



LIVING IN THE AGE OF SIGNS

UNTIL I RETURN

10 Devotionals for a Brighter Tomorrow

DAVID JEREMIAH



U N T I L I R E T U R N

10 Devotionals for a Brighter Tomorrow

The study of biblical prophecy provides encouragement for today and hope for tomorrow. I hope my series on *31 Undeniable Prophecies of the Apocalypse* has given you renewed optimism for the days ahead. Knowing that one day our Lord will welcome us to the Holy City with open arms is not just good news, it's the best news imaginable! Use these specially selected devotionals as you reflect on that marvelous truth.

David Jeremiah

— DAY 1 —

No Condemnation



There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.

ROMANS 8:1

Statutes of limitation specify an amount of time (years) *after which* charges may *not* be brought against an alleged perpetrator of a crime. Part of the reason is to promote the speedy resolution of suspected violations of the law.

The Bible's statute of limitations is spelled out in Romans 8:1: "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus." That is, when a Christian sins, God does not have a certain time frame within which He must judge the sinner for his sins. Why? Because there is no sentencing, and therefore no condemnation, for a Christian's sins. The penalty for all our sins was heaped upon Christ in His passionate suffering before and during the crucifixion. Christ bore the judgment, condemnation, and penalty (death) for our sins. That is not to say our sins don't matter—they certainly do. Our sins should be promptly confessed and fellowship with God restored. But there is no condemnation.

God's "legalities" are not like those on earth. Take a moment today to thank God that you are free from all condemnation—for yesterday, today, and forever.

— DAY 2 —

Break the Cycle



Therefore comfort one another with these words.

1 THESSALONIANS 4:18

Worry and discomfort can create a downward cycle of emotions. You receive some bad news—the death of a loved one, perhaps. In your discouraged state, you find yourself unable to respond to additional troubling events, weakening you further. And the downward cycle continues until hope and relief is interjected by yourself or another.

The apostle Paul found the Thessalonian Christians in a troubled state of mind. They were deeply worried about never seeing their loved ones again who had died before Christ's return. They were afraid that Christ had already returned, and they had missed His appearing. Paul wrote to them words with which they could comfort one another. The subject of His words? The Rapture of the Church—the appearing of Christ in the heavens to gather His followers to Himself just prior to the seven-year Tribulation on earth. Taking the sting out of death would go a long way toward relieving any other earthly trouble.

Are you troubled? Don't let the downward cycle begin. Comfort yourself with the truth of the any-moment appearing of Christ to gather you to Himself and take you to heaven. That blessed truth is enough to overcome any earthly trial.

— DAY 3 —

As Time Draws Near



And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed.

ROMANS 13:11

The morning headlines hit us with alarm as we realize we're drawing closer to the season of our Lord's return. One of our great comforts is what the Bible says about the Lord shielding His people in times like these.

Psalm 17 says we are hidden under the shadow of His wings.

Psalm 27 says we are hidden in the shelter of His tabernacle.

Psalm 32 says that God is our hiding place.

Isaiah 49 says we are hidden in the shadow of His hand.

And Colossians 3 says our lives are hidden with Christ in God.

When you read a frightening headline, remind yourself that you are hidden in the hollow of His hand, and He will keep you from the coming day of judgment. He will preserve your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forever. He will preserve your soul. That frees us from fear, allowing us to preach the Word with boldness, and experience His peace and joy as time draws near.

— DAY 4 —

Precious Promises



*Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth
in which righteousness dwells.*

2 PETER 3:13

Perhaps the most important lesson children learn growing up is trust—the promises of a parent: “I’ll be there at three o’clock to pick you up.” “Yes, you can go to summer camp this year.” Despite best intentions, sometimes life intervenes and promises aren’t kept. But if children learn that promises are a pathway through problems, they will learn to trust God’s promises, too.

God has made lots of promises to His people, beginning with promises to Noah after the Flood (Genesis 9:8-11) and later to Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3). Throughout the ages, God’s bedrock promise has been of a “new heavens and a new earth.” When life on this earth gets difficult, as it is bound to do (Job 5:7), we have the promise that something better is coming. That promise may not dull the immediate pain of the present, but it gives us hope. We know that God has not forgotten us. We have His “great and precious promises” to depend on (2 Peter 1:4). And, unlike human promises, God’s promises never fail.

Make a habit of noting God’s promises when you read the Bible. They are a lifeline that pulls us through the bumps in the world to the bliss of the next.

— DAY 5 —

A Heavenly Mansion



In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you.

I go to prepare a place for you.

JOHN 14:2

The largest private home in the world is Istana Nurul Iman Palace, the official residence of the Sultan of Brunei, Hassanal Bolkiah. The home consists of more than two million square feet of space, 1,788 rooms, 257 bathrooms, five swimming pools, a 110-car garage, air-conditioned stables for 200 polo ponies, a banquet hall, and a mosque large enough for 1,500 worshippers. It cost around \$1.4 billion to build in the mid-1980s.

