

Trials — Day 1



 Listen to
Scripture Song:



Today's Promise (#76) — KJV

Job 23:10 "But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."

Apply the Promise!

When we go through hard trials, God still sees us. He can use even painful times to purify our faith, strengthen our character, and help us come forth as gold.

Bible Story (Daniel 3)

King Nebuchadnezzar built a huge golden image and commanded everyone to bow down and worship it. When the music began, people from every nation fell to the ground before the idol.

But three young Hebrews—Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego—remained standing. They knew God's commandment, and they would not worship a false god.

Nebuchadnezzar was furious. He gave them one more chance and warned them that if they refused, they would be thrown into a blazing furnace. The three young men stood firmly. They told the king that God was able to deliver them, but even if He did not, they would not bow.

The furnace was heated so hot that the soldiers who threw them in were killed by the flames. But when the king looked into the fire, he was astonished. The three men were walking unharmed, and a fourth Person was with them in the flames.

God did not keep them from going into the fire, but He met them inside it. They were not alone for one moment. Jesus was with them in the very place that was supposed to destroy them. When they came out, their hair was not singed, their clothes were not burned, and they did not even smell like smoke. The fire had burned only the ropes that tied them.

Sometimes we face trials that feel frightening, painful, or unfair. Jesus may not always take the trial away immediately, but He promises to be with us through it. He can use hard times to loosen the things that bind us, strengthen our faith, and help us come forth as gold.

True Story

In 2015, a Christian aid worker named Petr Jašek traveled to the country of Sudan to help people who were suffering. But while he was at the airport trying to go home, he was suddenly arrested by the secret police.

Even though he had done nothing wrong, Petr was locked away in a terrible, filthy prison. For 445 days, Petr was forced to share a tiny, miserable cell with violent men who hated him because he was a Christian.

They insulted him, threatened him, and tried to make his life miserable. It felt like being thrown into a fiery furnace! Petr could have easily become angry or entirely given up hope.

But even in that dark, miserable place, Petr realized he was not alone. Just like the fourth man in the fiery furnace, Jesus was right there in the prison cell with him.

Petr didn't let the terrible trial make him bitter. He started showing kindness to the guards and the very men who were mean to him. He bravely shared the gospel and even led some of his fellow prisoners to Jesus right there in the dark!

When Petr was finally released and allowed to go back home to his family, his faith was stronger than it had ever been. God used that terrifying, fiery trial to refine his heart, and today he travels the world sharing his incredible story.

Petr's story shows that God does not abandon His children in the fire. He may not remove the trial as quickly as we wish, but He can walk with us through it, soften our hearts, and use even hard places to make our faith shine like gold.

Discussion Questions:

- Why did Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refuse to bow to the golden image?
- How many days was Petr Jašek locked inside the terrible prison in Sudan?
- Petr used his terrible time in prison to tell other people about Jesus. Can you think of a time when something bad or disappointing happened to you, but God ended up using it for something good?

Activity:

Show how "fire" reveals the good things God writes on our hearts! Have the kids use a Q-tip dipped in pure lemon juice to write a secret message or draw a cross on a piece of white paper. Let it dry completely so it is invisible. Then, have an adult hold the paper very carefully over a toaster or a hot lightbulb (the "fiery trial"). The heat will cause the lemon juice to magically turn brown, revealing the beautiful message!

Trials — Day 2



🎵 Listen to
Scripture Song:



Today's Promise (#77) — KJV

John 16:33 "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

❤️ Apply the Promise!

*Jesus told us that this world would bring trouble, but He also promised peace in Him.
No trial is darker than His presence, and no trouble is stronger than His victory.*

📖 Bible Story (Hebrews 10)

After Jesus returned to heaven, the early Christians faced incredibly hard times. Jesus had warned His disciples that they would definitely have tribulation in the world, but He also promised to give them perfect peace.

The book of Hebrews tells the amazing story of exactly how the early church reacted when those terrifying, painful trials arrived. The Roman rulers and angry mobs began to persecute the Christians. Many faithful believers were arrested and thrown into dark, miserable prisons just for loving Jesus.

Others experienced a different kind of trial. Angry mobs broke down their doors, and all their earthly belongings were destroyed or stolen away.

