

A woman with dark, curly hair is shown in profile, her eyes closed and hands clasped in prayer. She is lying down on a patterned blanket. In front of her is an open Bible, and to the right, a lit candle provides a warm, soft light. The background is a blurred landscape with mountains under a clear sky.

God's *Comfort* in Crisis

Praying Scripture's Promises for
People Facing Crisis and Tragedy

Right now, millions of people around the globe are facing some type of crisis.

Suffering from the effects of natural disasters, acts of terrorism, violence, poverty, political conflicts, illness and disease, and other events, they are often left traumatized and without hope.

But in times of crisis, Scripture reminds us that God does not ignore suffering: “The LORD doesn’t hate or despise the helpless in all their troubles. When I cried out, he listened and did not turn away” (Psalm 22:24 CEV).

God does not abandon us in our time of greatest need. Instead, he enters into our struggles and offers his peace. He reminds us that we are not alone and encourages us with his presence. And, through Jesus Christ, he gives us eternal hope.

That’s why, when we encounter suffering, tragedy, or crisis, the Bible encourages us to pray! Our prayers invite God’s help in the most hopeless situations. Through our prayers, we can see broken lives restored.

So, as we witness the plight of the refugee, the orphan, the displaced, the sick, the poor, victims of war and mass violence, and communities destroyed by hurricanes, floods, or earthquakes, let us turn to God in prayer.

This guide is designed to help you pray the Bible’s promises for those who are suffering around the world. In it, you will find:



Scriptures that point to God’s promises of hope and healing in the midst of disaster



Prayers that invite the Holy Spirit’s wisdom, comfort, and peace for those who are suffering



Resources designed to help those who have experienced traumatic events heal, as well as resources to support the church as it serves hurting people



3 Reassuring Truths About God Amid Crisis

Every day, our social media feeds and television screens are filled with images of people whose lives have been turned upside down by disaster and violence. Our own families and communities are rocked by unexpected crises and unthinkable tragedies. Our hearts grieve at the extent of the suffering we see in our world. But Scripture reminds us that our hope is in Jesus. He has the power to bring his light in the darkest of situations.

Today, be encouraged by these three reassuring truths about God during suffering:

1

God is always with us, even during our most difficult moments.

*I may walk through valleys
as dark as death,
but I won't be afraid.
You are with me,
and your shepherd's rod
makes me feel safe.*

— Psalm 23:4 CEV

"When you pass through deep waters, I will be with you; your troubles will not overwhelm you. When you pass through fire, you will not be burned; the hard trials that come will not hurt you. For I am the LORD your God, the holy God of Israel, who saves you."

— Isaiah 43:2–3a GNT

*The LORD is near to those who are discouraged;
he saves those who have lost all hope.*

— Psalm 34:18 GNT

2

God is our helper, our source of strength, and our comfort.

I look to the hills!

Where will I find help?

It will come from the LORD,

who created heaven and earth.

— Psalm 121:1-2 CEV

God is our shelter and strength,

always ready to help in times of trouble.

So we will not be afraid, even if the earth is shaken

and mountains fall into the ocean depths;

even if the seas roar and rage,

and the hills are shaken by the violence.

— Psalm 46:1-3 GNT

“God blesses those people

who grieve.

They will find comfort!”

— Matthew 5:4 CEV

3

God hears us when we cry out to him in prayer.

*In my trouble I called to the LORD;
I called to my God for help.
In his temple he heard my voice;
he listened to my cry for help.*

— Psalm 18:6 GNT

*When I was in trouble, I called to the LORD,
and he answered me.*

— Psalm 120:1 GNT

*You listen to the longings
of those who suffer.
You offer them hope,
and you pay attention
to their cries for help.*

— Psalm 10:17 CEV



6 Ways to Pray for People Facing Crisis

When we see the condition of our world, we can often feel helpless. But there are things we can do to help.

First, we must care deeply. In moments of unimaginable tragedy, Scripture tells us to weep with those who weep (Romans 12:15). In times of grief and sadness, we can come alongside our brothers and sisters and express grace and love.

