



# A PRAYER GUIDE FOR FAMILIES

---

# DURING THE COVID-19 CRISIS

*FREE Prayer and devotional guide for families with students looking for hope, courage and community in the midst of these challenging and uncertain times*

## INTRODUCTION

# HOPE, COURAGE & COMMUNITY IN THESE CHALLENGING TIMES

---

*Hope for Students* is a national movement of people of faith who believe all God's children deserve a high quality education, regardless their zip code, money their parents make, or color of their skin. In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, we know that all families with students are hurting and struggling—but students who were already vulnerable or far behind academically, are even more vulnerable. This is a moment to take care of each other.

We have created this prayer guide to help you navigate this time of crisis. Inside you will find five devotionals with timely biblical wisdom to provide encouragement for you and your family—and ideas for how to pray for our nation's most vulnerable students.

On behalf of all God's Children,



*Nicole Baker Fulgham*  
Founder, *Hope for Students* & *The Expectations Project*





*I don't pretend to "know it all." I am quiet now before the Lord, just as a child who is weaned from the breast.*

---

**PSALM 131:1-2**

## DEVOTIONAL ONE

# I'M NO MATH TEACHER

With school closures across the nation, suddenly, we're not only the loving adults in the lives of our children—we're also expected to be their teachers. We know that homework packets and online lessons can't take the place of school. We all want our kids to learn, and now more than ever, that falls to us parents. That is a lot of pressure! We're not prepared. We don't have the time. We have multiple kids with very different needs. We were never any good at math! We need God's help to make sure our kids keep learning and growing.

### BIBLICAL ENCOURAGEMENT

*Lord, I am not proud and haughty. I don't think myself better than others. I don't pretend to "know it all." I am quiet now before the Lord, just as a child who is weaned from the breast.*

**Psalm 131:1-2 (Living Bible)**

### PRAYING FOR YOUR FAMILY

Yes, educating our children is of utmost importance, but putting more pressure on yourself than you can bear won't help your child learn. Pray God would give you a sense of quiet peace even in the midst of the gap between what you would want your child to learn and what you feel capable of providing. Ask God to give you small, easily digestible ideas throughout the day for turning your kids toward learning, and be attentive to those ideas.. Pray for patience. Grant yourself the same grace God extends to you.

### PRAYING FOR VULNERABLE STUDENTS

While it can't meet all of the educational needs of our children, technology is a crucial learning resource during this time when schools are closed, but not all students have the technology they need. Currently, one quarter of households do not have access to the internet, and millions of students lack the devices to connect to it, whether they have access or not. This puts many students of color, who may be in inequitable schools and behind already, in danger of falling further behind. Pray for expanded internet access and availability of computers during this crisis so that all kids have this lifeline to school and learning.



*They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over.*

---

**MATTHEW 14:20**

## DEVOTIONAL TWO

# NOT ENOUGH TO GO AROUND

The paycheck stopped coming, but the rent is still due. The grocery shelves are empty—and so is the wallet—but our kids haven't stopped getting hungry. For many of us, things were already tough enough. For all of us, making ends meet just got a whole lot harder. Millions of us lost our jobs as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. We understand drastic measures have to be taken to stop this disease from spreading, but how are we going to provide our families with the basic necessities—a place to live, food to eat, proper supervision—in the meantime?

### BIBLICAL ENCOURAGEMENT

*"We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish," they answered. "Bring them here to me," he said. And he directed the people to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over.*

**Matthew 14:17-20 (NIV)**

### PRAYING FOR YOUR FAMILY

The disciples didn't have enough food to feed all of those people, but they were fed. What do you not have enough of right now? Food, money, work, childcare, all of the above? Ask Jesus for the hidden resources or the supernatural multiplication to turn your 'not enough' into what you need to provide the basics for your family. If you do have enough, ask where God may be calling you to multiply your loaves and fishes so that others have what they need.

### PRAYING FOR VULNERABLE STUDENTS

Millions of kids depend on public schools for their meals. No school, no breakfast and lunch. School districts are trying to rise to the occasion, to make sure that while school is out the kids still eat, as much as they would on a normal school day. Pray for school staff and administrators as they make this major change to being food providers during a health crisis. Pray for the resources they need to provide enough food. Pray that the food would make it to the students who need it. And pray that our children have enough to eat, now and always.