But the Christians did something shocking. Instead of panicking, weeping over their stolen property, or giving up their faith in God, the Bible says they actually accepted the "spoiling of their goods" with absolute joy! They refused to let these fiery trials destroy their deep peace.

Because Jesus had overcome the world, they understood that earthly treasures like comfortable houses, money, and beautiful clothes were only temporary. They had peace because they knew they had a much better treasure waiting for them in heaven.

Even as they watched their homes being ruined, their hearts were firmly anchored in the promises of God. Their incredible reaction showed everyone watching that when Jesus is truly living in your heart, you can lose absolutely everything you own in this world and still be full of joy and peace!

☀️ True Story

In August 2010, thirty-three miners were working deep inside a massive copper mine in Chile. Suddenly, the mountain above them collapsed. Over seven hundred thousand tons of solid rock crashed down, trapping the men over two thousand feet underground in absolute darkness. They had almost no food, unbearable heat, and no way to contact the surface. It was a terrifying tribulation, and many of the men began to panic.

One of the trapped miners was a Christian named José Henríquez. José gathered the frightened men together and asked them to pray. He started leading a prayer service every single day at noon and six o'clock.

As the men prayed and sang in the dark, a wonderful shift happened underground.. The panic faded, and a deep peace filled the mine. The men started sharing their tiny food rations, encouraged each other, and stopped fighting. They felt God's comforting presence so strongly in the darkness that they started calling Him the "thirty-fourth miner."

After sixty-nine long days of being trapped, a drill finally broke through the solid rock. Every single one of the thirty-three men was pulled safely to the surface in a rescue capsule. When they finally reached the fresh air at the top, they immediately dropped to their knees to thank God.

The mine had been dark, but Jesus had not been far away. His peace reached even underground. When we face frightening trials, we can pray, trust Him, and remember His words: "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

💬 Discussion Questions:

- What did the early Christians do when their earthly goods and belongings were stolen?
- What nickname did the trapped miners give to God because they felt His presence in the dark?
- The early Christians actually had joy when their earthly belongings were taken away. What is one of your favorite toys or belongings that would be really hard to lose?

🎬 Activity:

Drop a raw egg into a glass of plain tap water. It will sink straight to the bottom, just like we "sink" under the heavy weight of a trial. Now, take the egg out and stir several huge spoonfuls of salt into the water. Tell the kids the salt represents the bitter, hard trials we go through. Drop the egg back in, and it magically floats to the top! Talk about how God uses the "salty," bitter trials to actually lift us up and make our faith stronger!

Trials — Day 3



🎵 Listen to
Scripture Song:



Today's Promise (#78) — KJV

Romans 8:18,24,28 "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us...For we are saved by hope...And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." **Romans 5:3-4** "And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope:"

💖 Apply the Promise!

God promises to use our trials to build our patience and bring about something incredibly good! The hard things we suffer today are nothing compared to the glorious future God has planned for us.

📖 Bible Story (Josh. 3 & Hebrews 4)

After forty years in the wilderness, the Israelites finally reached the edge of the Promised Land. But God led them straight into a terrifying trial. The Jordan River was right in front of them during the spring harvest season. The river was at flood stage, overflowing its banks with rushing water.

There were no bridges or boats, making the crossing humanly impossible. It seemed like a terrible time for God to bring them there! But God often allows us to face trials to test our faith and show His power. He wanted the Israelites to learn to trust Him even when things looked hopeless.

God gave Joshua a surprising command. He told the priests to pick up the Ark of the Covenant and march straight into the water. At the Red Sea, God had parted the water before the people stepped in. But this trial was different. God required the priests to show their faith by stepping into the flood first.

The priests did exactly what God asked. They marched right up to the roaring river. The moment their feet touched the water, a miracle happened. The river stopped flowing!

The water piled up in an invisible wall miles away, and the riverbed quickly dried up. The entire nation of Israel walked safely across the Jordan River! The book of Hebrews explains that this historical event is a beautiful picture of our future.

Just like the Israelites had to face the flooded river before reaching Canaan, we will face trials in this world. But God promises that when we step forward in faith, He will make a way through our hardest trials and eventually bring us safely into the perfect, eternal rest of our heavenly Canaan!

☀️ True Story

In the early 1800s, a little boy named Louis Braille lived in France. When he was three years old, he was injured in his father's workshop. An infection followed, and by the time Louis was about five, he could no longer see.

