

Sadness — Day 1



Precious Promises

Devotional Guide



🎧 Listen to
Scripture Song:



Today's Promise (#141) — KJV

Psalm 40:1-3 "I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock..." **Psalm 42:11** "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God."

❤️ Apply the Promise!

When our souls are cast down and we feel stuck in a dark pit of sadness, God hears our cries. He promises to lift us up, set our feet on solid ground, and put a new song of praise in our hearts.

📖 Bible Story (1 Kings 19)

Elijah was a prophet who had just seen God send fire from heaven on Mount Carmel. It was a powerful miracle, but soon afterward, a queen named Jezebel sent Elijah a frightening message. She threatened to hurt him. Suddenly, this brave man felt afraid, tired, and deeply discouraged. He ran away into the lonely wilderness.

At last, Elijah sat down under a juniper tree. He was so worn out that he prayed and asked God to let him die. His heart felt heavy, and he felt like he was the only person left in the world who still loved the Lord. But God did not scold Elijah for being sad. He cared for His tired servant with incredible kindness.

First, God let Elijah sleep. Then He sent an angel to touch him gently and say, "Arise and eat." Elijah woke up and saw freshly baked bread and a jar of cold water. He ate, drank, and went back to sleep. God knew Elijah's body needed rest, just as his heart needed comfort.

After resting, Elijah traveled for forty days until he reached a cave. There, God showed His power through a strong wind, a shaking earthquake, and a bright fire. But God did not speak through those loud things. Instead, Elijah heard a gentle, "still small voice." God reminded Elijah that he was never truly alone. God told Elijah that there were still many other people who loved the Lord. He even gave Elijah a new friend named Elisha to help him.

Elijah's story reminds us that when our hearts feel heavy with sadness, God does not scold us; He offers us gentle rest and comfort.

☀️ True Story

When Bob was a young man, he hit absolute rock bottom. Struggling with deep discouragement, he traveled to San Diego, hoping to start over by joining the Navy. The recruiting officer coldly turned him away. Desperate, Bob tried to get a sales job, but the manager took one look at him and harshly told him to go home.

Every single door had slammed shut. Bob went back to his lonely hotel room and collapsed on the bed. He couldn't face his friends, he had no job, and he had exactly \$8.50 left to his name. The crushing weight of sadness told him to just give up—that his life was completely ruined.

Instead of listening to the darkness, Bob remembered a secret his friend had taught him: the ABCs of Bible prayer. Sitting there with tears in his eyes, Bob decided to Ask God for a way out, Believe He was listening, and Claim a Bible promise. He prayed, "God, if You pull me out of this dark pit and tell me what to do, I will do it!"

The moment he claimed the promise, the suffocating sadness broke! Suddenly, Bob heard a clear voice: "Go to Madison College in Tennessee." Bob didn't even know where that was! With a brand-new song of hope, he started walking. Miraculously, God guided him across the entire continent on just \$8.50. When Bob arrived six days later, his future was beautifully rewritten.

Bob's story reminds us that when sadness feels heavy, we can bring our tears to God, claim His promises, and trust Him to guide us step by step.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- Why do you think Elijah felt so sad even after he had just seen God do a huge miracle?
- What three letters did Pastor Glenn Coon teach Bob to use when he prayed in his hotel room?
- When you feel stuck in sadness, what is one Bible promise you can claim out loud to help your heart feel better?

📖 Activity:

Get a large lump of sticky playdough or modeling clay. Have the children stick their fingers deep inside. It creates a tight grip that is hard to pull out! Talk about how deep sadness sometimes feels just like that—heavy and sticky, and you usually cannot get out by yourself. Then, grab their wrist and gently pull their hand free. Remind them that when they feel stuck in a pit of sadness, they can use their ABCs to ask God to pull them out!

Sadness — Day 2



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🎧 Listen to
Scripture Song:



Today's Promise (#142) — KJV

Isaiah 55:8–9 "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." **Jeremiah 29:11** "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end."

❤️ Apply the Promise!

When we feel sad because life isn't going our way, we can trust that God sees the whole picture. His plans for us are always good!

📖 Bible Story (Esther 2-4)

Esther was a young Jewish girl who had already known sadness. Her mother and father had died, and her kind cousin Mordecai had taken her in and raised her as his own daughter. Mordecai loved Esther and cared for her, and his home was the place where she belonged.

But one day, Esther's life changed again. She was taken from the home she knew and brought to the king's palace. She had to live among strangers and become part of a royal contest to choose a new queen. Esther may have felt afraid, lonely, and confused. She could not see why this hard thing was happening.

