

## **35 Benefits of Trials – TRIALS...**

1. Test Our Faith
2. Develop Endurance
3. Perfect and Complete Us
4. Establish Who is in Control
5. Remind Us to Examine Our Hearts
6. Purify Us – Showing How Genuine Our Faith Is
7. Deepen Our Prayer Life
8. Spur Us on to Action
9. Teach Us How to Deal with the Enemy
10. Point Us to God's Word and Remind Us to Obey
11. Teach Us to Walk by Faith – Not by Sight or Fear
12. Prepare Us to Lead Effectively
13. Define Our Friendships
14. Can be a Result of God's Discipline
15. Yield a Broken Heart
16. Show Us God's Power in Our Weakness
17. Help Us Identify with Christ
18. Cause Us to Have an Eternal Perspective
19. Show Us God's Faithfulness
20. Teach Us to Be Diligent
21. Teach Us Patience
22. Get Our Focus Back on Christ
23. Help Us See Our Pride So We Can Humble Ourselves
24. Show Us Our Need for God's Mercy
25. Show our True Character
26. Give Us Opportunities to Pray for Our Authorities
27. Prove the Sincerity of Our Convictions
28. Help Us Overcome Our Insecurities
29. Give Us Opportunities to Deal with Difficult People
30. Allow Us to See How Much We Need Other People
31. Give Us Compassion for Others
32. Can Bring Salvation
33. Teach Us to Trust God
34. Make Us More Dependent on God
35. Teach Us to be Thankful

# WEEK 1 – REVIEW

## Bible Character Study: JOSEPH

### INTRO: Trials Will Come

**James 1:2-4 (NLT)** “Dear brothers and sisters, WHEN troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. <sup>3</sup>For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. <sup>4</sup>So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.”

### 1. Trials Test Our Faith

**James 1:2-3 (NIV)** “Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, <sup>3</sup>because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance.”

**Isaiah 7:9b (NIV)** “If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all.”

### 2. Trials Develop Endurance

**1 Peter 1:6 (NLT)** “So be truly glad. There is wonderful joy ahead, even though you must endure many trials for a little while.”

**Romans 5:3 (NLT)** “We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance.”

### 3. Trials Perfect and Complete Us

**James 1:4a (NLT)** “So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.”

**Philippians 1:6 (NIV)** “being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”

## WEEK 2 – REVIEW

### Bible Character Study: SHADRACH, MESHACH, & ABEDNEGO

#### 4. Trials Establish Who is in Control

**Isaiah 45:5-7 (NLT)** “I am the Lord; there is no other God. I have equipped you for battle, though you don’t even know me, <sup>6</sup> so all the world from east to west will know there is no other God. I am the Lord, and there is no other. <sup>7</sup> I create the light and make the darkness. I send good times and bad times. I, the Lord, am the one who does these things.”

**Romans 8:28-29a (NLT)** “And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them. <sup>29</sup> For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son...”

#### 5. Trials Remind Us to Examine Our Hearts

**2 Corinthians 13:5 (NLT)** “Examine yourselves to see if your faith is genuine. Test yourselves. Surely you know that Jesus Christ is among you; if not, you have failed the test of genuine faith.”

**Psalms 139:23-24 (NLT)** “Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. <sup>24</sup> Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life.”

#### 6. Trials Purify Us – Showing How Genuine Our Faith Is

**Proverbs 17:3 (NLT)** “Fire tests the purity of silver and gold, but the Lord tests the heart.”

**1 Peter 1:6-7 (NLT)** “So be truly glad. There is wonderful joy ahead, even though you must endure many trials for a little while. <sup>7</sup> These trials will show that your faith is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold—though your faith is far more precious than mere gold. So when your faith remains strong through many trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world.”

**Daniel 12:10 (NLT)** “Many will be purified, cleansed, and refined by these trials. But the wicked will continue in their wickedness, and none of them will understand. Only those who are wise will know what it means.”

## WEEK 3 – REVIEW

### Bible Character Study: NEHEMIAH

#### 7. Trials Deepen Our Prayer Life

**Nehemiah 1:5-6 (NLT)** “O Lord, God of heaven, the great and awesome God who keeps his covenant of unfailing love with those who love him and obey his commands, <sup>6</sup> listen to my prayer! Look down and see me praying night and day for your people Israel. I confess that we have sinned against you. Yes, even my own family and I have sinned!”

**James 4:2 (NLT)** “Devote yourselves to prayer with an alert mind and a thankful heart.”

**Philippians 4:6-7 (NLT)** “Don’t worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. <sup>7</sup> Then you will experience God’s peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.”

#### 8. Trials Spur Us on to Action

**1 Peter 1:13-14a (NLT)** “So prepare your minds for action and exercise self-control. Put all your hope in the gracious salvation that will come to you when Jesus Christ is revealed to the world. <sup>14</sup> So you must live as God’s obedient children. Don’t slip back into your old ways of living to satisfy your own desires...”

**Revelation 3:2-3 (NLT)** “Wake up! Strengthen what little remains, for even what is left is almost dead. I find that your actions do not meet the requirements of my God. <sup>3</sup> Go back to what you heard and believed at first; hold to it firmly. Repent and turn to me again. If you don’t wake up, I will come to you suddenly, as unexpected as a thief.”

