



# Finding Hope in Difficult Situations

## Finding Hope In Hard Times

### Key idea:

In hard times we can easily give in to despair, but God uses times like this to call us to look to Him for mercy, salvation, and hope, knowing that He is the faithful God.

### Key text:

Lamentations 3:17-26

I have been deprived of peace; I have forgotten what prosperity is. <sup>18</sup> So I say, “My splendor is gone and all that I had hoped from the Lord.” <sup>19</sup> I remember my affliction and my wandering, the bitterness and the gall. <sup>20</sup> I well remember them, and my soul is downcast within me. <sup>21</sup> Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope: <sup>22</sup> Because of the LORD’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. <sup>23</sup> They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. <sup>24</sup> I say to myself, “The Lord is my portion; therefore I will wait for him.” <sup>25</sup> The Lord is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him; <sup>26</sup> it is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord.

### Key points:

1. Jeremiah lives through the fall and destruction of Jerusalem and the exile of God’s people to Babylon.
2. This dire situation left Jeremiah and everyone else feeling despair and a loss of hope for the present and the future.
3. There are many reasons why times like this happen. Two of them are:
  - a. The things we love and trust betray us and their natural results create a crisis.
  - b. These times are used to expose our sin and are a call for us to recognize, repent of, and root out our sin.
4. In hard times we should turn to God, for He is faithful and compassionate, and can restore our hope.
5. During hard times we need to give special time to waiting on God, focusing on Him rather than the circumstances surrounding us.

### **Questions for discussion/application:**

1. What part of Sunday's text and teaching stood out most to me? Why?
2. How am I feeling during this current crisis? What are my emotions? Do Jeremiah's words in this passage reflect my feelings? Or perhaps a Psalm? Have I expressed these feelings to God in prayer? What passage of Scripture could guide my prayers in expressing my feelings?
3. Jeremiah 1:19 says that Judah's lovers (or allies) had betrayed her and led to her time of crisis. What allies and lovers in our modern world might have led to this crisis? Can I detect such allies and lovers in my own heart? Can I identify things I have trusted in or relied on more than God?
4. What is the relationship of sin to times of hardship and crisis? Is there a direct relationship between sin and suffering? Or is it more complex?
5. Can I think of sins in our culture that God might be exposing through the current situation? Have I taken time to pray and repent of these national sins?
6. In Lamentations 3:40-42 Jeremiah called on the people to examine themselves for sin and to turn to the Lord. What sins might God be exposing in my own life right now? Have I sought the Spirit, asking Him to reveal sin in my life during this time? How can I apply this passage during this time?
7. How is the character of God - faithful and compassionate - a source for hope in times like this? Am I experiencing God's faithfulness and mercy each morning? And I purposefully seeking to experience them, or am I just trying to get through this time and have life return to normal?
8. When I face difficult times (sickness, economic hardship, loss of a loved one, shattered hopes, etc.) how do I normally respond? How do I tend to spend my time during such situations?
9. In such difficult times do I tend to focus more on the difficult situation or God's Presence and Promises? How can I practice "waiting on God" during this time?
10. Who will I call to encourage this week? What specific members of BRCC will I commit before God to call?