But God could see what Esther could not. He knew that one day His people would be in great danger. A wicked man named Haman would trick the king into making a law to destroy the Jewish people. Long before Esther understood the reason, God was already working.

In time, Esther became queen. Then the terrible law was announced, and her people were filled with fear and sorrow. Mordecai sent Esther a message, reminding her that perhaps she had come to the kingdom "for such a time as this."

Going to the king without being called was dangerous, but Esther chose to be brave. She prayed, fasted, and went before the king. God helped her, and through Esther, He saved His people.

Esther's story reminds us that when life feels confusing and sad, we can trust that God is working behind the scenes and sees the whole picture.

☀️ True Story

Bethany Hamilton was thirteen years old and already a champion surfer. She loved the water, spent her mornings in the ocean, and dreamed of surfing for many years. But one morning in Hawaii, Bethany's life suddenly changed. While she was lying on her surfboard, a large shark attacked her and bit off her left arm.

After a long stay in the hospital, Bethany had to face a very hard new reality. The life she had planned seemed broken. Simple things like cutting her food or tying her shoes became very difficult. She felt a deep, heavy sadness about losing her arm.

But Bethany did not have to face her sadness alone. She trusted God and took one step at a time. Only twenty-six days after the attack, she went back into the ocean! Surfing with one arm was very difficult. She fell off her board many times and had to use a special handle to dive under the waves. But she refused to give up and kept trying.

Over time, Bethany's incredible courage encouraged many other people. Children all over the world who were facing hard things saw her story and felt hope. Bethany learned that God's thoughts and ways are much higher than our ways. Even when she could not understand why her life had to change, she trusted that God's higher plan was perfectly good. He used her broken plans to do amazing things!

Bethany Hamilton's story reminds us that when we feel sad because our plans are broken, we can trust that God's ways are much higher and better than ours.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- If you were Esther being taken away to the palace, how do you think you would have felt?
- How many days after the shark attack did Bethany Hamilton get back on her surfboard?
- Why is asking "What's next?" a much better way to fight off a sad mood than asking "Why did this happen to me?"

🖨️ Activity:

Print a few pictures (like a butterfly wing, a piece of carpet, or the skin of a pineapple) and zoom in so close that they just look like a confusing blur of colors. Show the zoomed-in pictures and ask the children to guess what they are. Then, show the whole picture! Talk about how when we are going through a sad time, we are "zoomed in" and confused by what is happening. Remind them that God is "zoomed out" and can see the whole beautiful picture of our lives!

Sadness — Day 3



🎧 Listen to
Scripture Song:



Today's Promise (#143) — NKJV

Jeremiah 32:17–19, 26–27, 37–38 "Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and outstretched arm. There is nothing too hard for You...the Great, the Mighty God, whose name is the LORD of hosts. You are great in counsel and mighty in work... Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying, 'Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh. Is there anything too hard for Me?' ... 'Behold, I will gather them, and I will cause them to dwell safely. They shall be My people, and I will be their God;" **Matthew 19:26** "... With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." **Mark 9:23** "...If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.."

♥ Apply the Promise!

When you face a problem and feel hopeless, remember that nothing is too hard for God.

📖 Bible Story (Genesis 18 & 21)

Abraham and Sarah had waited many years for the child God had promised them. But now Abraham was almost one hundred years old, and Sarah was ninety. Sarah had never had a baby, and from the outside, it looked impossible. Her heart may have carried a quiet sadness for a very long time.

One day, three visitors came to Abraham's tent in the heat of the day. Abraham welcomed them and hurried to prepare food for them. While they were resting, the Lord gave Abraham a wonderful promise. He said that by that same time the next year, Sarah would have a baby boy.

Sarah was listening from inside the tent. When she heard the promise, she laughed to herself. She thought she was too old to have a child. After so many years of waiting, the promise sounded impossible.

But the Lord knew Sarah had laughed. He asked Abraham, "Wherefore did Sarah laugh?" Then He asked a powerful question: "Is any thing too hard for the LORD?" God wanted Abraham and Sarah to understand that age, weakness, and impossibility could not stop His promise.

God kept His word. The next year, just as He had said, Sarah gave birth to a baby boy. Abraham and Sarah named him Isaac, which means "laughter." The child Sarah once thought was impossible was now in her arms.

Abraham and Sarah's story reminds us that God sees the sadness we carry while we wait. Nothing is too hard for Him, and in His time, He can turn sorrow into joy.