Life for blind children was very difficult in those days. There were few books they could read, and many people thought blind children could not learn much. But Louis had a bright mind and a patient spirit.

When Louis was sent to a school for blind children in Paris, he was thankful to learn. But the books were large, heavy, and hard to use. The raised letters were slow to feel with the fingers, and there were not many books available.

Louis did not give up. He began experimenting with tiny raised dots that could be felt quickly by touch. Again and again, he worked on the system, making it simpler and easier to read.

By the time he was a teenager, Louis had created a new alphabet made of raised dots. This system became known as Braille. It allowed blind people to read, write, study music, and learn in a way that had never been possible before.

Louis did not choose the painful trial of blindness. But he patiently worked through it, and God brought something useful from his suffering. His incredible invention forever changed history, bringing the gift of reading, writing, and the Bible to millions of blind people all over the entire globe. God took one boy's tragic loss of light and worked it together for the ultimate good of the world!

💬 Discussion Questions:

- What did the Jordan River do the exact moment the priests stepped into the water?
- What did Louis Braille invent using tiny, raised dots on paper?
- We look forward to entering "heavenly Canaan" where all our trials are permanently over. What is the number one thing you are most excited to do when you get to heaven?

🎬 Activity:

Demonstrate Romans 8:28! Have the kids taste a tiny pinch of flour, a tiny dab of baking soda, and a drop of vanilla extract. Alone, they taste terrible, bitter, and dry (just like our trials). But explain that when the Master Baker mixes all these "bad" things together and puts them through the "heat" of the oven, they work together to create a perfectly delicious chocolate cake!

Trials — Day 4



 Listen to
Scripture Song:



Today's Promise (#79) — NKJV

2 Corinthians 4:16–18 "Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal."

Apply the Promise!

Our earthly struggles are temporary, but God is using them to prepare an invisible, eternal reward in heaven that will last forever.

Bible Story (Hebrews 11)

Moses grew up surrounded by the greatest wealth in the world. Because he was the adopted grandson of the Pharaoh, he lived as a prince in the spectacular palaces of Egypt.

He had unlimited access to glittering gold, luxurious food, soft clothing, and the highest fame. To everyone watching, it looked like Moses had a perfect, successful life.

But Moses knew a secret that the wealthy Egyptians did not understand. He knew that everything he could see with his eyes—the giant pyramids, the gold statues, and the powerful armies—was temporary. None of it would last forever.

Moses had to make a huge decision. He could choose to stay in the palace and enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, or he could walk away from his royal title and choose to suffer terrible affliction alongside God's enslaved people.

The book of Hebrews tells us exactly what Moses did. When he grew up, he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He turned his back on the temporary treasures of Egypt and chose to suffer hard affliction with the Israelites.

Moses wasn't looking at the visible things around him. Instead, he looked ahead to the invisible, eternal reward that God had promised. He knew the temporary wealth of this world was worthless compared to the glory waiting in heaven.

His story teaches us that trials can help us choose what really matters. When we keep our eyes on Jesus and His eternal promises, we can endure hard things now because something far better is coming.

True Story

In 2001, a severe famine struck Malawi. Fourteen-year-old William Kamkwamba's family could no longer afford his school fees, so he had to leave school. It was a painful trial for a boy who loved learning.

But William did not stop searching for knowledge. He went to a small library and found science books with pictures of windmills. He could not understand every word, but the pictures gave him an idea that filled him with hope.

The book said wind could be used to make electricity and pump water. William began to wonder if he could build something that would help his family and village. Everyone around him saw only drought, hunger, and poverty, but William began to see a possibility.

Most people saw junk when they looked at old bicycle parts, broken pipes, plastic pieces, and scrap metal. William saw something different. He saw pieces that might become light, water, and a better future. People laughed at him while he worked. They thought he was wasting time digging through trash and building strange machines. But William kept going, looking past what others could see.

At last, his windmill worked. It brought light to his family's home. Later, his ideas helped bring water and to others too.

William's story shows how trials can teach us to look beyond what is right in front of us. What looked like famine, failure, and junk became part of something useful. In the same way, God can help us see past today's trouble and trust the greater future He is preparing.