STAY SAFE & FOLLOW GUIDELINES  
DO YOUR PART TO REDUCE  
THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

”

*The whole town gathered at the door, and Jesus healed many who had various diseases.*

---

**MARK 1:34**

## DEVOTIONAL THREE

# ARE WE SAFE?

The once invisible threat of COVID-19 is becoming more and more visible as the number of cases rise, and people die. First, famous people started testing positive for the virus. Then, the US passed the rest of the world in the number of known cases. Now, I've heard the neighbor downstairs has it. It's starting to feel like a matter of time before this disease hits me. And it's frightening how little we know about the virus still and the different advice we are getting. At one point experts said children and young adults didn't get the disease. And that turned out to be wrong. I never want my child sick, and I especially don't want them to catch a disease I know nothing about. And isn't the best case scenario a bad one anyway? Say my children really aren't very vulnerable to this disease. Can't they still put my elderly parents at risk—especially if we're cooped up in the same house with nowhere to go?

### BIBLICAL ENCOURAGEMENT

*They went with James and John to the home of Simon and Andrew. Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they immediately told Jesus about her. So he went to her, took her hand and helped her up. The fever left her and she began to wait on them. That evening after sunset the people brought to Jesus all the sick and demon-possessed. The whole town gathered at the door, and Jesus healed many who had various diseases. **Mark 1:29-34 (NIV)***

### PRAYING FOR YOUR FAMILY

God loves you and cares about your family's health. Ask God to preserve the health of those in your family who are well, and to provide good care and healing to anyone who is sick.

### PRAYING FOR VULNERABLE STUDENTS

With schools closed but many people still working outside of the home, the reality is that we'll see more kids left at home alone, at younger ages or for longer times. Pray for safety for these kids, for access to help when they need it, and for as little time as possible in the absence of a caring adult. Pray too for a better societal solution than parents being left with the excruciating choice between losing their job and leaving their kids alone.

## DEVOTIONAL FOUR

# I MISS MY FRIENDS

My least favorite part of every day is the moment when my daughter asks, "Playground?" and I have to explain to her that they're closed. She's two years old, has no idea what a pandemic is, and can't conceive of why or how a playground would be closed. All she knows is that she's spending way too much time at home, inside, with no other kids to play with. And I know I have it easy. Older kids probably have a better idea of what's going on, but being with friends is such a huge part of their life that the isolation must feel worse than the prospect of being sick--it must feel a little like death. And, honestly, I feel that too. Praise God for technology. Phone calls and virtual hangouts are at least helping me keep up with my family and friends. But they can't take the place of actually being with them. How do we keep connected when the whole point of social distancing is staying away from everyone?

### BIBLICAL ENCOURAGEMENT

*Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted. Relieve the troubles of my heart and free me from my anguish.*

**Psalm 25:16-17, NIV**

### PRAYING FOR YOUR FAMILY

God knows our need for human connection, and cares when we're lonely. In this time when we're all separated from friends and family for health's sake, pray for comfort from God in the midst of loneliness. Pray too that you and your children would be able to get more than expected out of the indirect ways we can meet with our friends right now.

