

## Strength for Today, New Hope for Tomorrow



At the time of this writing, the whole world is in a state of shut down. Approximately two to three months ago, a nasty virus referred to as “COVID-19” infiltrated the whole world. It is extremely contagious & in many cases, deadly. People can’t always tell they are contagious for up to 2 weeks prior to experiencing any

symptoms & thus unknowingly the virus is easily spread. There is no current cure & no end in sight as the virus is rapidly spreading across all countries. Hospitals are full to capacity & health care workers are becoming overwhelmed & ill. In an attempt to contain the spread of this potentially deadly virus, our nation & many others around the world, currently have been placed under quarantine. It is a very dark & frightening time in the world. Darkness, fear, dread, doubt, hopelessness, & despair fill the hearts of the people. It does seem like it will take an unexplainable miracle to bring light into this darkened world.

According to the calendar, we are now officially in the season of Spring when all of God’s creation is bursting forth with new life. Generally, as we enter this season the darkness & cold of winter has passed. The days lengthen & the warmth that comes from the increased light brings the earth to life once again in all of its glory with birds singing & flowers beginning to grow, giving us hope & reminding us of God’s unending love for all of His creation. In the warmth of the light, the bulbs & seeds that appeared to have died in the winter, now burst forth with new life. Only God our Creator can bring life out of death. Spring, in some faith traditions is sometimes referred to as Easter, as a season of new life & hope, when all of God’s creation is singing in gratitude & joy.

However, despite what the calendar may say, this year, winter & spring are wrestling with each other. One day the thermometer says 50 degrees & a day or two later it reads 25 degrees. Wind, rain & even snowflakes persist as the sun tries to break through the dark clouds. In many ways, this year is very different than any other Spring we have ever experienced in our lifetime. Aside from the wrestling going on between winter & spring, instead of joyfully celebrating the gift of new life, we find ourselves experiencing the wilderness of unknowing & living in the dark season of fear & hopelessness that the pandemic brings to us. Many are struggling to find any hope for the future, barely noticing that the flowers that once lay dormant, are now displaying the gift of new life given to us by God our Creator.

# Bright Hope for Tomorrow



Given the magnitude of the pandemic we are currently living through, it does seem like the questions that challenge us all as we step into this Spring season is; “Where will we find the strength & the hope to keep going or is this season totally hopeless & devoid of the new life that we are used to experiencing at this time of year?” This is not

the first time we have experienced deep darkness, fear & death either individually, or in a pandemic that involves all of creation. Yet each & every time that all of creation has experienced deep darkness & death, when we are on the verge of giving up, God our steadfast Creator breaks into the darkness, shatters the dark with His Holy light & brings us new life. God our Creator’s love for all of His creation is unconditional & steadfast. He is the Alpha & the Omega of all life; the beginning & the end. As quoted in the book of Lamentations 3:22; “The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, His mercies never end.” As the Psalmist write; “God our Creator, is our refuge & our strength, our light & our salvation, whom shall we fear?” Through His unending steadfast love & grace, God alone brings new life out of death in all seasons. As we seek for strength, courage & hope through the dark days of this pandemic it is important for us all to remember that it is God our creator who is the stronghold of our life regardless of what season we may be in. Our strength for these days & our hope of new life comes from God alone. Faith is the opposite of doubt & fear. It is faith in our living Lord that is the bedrock of all hope, & it is hope that is the fuel for our healing. In this season of new life, as we wrestle between winter & spring, the season of new life, we invite everyone to hold fast to God the giver of all life & to live into & reflect strength & faith in the sure & certain hope of the Resurrection to new life that most assuredly will be given by our living faithful God. AMEN

## “Great Is Thy Faithfulness”

Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father, There is no shadow of turning with Thee;  
Thou changest not, Thy compassions they fail not; As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be...  
Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth, Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;  
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow, Blessings all mine, with ten thousand besides  
Great is Thy faithfulness, Great is Thy faithfulness Morning by morning new mercies I see; All I have  
needed Thy hand has provided; Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord unto me!

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