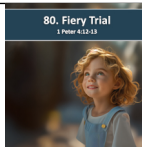
Discussion Questions:

- What specific things did Moses choose to leave behind in the palace of Egypt?
- What invisible force did William use to create electricity for his starving village?
- 2 Corinthians says our earthly troubles are "light" compared to the glory of heaven. What is one hard or painful thing about this world that you will be so glad to leave behind when Jesus returns?

Activity:

William looked at junkyard trash and saw a valuable machine. Give the kids a cardboard box filled with random, clean recycling items (empty paper towel rolls, plastic lids, rubber bands, and empty water bottles). Set a timer for exactly three minutes. Challenge them to use their imagination to look past the "trash" and build a brand-new, useful tool or toy out of the junk!

Trials — Day 5



 Listen to
Scripture Song:



Today's Promise (#80) — KJV

1 Peter 4:12–13 "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."

Apply the Promise!

*We shouldn't be surprised when hard times happen! God can use our fiery trials for His glory.
When we trust Him through the pain, He turns our deepest sadness into exceeding joy.*

Bible Story (Exodus 2)

A wicked Pharaoh ruled over the land of Egypt and hated God's people. To stop the Israelites from growing too powerful, Pharaoh issued a terrifying, evil decree. He commanded that every single newborn Hebrew baby boy must be thrown into the Nile River. It was an horrifying fiery trial for the Israelites.

During this dark time, a faithful woman named Jochebed gave birth to a beautiful baby boy named Moses. For three long months, she hid him inside her house. But eventually, the baby grew too big and too loud to keep secret. Jochebed was faced with an impossible, heartbreaking situation. If the Egyptian soldiers found her son, he would be killed.

Instead of giving up in despair, Jochebed trusted God to bring good out of this terrible trial. She gathered tall papyrus reeds from the riverbank and carefully wove them together to create a small ark. She covered the outside with thick, sticky pitch so it would be waterproof. With a breaking heart, she placed her precious baby inside the little basket and let it gently float away into the tall grass of the Nile River.

But God was in complete control of the trial. The basket floated directly to the spot where Pharaoh's own daughter was bathing. When the Egyptian princess opened the basket and saw the crying baby, she immediately loved him. She even hired Jochebed to be his royal nurse! The trial that looked like loss became part of God's plan to save His people. That baby grew up to be Moses, the man God would later use to lead Israel out of Egypt. This story teaches us that even when our hearts are breaking, God can still be working for His glory.

True Story

In the late 1990s, when Daniel Meola was just eleven years old, his entire world fell apart. His parents went through a deeply painful divorce. Because he was so young, Daniel felt confused and overwhelmed by the heavy sadness.

He had to pack a duffel bag and constantly bounce back and forth between two different houses, trying to make sense of his entirely divided life. It was a deeply personal, fiery trial that left him with a deep, invisible wound in his heart.

As Daniel grew older, he could have easily stayed angry at God for allowing his family to break apart. Instead, he decided to fully trust Jesus with his deep sadness. He began to realize that God could take the terrible, painful trial of his childhood and use it for something incredibly good.

Daniel noticed that there were thousands of other kids and young adults all over the country who were suffering from the exact same silent pain of divorce, but they had absolutely nowhere to go for help. Because Daniel had already walked through the fire, he knew exactly how to comfort them.

He decided to start a wonderful, nationwide Christian ministry called Life-Giving Wounds. Today, Daniel travels the country hosting special retreats and writing books to help other children of divorce find the healing and joy of Jesus.

God did not cause the heartbreaking trial of his parents' divorce, but He beautifully transformed Daniel's deep childhood wound into a powerful ministry that is actively healing thousands of other broken families all over the world!

Discussion Questions:

- What sticky substance did Jochebed use to make the basket completely waterproof?
- What is the name of the special ministry Daniel started to help other children of divorce?
- Daniel used his sad experience with divorce to help comfort other kids. Have you ever gone through a hard trial (like failing a test or missing a friend) that helped you comfort someone else?

Activity:

Show how God protects us in the trial! Give the kids a square piece of paper and have them color it heavily with thick wax crayons (representing Jochebed's pitch). Fold it into a simple paper boat and set it in a bowl of water. Put a small toy figure inside. The thick wax makes the paper magically repel the water! Talk about how trusting God "waterproofs" our hearts from sinking during fiery trials.