



## Day 4: Hope in Difficult Times

by Jill Opie

Welcome to Torquay seafront on a beautiful summer's day. I sometimes come here early in the morning when it's quiet, with just the dog walkers, the breakfast time swimmers and the seagulls for company. I love to hear the waves, to step back from the busyness of life and bring my joys and concerns to our Heavenly Father. You too may have a special place where you feel very close to God. Or perhaps there is a particular chair at home where you sit each day to pray. We love it when life runs well and the path ahead is clear and smooth and the smiles come easily. But we all know that life has its valleys as well as its mountain tops.

In chapter 3 of Lamentations we read these words-

**'This I call to mind and therefore I have hope. The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases. His mercies never come to an end. They are new every morning. Great is your faithfulness.'**

Here Jeremiah speaks of hope, for with God there is always hope. No matter how bleak the situation appears we can trust in our faithful God. The God of forgiveness, love and mercy, who understands how we feel, our frailty, our worries and our weaknesses.

We can also take encouragement by recalling God's faithfulness in the past in our lives and in the lives of those we read about in the Bible, such as Joseph, Moses, David and Daniel. God brought them all through difficult and seemingly impossible situations and turned things around for good and that is what God can do for us when we trust in Him.

God's steadfast love gives us hope. He never stops loving us. Close your eyes and just drink in those 5 words- God never stops loving us. When on this earth Jesus

knew pain and suffering and has promised that He will give us strength and help us cope in every situation we face. Each sunrise heralds a new day and a fresh opportunity to remember God's goodness. We can know the joy and comfort of God's abundant love in our hearts on a daily basis. He can lift our spirits and give us fresh hope.

He will be there in our tomorrows, blessing us, encouraging us and loving us, bringing us through the valleys and accompanying us on the mountain tops. Remember that He has promised- Never will I leave you or forsake you.

You may know the hymn 'There is a hope', by Stuart Townend and Mark Edwards. All of the words are beautiful, but it's verse 2 that I particularly love.

There is a hope that lifts my weary head. A consolation strong against despair.

That when the world has plunged me in its deepest pit, I find the Saviour there.

Through present sufferings, future's fear, He whispers courage in my ear.

For I am safe in everlasting arms, and they will lead me home.

### **Let's finish with a prayer.**

Lord, we give you our yesterdays, our todays and our tomorrows, and all those things that clamour for our attention and unsettle us. You are Lord and you understand everything that we go through. Fill our minds and hearts with your presence, your power and your peace that we might trust in you and in your unfailing love for us. Amen.