Second, we must pray deeply. Scripture tells us that “the prayer of a good person has a powerful effect” (James 5:16b GNT). When we pray, we are placing our confidence in God, trusting that he can heal hearts, bring peace, and transform lives.

Today, you can pray for God to intervene in the lives of those who are suffering around the world. Here are six ways you can pray now.

1

A Prayer for Those Affected by Natural Disasters

Father, we pray for all those affected by hurricanes, typhoons, earthquakes, floods, tornadoes, wildfires, and other natural disasters.

For those in the path of disaster, we pray for your protection. Shelter them under the shadow of your wings. Give them strength, courage, and resolve to endure the storm. Lord, we ask you to protect communities so that they will not suffer devastation and destruction. We pray the words from Psalm 57:1 (CEV): “God Most High, have pity on me! Have mercy. I run to you for safety. In the shadow of your wings, I seek protection till danger dies down.”

For disaster survivors, we ask you to provide for those who have lost their homes, their livelihoods, their security, and their possessions. May they have the courage to face the long road of rebuilding ahead. Bring consolation and comfort to those who lost loved ones. Guide first responders and caregivers with your grace. Renew their strength so they may respond to people in need. May your church open its doors to the needy, providing meals, shelter, and spiritual support through your Word. We also pray that humanitarian aid will pour in from around the world and that every need would be met through the generosity of others.

In Jesus’s name we pray. Amen.

2

A Prayer for Those Affected by Wars and Civil Unrest

Father, we pray for those whose families, communities, and nations have been ravaged by war, political volatility, and instability.

God, you are the God of peace. Bring peace to nations embroiled in bitter conflict. We pray for peaceful resolutions. We intercede for national leaders, guided by 1 Timothy 2:1–2 (GNT): “First of all, then, I urge that petitions, prayers, requests, and thanksgivings be offered to God for all people; for kings and all others who are in authority, that we may live a quiet and peaceful life with all reverence toward God and with proper conduct.” Transform the hearts and minds of those who perpetuate violence and oppression. Grant that governments will work together to seek all avenues of peace.

Father, in your kindness, watch over victims of war. May they be held in your loving care and protection and receive strength to endure great hardship. For the refugees forced out of their homes because of war and conflict, we ask for your protection and guidance. We pray that they will be welcomed in foreign lands and experience great generosity. For those displaced within their nations, we ask for your help and provision. Lord, empower your Church to rise up and be a shining light and a safe refuge in these times of trouble.

In Jesus’s name we pray. Amen.

3

A Prayer for Those Affected by Mass Violence

Father, we pray for those who have lost loved ones to violence or have been emotionally, physically, or spiritually injured because of brutality.

Lord, in our grief over the violence we see in our communities, we turn to you. We repent of the sin of violence and pray for the healing of our land from 2 Chronicles 7:14a (CEV): “If my own people will humbly pray and turn back to me and stop sinning, then I will answer them from heaven.” We pray that the Bible’s message of love and goodwill will permeate hearts, replacing messages of hatred and anger. Grant us your wisdom and power to end cycles of violence in our communities so that no more lives are lost. We long to hear your words from Isaiah 60:18 (GNT) declared over our communities: “The sounds of violence will be heard no more; Destruction will not shatter your country again. I will protect and defend you like a wall; You will praise me because I have saved you.”

Gracious God, comfort those grieving the loss of loved ones. Grant healing to those who were injured, as well as those overwhelmed by trauma. Help your church be a place of refuge and restoration in communities broken by violence.

In Jesus’s name we pray. Amen.

4

A Prayer for Those Affected by Sickness, Illness, or Disease

Father, we pray for those dealing with illnesses, pains, cancers, and chronic diseases. We also pray for those battling depression, anxiety, fear, addiction, and mental illness.

God, you have the power to heal, so we turn to you, and ask you to restore to health those afflicted by sickness, illness, and disease. We pray the words in Jeremiah 17:14 (GNT): “LORD, heal me and I will be completely well; rescue me and I will be perfectly safe. You are the one I praise!” God, remove aches and pains and grant wellness to those suffering physical ailments. We speak the powerful name of Jesus over every disease that afflicts us. For the doctors, nurses, and family members administering care, we pray you give them wisdom, strength, and compassion.