☀ True Story

Holden Jorgensen was thirteen years old when a football game changed his life. During a play, a hard tackle injured his back so badly that he became paralyzed from the waist down. The doctors told Holden he would spend the rest of his life in a wheelchair. They said walking again was impossible.

Trapped in a body that refused to move, Holden felt a deep, heavy sadness. He spent many days feeling completely hopeless. But in those quiet moments, Holden realized God was right there with him. Before his legs ever started working, Holden asked God for help and felt a wonderful, comforting peace in his heart. Instead of giving up, he chose to believe that nothing is too hard for the Lord.

Holden started going to physical therapy. It was very hard work. He had to wear special heavy braces on his legs just to practice standing up. Even when he fell down, he bravely refused to stay on the floor! Holden trusted God and kept trying every single day. Slowly, he learned to do exactly what the doctors said he could never do: he learned to walk again!

Holden walked right out of his wheelchair and grew up to achieve his biggest dreams. He became a strong firefighter, passed all his physical tests, and helped patients in the exact same hospital where he was treated. Amazingly, even today as he runs marathons and lifts five hundred pounds, Holden still has absolutely no feeling in his legs!

Holden's story reminds us that no matter how sad or impossible a situation seems, there is absolutely nothing too hard for God.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- Why do you think Sarah laughed when God promised she would have a baby?
- What job did Holden become when he grew up and walked out of his wheelchair?
- What is something in your life (or someone else's life) that seems impossible right now, and how does Jeremiah 32:27 help you face it?

📄 Activity:

Give everyone a small index card and scissors. Ask if anyone can cut a hole in it large enough to step their entire body through. It seems completely impossible! Look up a quick tutorial online for "how to step through an index card." By cutting alternating slits, the tiny card expands into a massive ring! Just like this expanding paper, God solves our "impossible" problems in ways we cannot imagine.

Sadness — Day 4



Precious Promises

Devotional Guide



🎵 Listen to
Scripture Song:



Today's Promise (#144) — NKJV

Habakkuk 3:17–18 "Though the fig tree may not blossom, Nor fruit be on the vines; Though the labor of the olive may fail, And the fields yield no food; Though the flock may be cut off from the fold, And there be no herd in the stalls—Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation."

❤️ Apply the Promise!

When everything goes wrong and you feel sad, you always have a choice. You can focus on the empty places, or you can choose to rejoice in the God who saves you!

📖 Bible Story (Habakkuk)

Long ago, families grew all their own food to survive. They needed rain to grow plants like figs and olives. They needed green grass to feed their sheep and cows. If the plants died and the animals ran away, the families would go hungry. Life depended entirely on having full fields and crowded barns.

A man named Habakkuk served as a prophet, sharing messages from God. One day, God showed him a vision of what was going to happen to his country. In this vision, an army marched in and took over the land.

Habakkuk looked around the vision and saw that the trees had no fruit. The vines were completely bare. The dirt fields did not grow any food. The sheep were gone from their pens, and the cows were missing from their stalls.

Habakkuk knew exactly what this meant. His people would have nothing to eat. When he saw this future, he felt his stomach shake. His lips trembled, and his legs grew weak. He had every reason to sit down, complain, and give up.

Instead, Habakkuk made a clear choice. He did not pretend he was happy about the empty fields. He did not ignore the problem. He chose to praise God anyway. He said out loud that he would still rejoice in the Lord. He would find his joy in God, his Savior.

Habakkuk showed that joy is a decision we make. When things go wrong and our own lives feel empty, we can still choose to sing. We can always trust the God who saves us and praise Him in the middle of trouble.

☀️ True Story

During the 1600s, a war stretched across many countries. Armies marched through towns and destroyed the farms. Because the farms were ruined, there was no food left to eat. This caused a famine, which means people went hungry. Soon sickness spread through the towns.

A man named Martin Rinkart lived in a walled city in Germany. He worked as a pastor, helping people learn about God. When the war came near his city, thousands of people ran inside the walls to hide. The city became too crowded. The food disappeared, and sickness took over.

Soon, the other pastors in the city either moved away or caught the sickness and died. Martin was the only minister left to care for everyone. He worked every day from morning until night. He had to conduct thousands of funerals for the people who passed away. Some days, he buried fifty people. One of those people was his own wife.

Martin lived surrounded by sickness, hunger, and sadness. His own home felt empty. He had every reason to stop working, cry, and quit his job as a pastor.