### PRAYING FOR VULNERABLE STUDENTS

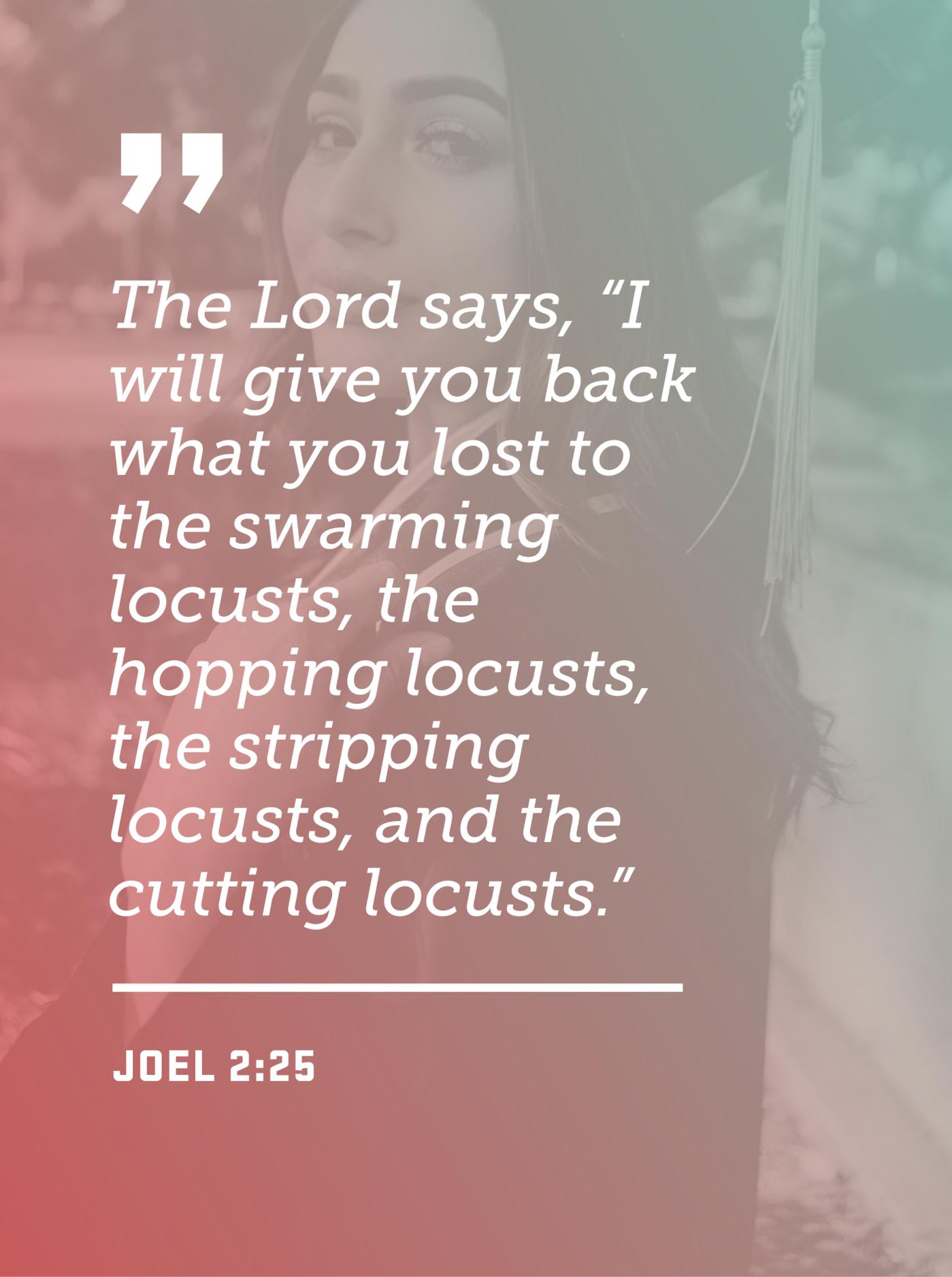
The trauma we are experiencing from disrupted lives and isolation from one another will likely last beyond the health crisis. That is even more true for students already experiencing trauma from hunger, housing insecurity, inequity in school, and neighborhood violence. Pray for these children, that they would receive the help they need to overcome the effects of the trauma they're experiencing. Pray too for protection for children experiencing domestic abuse, for whom long-term isolation at home is particularly dangerous.

”

*Turn to me and be  
gracious to me,  
for I am lonely  
and afflicted.  
Relieve the  
troubles of my  
heart and free me  
from my anguish.*

---

**PSALM 25:16-17**



”

*The Lord says, “I will give you back what you lost to the swarming locusts, the hopping locusts, the stripping locusts, and the cutting locusts.”*

---

**JOEL 2:25**

## DEVOTIONAL FIVE

# WE ALREADY BOUGHT THE TICKETS

We all thought we would be doing something different right now. Our day-to-day lives have been dramatically changed by the COVID-19 pandemic, and special events are being irrevocably changed. We couldn't have imagined anything getting in the way of the big reunion, an upcoming wedding, that family vacation we've been saving for. All of these celebrations we've been looking forward to, all of these big plans we've made are being plowed over. And how do you explain to your child that they can't have a birthday party this year? How do you make up for a lost season of their favorite sport? Are they going to be able to graduate this year, and if not what does that mean? Come to think of it, even if they do graduate, but they missed half of their senior year, what does that mean? This pandemic has taken a lot from us, and the longer it goes, the more and bigger the losses.