For those suffering from mental illness and the darkness of anxiety and depression, we pray for your deliverance. Deliver them from the weight of sadness and grant them your joy. We pray for freedom and that every person struggling through mental illness will be able to declare the words in Psalm 30:11 (GNT): “You have changed my sadness into a joyful dance; you have taken away my sorrow and surrounded me with joy.” Lord, grant your church a spirit of compassion and generosity as we bear witness to your healing power and care for the needs of those suffering from sickness and mental illness.

In Jesus’s name we pray. Amen.

5

A Prayer for the Poor and Needy

Father, we pray for those experiencing economic hardships and living in poverty around the world. We also pray for those forgotten, overlooked, and abandoned by society.

Almighty God, we bring before you the men, women, and children who are undervalued and oppressed. Lord, we know you come for the least, the last, and the lost. You do not turn a blind eye to orphans, widows, the poor, the homeless, the hungry, or the destitute. You welcome them and you care for them. Father, we pray that your church will follow your way of love. Help us to be your feet walking beside those in need. Help us to be your hands to clothe, feed, and shelter them.

Father, we pray for the eyes of the world to be turned to those in need. We pray that corrupt systems of injustice will be exposed and repaired so that no one will be denied access to food, shelter, work, education, or medical care. May there be an outpouring of support and resources for those in need. Help us always remember that whatever we do for one of the least of these brothers and sisters, we are doing it for you (Matthew 25:40).

In Jesus’s name we pray. Amen.

6

A Prayer for the Persecuted Church

Father, we pray for those who face the threat of violence, or who are beaten, imprisoned, harassed, discriminated against, or ostracized by their families and communities because they follow Jesus.

Heavenly Father, we ask you to grant those who are persecuted courage to endure the trials they face. We pray that you will protect them and their families according to your will. We pray that even as they experience suffering, that they would remain strong in their faith and cling to Christ, embracing the truth found in 2 Corinthians 12:10 (CEV) which says, "I am glad to be weak or insulted or mistreated or to have troubles and sufferings, if it is for Christ. Because when I am weak, I am strong."

Lord, cause your gospel to spread through the faithful witness of these precious ones who remain steadfast in their love for Jesus. And we pray that Matthew 5:10 (GNT) will be demonstrated in their lives: "Happy are those who are persecuted because they do what God requires; the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to them!"

Finally, we pray for those who are persecuting Christians. We ask, God, that they would come to know Jesus Christ as their Savior through the testimony of those they are persecuting.

In Jesus's name we pray, Amen.



Bible-Based Resources

Loss, disaster, and tragedy are part of every person's experience in a broken world. But the Bible tells us that it is possible to move beyond trauma toward true healing.

American Bible Society's Bible-based Trauma Healing Ministry was created to help people who have experienced trauma find hope and healing through God's Word. Our ministry applies the Bible's wisdom in the context of mental health best practices. We train churches, community leaders, and individuals in a Bible-based curriculum that is proven to break down barriers of trauma with the restorative truths of God's Word. We also produce resources like the [Restoring Hope Bible](#), which features tools to help suffering people bring their pain to Jesus.

Here are some free resources that you can use and share with people in your own life:

- **What Is Trauma? Video.** This short video gives a simple explanation of trauma and its effect on people.
- **Healing from Trauma Video.** This one-minute video explains how someone might begin the healing journey.
- **Recognizing Trauma.** This resource walks you through the three most common ways trauma presents itself in people's lives.
- **Caregiver Cards.** These print-at-home cards can help you care for yourself and experience God's love when the burden of caregiving feels overwhelming.
- **Trauma Healing Basics Discussion Guide.** This easy-to-use discussion guide will help groups of people learn about trauma and healing together.
- **How to Lament.** This resource shares the Bible's blueprint for a kind of prayer that helps us pour out our pain to God.
- **3 Questions to Ask Someone Who Is Hurting.** Through this resource you can help a friend or loved one share their pain by asking just three simple questions and listening without offering judgment or solutions.
- **Beyond Disaster: A Survivor's Guide.** This booklet can help you with practical ways to care for yourself and your loved ones.

You can download these resources and more at
www.traumahealingbasics.org/resources