Grand as it is, that mansion pales in significance to what Jesus is preparing for His followers. The home He is preparing is called the New Jerusalem in Revelation 21:2—and it is large. Shaped like a cube, it measures 1,500 miles in each of its three dimensions—length, width, and height (Revelation 21:16). It is built of precious stones and minerals and its worth, in human dollars, would be incalculable. But more important than its worth in dollars is its worth in security and joy for all who dwell there for eternity.

When comparing a man's greatest with God's greatest, there is no comparison. Make sure you have secured your reservation in the mansion Jesus is preparing.

— DAY 6 —

While You're Waiting



But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

J U D E 20 - 21

“What am I supposed to do until you get here?” That’s a question a child might ask a parent who has been delayed by traffic. Answers: Read a book, do your homework, practice your clarinet, empty the dishwasher, let the dog out—parents have lots of ideas for children with time on their hands.

Christians are waiting for Christ to “get here.” How would you describe what we should be doing until He arrives? Witnessing, worshiping, being a good steward, loving others—those are all good answers. But Jude, in his often-overlooked letter, has as good a summary as will be found in the New Testament (Jude 20-21). In two verses, there is one imperative: “keep yourselves in the love of God.” That’s the main priority. But there are three participles that describe accompanying activities. That is, keep yourselves in God’s love *while* (1) building yourself in the faith, (2) praying in the Spirit, and (3) watching for the appearing of Jesus Christ. Those three activities will support the priority of keeping ourselves centered in the love of God.

Are you building, praying, and watching? If you are, you are likely living confidently in God’s love.

— DAY 7 —

Home Decorating



Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, and this temple to lie in ruins?

HAGGAI 1:4

In her book, *Sacred Stories*, Ruth Tucker told about Sarah Dunn, who was sitting at home in Waterloo, Iowa, one day in 1861, finishing an elaborate piece of handiwork for her house. Suddenly the Lord whispered, “What are you doing to decorate your heavenly home?” Sarah couldn’t get away from that question, and she grew zealous to bring others to Christ. Moving to Chicago, she devoted herself to meeting the physical and spiritual needs of the downtrodden. She married Colonel George R. Clarke; and in 1877 they founded a mission on South Clark Street that later became the Pacific Garden Mission, which is still preaching Christ today.¹

In Haggai’s day, the people had abandoned work on the temple. Their focus was adorning their own homes. There’s nothing wrong with creating a beautiful environment around us, but we mustn’t forget our eternal work. We can’t take our houses to heaven with us, but when we share the Gospel, we’re investing in an eternal mission and laying up a treasure for ourselves in heaven.

What are you doing to decorate your heavenly home?

1. Ruth Tucker, *Sacred Stories: Daily Devotions from the Family of God* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1989), 183.

— DAY 8 —

Live Now as Then



Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

MATTHEW 6:10

Charles Spurgeon asked the question in an 1891 sermon, saying he read it in the fifteenth-century book by Thomas à Kempis, *Imitatio Christi*. Charles Sheldon also used the question in the subtitle of his 1896 book, *In His Steps*. But it wasn't until the 1990s that the question became popular, especially among Christian youth: "What Would Jesus Do?" WWJD bracelets were worn by the tens of thousands to signify a life to be led in step with the life of Jesus.

It's a good question. In a way, Jesus addressed the "how to live" question in the prayer He taught His disciples when He prayed, "Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." The kingdom of God broke into the kingdom of this world with the advent of Christ. It will be fully realized when He comes again and establishes His millennial, and ultimately eternal, kingdom on earth. Until then, we are to live as citizens of His kingdom—living on earth as we would (and will) live in heaven. In his book, *Surprised by Scripture*, N. T. Wright says, "you must therefore live, in the present, as far as possible like you will live in the future."²

Jesus was the same on earth as He was (and is) in heaven. If we do what Jesus would do, we will live on earth as we will be in heaven—a kingdom-centered life, one day at a time.

2. N. T. Wright, *Surprised by Scripture: Engaging Contemporary Issues* (New York: HarperOne, 2014), 95.

— DAY 9 —

Loving His Appearing



Finally there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

2 TIMOTHY 4:8

Picture a fourth-grade boy sitting in the principal's office, waiting for the appearing of the principal. Now picture the same boy at noon on a Friday, anxiously waiting for his mom to pick him up early from school to begin a long family-vacation weekend. He is waiting for the appearing of his mother. Which "appearing" does the lad love? Obviously, the appearing that will precede a weekend of fun and excitement.

There is a difference between waiting and waiting with excitement and anticipation. Or so the apostle Paul seems to suggest in 2 Timothy 4:8. There he mentions the "crown of righteousness" that awaits all who "love" the appearing of Christ at His Second Coming. It's one thing to wait for Christ's return; it's another to wait with love and anticipation. Those who love the idea of seeing Christ one day will live in such a way as to welcome His appearing—not hesitantly waiting like the boy in the principal's office.