### BIBLICAL ENCOURAGEMENT

*The Lord says, “I will give you back what you lost to the swarming locusts, the hopping locusts, the stripping locusts, and the cutting locusts.”*

**Joel 2:25 (NLT)**

### PRAYING FOR YOUR FAMILY

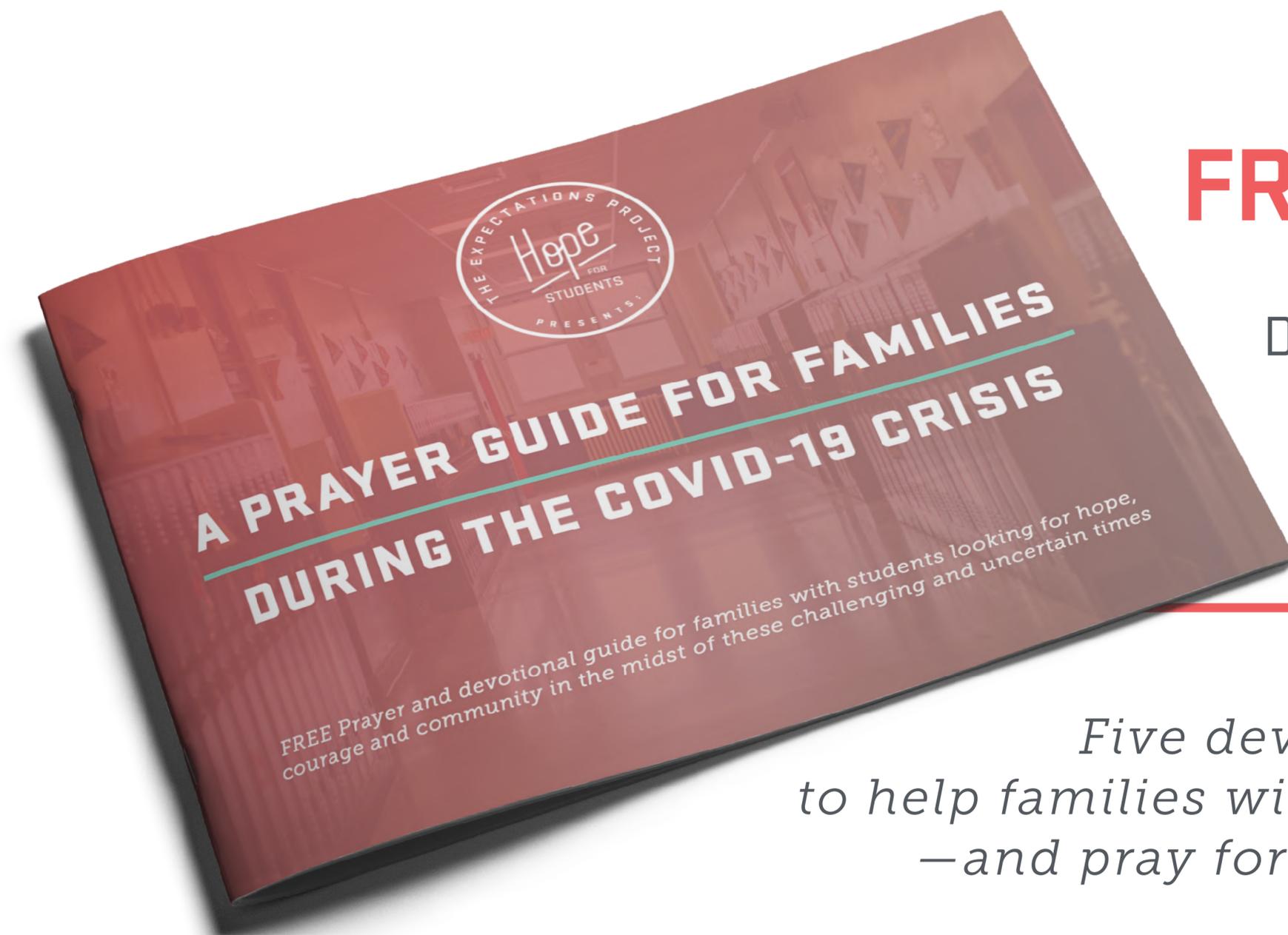
Ask God to help you grieve your losses well together as a family. Pray that as little will be lost as possible, and that much of what is lost can be recovered. Pray too for creativity about ways to celebrate even during social distancing, and that the celebrations will be more fun and meaningful than you expect.

### PRAYING FOR VULNERABLE STUDENTS

It's especially hard to recover from a lost school year if you were already behind. For some students, it will feel like they might as well give up. Pray for God to give them hope, that they will stay in school, that they will graduate, and that they will be given the resources they need while in school to be ready for a career or college when they do graduate.



*COPYRIGHT 2020 - THE EXPECTATIONS PROJECT*  
*[www.expectations.org](http://www.expectations.org) | [www.hopeforstudents.org](http://www.hopeforstudents.org)*



## FREE PRAYER GUIDE

DO YOU NEED HOPE AND COURAGE  
IN THESE CHALLENGING TIMES?

---

*Five devotionals with biblical wisdom  
to help families with children navigate the times  
—and pray for our most vulnerable students*