

## 39. Hard Times

Hard times are experienced by all Christians. This reality is reflected in the Bible. But the Bible also shows that there are a number of practical and effective things that we can do when undergoing hard times – the most prominent of which is praying.

### Trust and Wait For God

#### Trust in God

[DAVID, TO GOD:] I have heard the slander of many; It is like terror all around me, as they conspire together and plot to take my life. <sup>14</sup>*But I trust in you, O LORD. I say, “You are my God.”* <sup>15</sup>*My times are in your hands. Deliver me from the hands of my enemies and from those who pursue me.* PSALMS 31:13–15 ISV

The statement: “You are my God” (v. 14), implies that the LORD is the one David trusts as being in control of his life, the one who held his present and future circumstances in his hands (v. 15a).

#### Take refuge in God

*The one who lives in the shelter of the Most High and who abides in the shadow of the Almighty<sup>2</sup> will say to the LORD, “You are my refuge, my fortress, and my God in whom I trust!”* PSALMS 91:1–2 ISV

#### Wait for God

*Wait patiently for the LORD! Wait confidently for him!* PSALMS 37:7A NET

#### Take comfort in God’s word

[A PSALMIST, TO GOD:] *When I suffer, this comforts me: Your promise gives me life. ...* <sup>52</sup>*I remember your laws from long ago, and they comfort me, LORD.* PSALMS 119:50, 52 NCV™

In v. 50 the psalmist speaks of God’s promise renewing his life, through the hope that it gives.

### Pray in Hard Times

#### Pour out your heart to God

O people, in every situation put your trust in him; *pour out your heart before him*; for God is a refuge for us. PSALMS 62:8 ISV

#### Cry out to God for help

[DAVID:] *In my distress I called to the LORD; I cried out to my God. From his heavenly temple he heard my voice; he listened to my cry for help.* PSALMS 18:6 NET

#### Persist in prayer to God

[A PSALMIST, TO GOD:] *LORD God, my saviour, I cry out all day, and at night I come before you.* PSALMS 88:1 GNT

#### Praise and thank God amidst trouble

Then [Jehoshaphat] *he chose men to be singers to the LORD, to praise him because he is holy and wonderful. As they marched in front of the army, they said, “Thank the LORD, because his love continues forever.”* <sup>22</sup>*As they began to sing and praise God, the LORD set ambushes for the people of Ammon, Moab, and Edom who had come to attack Judah. And they were defeated.* 2 CHRONICLES 20:21B–22 NCV™

### God in Our Hard Times

#### God is near us in hard times

*The LORD is close to the brokenhearted, and he saves those whose spirits have been crushed.* PSALMS 34:18 NCV™

#### God comforts us in hard times

[PAUL, TO BELIEVERS:] Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! *He is the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort,* <sup>4</sup>*who comforts us in all our suffering, so that we may be able to comfort others in all their suffering, since we ourselves are being comforted by God.* 2 CORINTHIANS 1:3–4 ISV