

# The Tension in Scripture Between Hope and Doubt

*"I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!" — Mark 9:24 (NIV)*

## 1. Understanding the Tension

Hope and doubt often live side-by-side in the human heart. Hope looks toward God's promises with expectancy, while doubt questions whether they will truly come to pass. Scripture doesn't hide this tension — instead, it reveals that even great men and women of faith wrestled with it. - Abraham: Believed God's promise but also asked for a sign (Genesis 15:8). - Thomas: Desired proof before believing in Christ's resurrection (John 20:25–28). - The father in Mark 9: Held faith and doubt in the same breath.

## 2. Why the Tension Exists

1. Human limitation — We cannot see the whole picture, so uncertainty feels natural. 2. Delayed fulfillment — The longer we wait, the more temptation there is to question. 3. Conflicting evidence — What we see may contradict what God has spoken.

## 3. How Scripture Addresses the Struggle

- God invites honesty — He welcomed Gideon's repeated requests for confirmation (Judges 6:36–40). - God gives reassurance — Jesus showed Thomas His wounds to remove doubt (John 20:27). - God strengthens faith — Through His Word, reminders of past faithfulness, and the witness of others (Romans 10:17; Hebrews 12:1–2).

## 4. Moving Through the Tension

1. Acknowledge the doubt — Pretending it's not there won't make it disappear. 2. Bring it to God in prayer — Like the man in Mark 9, invite Him into your struggle. 3. Feed hope intentionally — Spend more time in the promises of God than in the "what ifs." 4. Act in faith anyway — Obedience often precedes the feeling of certainty.

## 5. The Outcome of Hope Over Doubt

When hope is chosen over doubt, even in weakness, God is glorified. He doesn't demand perfect faith before He moves — He meets us where we are and grows our trust through the journey.

## **6. Prayer for Navigating Hope and Doubt**

Lord, You know the struggles in my heart — the places where hope and doubt wrestle. Thank You for not condemning my questions but inviting me to bring them to You. Help me to feed my hope with Your truth and starve my doubt by focusing on Your faithfulness. Teach me to trust You in the waiting, until my hope becomes sight. Amen.