large, it can be so helpful to lift our eyes above the mess and rubble towards Christ. When we focus on what he has done, and continues to do, it helps us to navigate through the things of this world.</p> <p>What might it mean for you to dwell on Christ today?</p>	<p>oving God, thank you for Jesus' completed work on the cross. Help me to fix my heart and mind upon him, not on the things of this world.</p> <p>Amen.</p>
13	We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure.	Hebrews 6:19	<p>In a world where things change so very quickly, and all that seems very secure and stable can change in an instant, when we look to Jesus we have a firm and secure anchor, one who keeps us grounded and gives us hope. And it is not a hope that is wishful thinking, but a hope grounded in the defeat of death and the promise of eternal life. This is where rest for a weary soul can be found.</p> <p>Is your hope resting in Jesus?</p>	<p>Gracious Father, thank you that in Jesus we have a firm and secure hope. When life threatens to overwhelm me, please help me to put all my hope in his death and resurrection.</p> <p>Amen.</p>

Hope for uncertain times (continued)

Day	Readings	Reference	Reflection/Question	Prayer
14	And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."	Revelation 21:3-4	<p>It's hard to imagine a world where everything is right and perfect, but that is the picture we are given here of eternity with God. Once again God will live with his people, harking back to the early days in Genesis when there was no sin and he walked with the man and the woman. He will be the one who will wipe away every tear and restore the world, ushering in the new order where sin and decay no longer has any place. It is such a beautiful picture of things made right.</p> <p>How can the hope of all things being rightly restored help you to live now, when life is messy and painful?</p>	<p>Lord God, thank you for the hope of a future where all the wrongs are righted, and there will no longer be any death, mourning, tears or pain. Please help me to hold on to that hope when life here on earth is messy and painful.</p> <p>Amen.</p>