

# At a Time of Crisis



*All Hymn Numbers, unless otherwise stated, taken from Hymns Old and New (New Anglican Edition 1996)*

## Background

*Farming has always been subject to good times and bad times. The weather plays less of a dramatic part than it, thanks to modern equipment and scientific knowledge. However, we are all aware that disease can still ravage individual farms or even national herds and the uncertainty of farming today can lead to tragedy. The following might be found of value in difficult situations, where the Christian community can act as a local focus and support.*

**Passage from the Psalms** (see pages 223-6 of Seasonal Worship from the Countryside)

or

**Old Testament Reading** (*Habakkuk 3: 17- 18, RNSV*)

Although the fig tree has no blossom,  
neither shall fruit be on the vines;  
the crop of the olive shall fail  
and the fields shall yield no grain;  
the flock shall be cut off from the fold  
and there shall be no herd in the stalls.  
Yet I will rejoice in the Lord,  
I will exult in the God of my salvation.

Lord have mercy on your land and creatures

**Christ have mercy on your human children**

Lord have mercy on your whole creation

**New Testament Reading** (*from Romans 8, NRSV*)

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**Prayer for those in uncertainty and trouble**

O Lord, in our lives  
We are going through a time  
of clambering over rocky outcrops  
and drinking at turbulent, muddy streams.  
Shadows are all about us  
and we are fearful all the time.

Where are you, with your rod and staff?  
Where is the comfort that you promise us?  
Bring us safely through this time of trouble,  
that our hunger and thirst may be satisfied,  
that our fear may be calmed  
and our souls restored.  
Then shall we praise you,  
walking in the paths of righteousness  
and seeking to follow you all our days. **Amen.**

## Responses

God is our refuge and strength,  
an ever-present help in trouble.

**Rejoice, the Lord is King!**

Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way  
and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea.

**Rejoice, the Lord is King!**

He will bind up the broken-hearted  
And release the oppressed.

**Rejoice in the Lord, and again I say, Rejoice!**

Do not be anxious,  
but in everything,  
make your requests known to God.

**Rejoice in the Lord, and again I say, Rejoice!**

And the peace of God, which passes all understanding,  
will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

**Thanks be to God**

## Blessing

May the God of might and mercy  
who brought again our Lord Jesus  
from the tomb into the glory of Easter day,  
raise you from the dust into new life.

May our Saviour, the sun of righteousness,  
risen with healing in his wings,  
shine upon you with his marvellous light.

May the Holy Spirit, the comforter  
be constantly by your side  
supporting and strengthening you  
on the path you tread.

And may the Holy Trinity  
guard, preserve and bless you  
and all those whom you love,  
now, and in the days to come. **Amen.**

## Hymn at a time of crisis

A brighter dawn is breaking,  
And earth with praise is waking;  
For thou, O King most highest,  
The power of death defiest;

And thou hast come victorious,  
With risen body glorious,  
Who now for ever livest,  
And life abundant givest.

O free the world from blindness,  
And fill the world with kindness,  
Give sinners resurrection,  
Bring striving to perfection;

In sickness give us healing,  
In doubt thy clear revealing,  
That praise to thee be given  
In earth as in thy heaven.

*Bishop G.E.L. Cotton, 1813-66; L.M; Tune: New Sabbath*

**Other suggested hymns**

'Guide me O thou great Redeemer' (HO&N 188)  
'Father, I place into your hands' (HO&N 121)  
'In heavenly love abiding' (HO&N 246)  
'O Love that wilt not let me go' (HO&N 384)

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