But right in the middle of that pain, Martin made a choice. He sat down and picked up a pen. He did not write a letter to complain about the hunger. He wrote a song of thanks. He wrote the famous hymn, "Now Thank We All Our God."

Martin's story reminds us that sadness does not have to silence our praise. Even when our hearts hurt, we can remember God's mercy, thank Him for His care, and trust Him to carry us through.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- What did Habakkuk mean when he talked about the fig tree not blossoming and the fields being empty?
- What did Martin Rinkart use a pen to write right in the middle of a very sad time?
- How can we practice "rejoicing in the Lord" on days when we feel sad and nothing seems to be going our way?

📖 Activity:

Go outside and find a complete-looking branch or stick, and also find a small broken branch. Bring them inside and place them in a jar. Cut out several small paper leaves. Talk about how life can feel sad and empty, just like the broken branch. Then have everyone write or say things they can still praise God for. Hang or tape the leaves onto the branches. Watch as the sad, bare branch fills up with reminders of God's goodness.

Sadness — Day 5



Precious Promises

Devotional Guide



🎧 Listen to
Scripture Song:



Today's Promise (#145) — KJV

Philippians 4:8 "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

📖 Apply the Promise!

When sadness feels heavy, choose to focus your mind on the pure, lovely, and good things God has given you!

📖 Bible Story (Numbers 13 & 14)

Moses sent twelve men to explore the Promised Land. God had promised to give them this beautiful country. For forty days, the spies walked through Canaan. They saw large cities with high walls and beautiful, green valleys. When they returned, they brought back a single cluster of grapes that was so massive it had to be carried on a heavy pole between two men! But ten of the spies chose to give a very sad and negative report. They only focused on the scary things. They talked about giant warriors and high walls, saying, "We look like tiny grasshoppers compared to them!"

Because these ten spies focused entirely on the bad news, deep sadness fell over the entire camp of Israel. The people cried all night long and felt completely hopeless. They were ready to give up and go back to Egypt. They let the bad report control their thoughts.

But two of the spies, a man named Joshua and a man named Caleb, made a different choice. They had seen the exact same giants and the exact same walls, but they refused to focus on them. Instead, Joshua and Caleb chose to think about what was true, lovely, and good. They focused on the gigantic grapes and the wonderful promise of God! They knew that with God's help, they were much stronger than any giant. They begged their friends to trust the Lord instead of giving up. They tried to encourage everyone, saying, "Do not be afraid of the people of the land. The Lord is with us!"

Joshua and Caleb's story reminds us that when sad or fearful thoughts fill our minds, we can choose to remember what is true. God's promises are stronger than the problems we see.

💬 Discussion Questions:

- What massive fruit did the spies bring back on a pole between two men?
- What did Cavanaugh buy for the elderly people in his community?
- When you are having a really sad day, what is one "pure" or "lovely" thing you can choose to think about to help change your focus?

☀️ True Story

When Cavanaugh Bell was five years old and starting kindergarten, he faced a very hard situation. Some of the older children at his school were very unkind to him. They teased him every single day, which made him feel very small and afraid. Cavanaugh felt a deep, heavy sadness inside his heart. He cried and begged his mother to let him stop going to school because the pain felt too big to handle.

Cavanaugh felt powerless to stop the mean kids from saying hurtful things. But one afternoon, his mother gently helped him change how he was thinking. She explained that he could not control the unkind children, but he could intentionally choose where he focused his own mind.

Instead of thinking about the hurtful insults, Cavanaugh decided to focus on doing good things for other people. He completely shifted his attention away from the bullies and poured all his energy into spreading kindness. When he was only seven years old, he started his own charity called "Cool & Dope." He raised money to buy groceries and toilet paper for elderly people in his community who were stuck at home. He even packed the bags and delivered them right to their front doors with a big, happy smile.

The moment Cavanaugh shifted his focus to helping others, his dark sadness began to lift. By thinking about things that were pure, true, and good, his heart filled with courage. He became a bold leader in his city.

Cavanaugh's story reminds us that we can defeat feelings of sadness by intentionally choosing to focus our thoughts on doing good.

📄 Activity:

Have the children roll two pieces of paper into tubes to make "binoculars." Draw a scary, angry face on one piece of paper and a big, beautiful heart on another. Tape them to opposite walls in the room. Have the kids look through their tubes at the scary face—it is all they can see! Then, have them turn their bodies and focus only on the heart. Talk about how we get to choose which picture fills our vision and our minds!