If Christ appears today, will He find you loving His appearing?

— DAY 10 —

The Victor



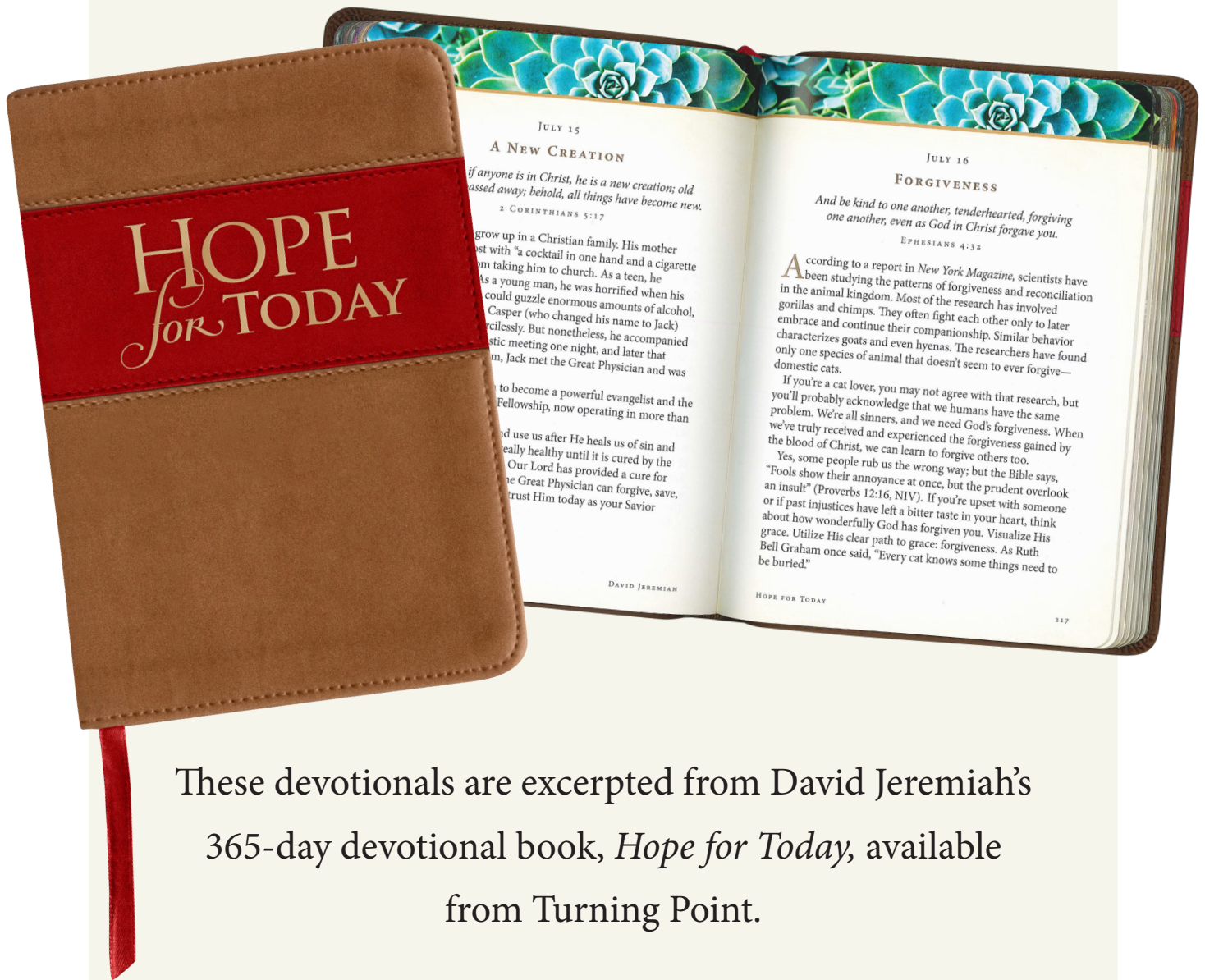
Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.

REVELATION 19:11

Archaeologists in Montana have analyzed 5,000 artifacts of a battle that occurred in 1876. That's when Lieutenant George Armstrong Custer led his army to disaster at the Little Bighorn. Custer's troops were slaughtered to the last man; and even now whenever we hear the name Custer, we think of one of history's worst defeats.

One day that's how we'll think of the Antichrist. Despite his threats, charisma, power, technology, militarism, wealth, and satanic energy, he and his army will be defeated suddenly and decisively at the moment Christ returns. In one swoop, Jesus will put down all rebellion against Him when He returns in victory at the end of history. The Bible says, "And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming" (2 Thessalonians 2:8). The devil and all his forces are defeated. They were defeated at the Cross. They are defeated now in our lives. They will be defeated forever at Christ's return.

There is only one Victor, and His name is Jesus.



These devotionals are excerpted from David Jeremiah's
365-day devotional book, *Hope for Today*, available
from Turning Point.