**Psalms 119:5 (NLT)** “Oh, that my actions would consistently reflect your decrees!”

#### 9. Trials Teach Us How to Deal with the Enemy

**1 Peter 5:8 (NLT)** “Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour.”

**James 4:7 (NLT)** “So humble yourselves before God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”

**Ephesians 6:10-11 (NLT)** “A final word: Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. <sup>11</sup> Put on all of God’s armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil.”

## WEEK 4 – REVIEW

### Bible Character Study: JOSHUA

#### 10. Trials Point Us to God’s Word and Remind Us to Obey

**Joshua 1:7-8 (NLT)** “Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the instructions Moses gave you. Do not deviate from them, turning either to the right or to the left. Then you will be successful in everything you do. <sup>8</sup> Study this Book of Instruction continually. Meditate on it day and night so you will be sure to obey everything written in it. Only then will you prosper and succeed in all you do.”

**Psalms 119:71-73 (NLT)** “My suffering was good for me, for it taught me to pay attention to your decrees. <sup>72</sup> Your instructions are more valuable to me than millions in gold and silver. <sup>73</sup> You made me; you created me. Now give me the sense to follow your commands.”

**Psalms 119:143 (NLT)** “As pressure and stress bear down on me, I find joy in your commands.”

#### 11. Trials Teach Us to Walk by Faith – Not by Sight or Fear

**2 Corinthians 5:7 (NIV)** “For we live by faith, not by sight.”

**Joshua 1:9 (NLT)** “This is my command—be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”

**Psalms 56:3-4 (NLT)** “But when I am afraid, I will put my trust in you. <sup>4</sup> I praise God for what he has promised. I trust in God, so why should I be afraid? What can mere mortals do to me?”

**2 Timothy 1:7 (NLT)** “For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.”

#### 12. Trials Prepare Us to Lead Effectively

**Titus 2:7 (NLT)** “And you yourself must be an example to them by doing good works of every kind. Let everything you do reflect the integrity and seriousness of your teaching.”

**Hebrews 13:7 (NLT)** “Remember your leaders who taught you the word of God. Think of all the good that has come from their lives, and follow the example of their faith.”

**1 Timothy 4:16 (NLT)** “Keep a close watch on how you live and on your teaching. Stay true to what is right for the sake of your own salvation and the salvation of those who hear you.”

## WEEK 5 – REVIEW

### Bible Character Study: DAVID

#### 13. Trials Define Our Friendships

**Proverbs 16:28 (NLT)** “A troublemaker plants seeds of strife; gossip separates the best of friends.”

**Proverbs 18:24 (NLT)** “There are ‘friends’ who destroy each other, but a real friend sticks closer than a brother.”

**Proverbs 27:17 (NLT)** “As iron sharpens iron, so a friend sharpens a friend.”

**Proverbs 13:20 (NLT)** “Walk with the wise and become wise; associate with fools and get in trouble.”

**James 4:4 (NLT)** “Don’t you realize that friendship with the world makes you an enemy of God? I say it again: If you want to be a friend of the world, you make yourself an enemy of God.”

#### 14. Trials Can be a Result of God’s Discipline

**Hebrews 12:6; 10b-11 (NLT)** “For the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes each one he accepts as his child.”<sup>10b</sup> ...God’s discipline is always good for us, so that we might share in his holiness.<sup>11</sup> No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening—it’s painful! But afterward there will be a peaceful harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way.”

**Psalms 119:67 (NLT)** “I used to wander off until you disciplined me; but now I closely follow your word.”

#### 15. Trials Yield a Broken Heart

**Psalms 51:7-8 (NLT)** “Purify me from my sins, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.<sup>8</sup> Oh, give me back my joy again; you have broken me—now let me rejoice.”

**Psalms 51:17 (NLT)** “The sacrifice you desire is a broken spirit. You will not reject a broken and repentant heart, O God.”

**Psalms 34:17-18 (NLT)** “The Lord hears his people when they call to him for help. He rescues them from all their troubles.<sup>18</sup> The Lord is close to the brokenhearted; he rescues those whose spirits are crushed.”

# WEEK 6 – REVIEW

## Bible Character Study: PAUL

### 16. Trials Show Us God's Power in Our Weakness

**2 Corinthians 12:7b-10 (NLT)** "...So to keep me from becoming proud, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger from Satan to torment me and keep me from becoming proud.<sup>8</sup> Three different times I begged the Lord to take it away.<sup>9</sup> Each time he said, 'My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness.' So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me.<sup>10</sup> That's why I take pleasure in my weaknesses, and in the insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles that I suffer for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong."

### 17. Trials Help Us Identify with Christ

**1 Peter 4:12-13 (NLT)** "Dear friends, don't be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you.<sup>13</sup> Instead, be very glad—for these trials make you partners with Christ in his suffering, so that you will have the wonderful joy of seeing his glory when it is revealed to all the world."

**Philippians 1:29 (NLT)** "For you have been given not only the privilege of trusting in Christ but also the privilege of suffering for him."

**2 Corinthians 4:10 (NLT)** "Through suffering, our bodies continue to share in the death of Jesus so that the life of Jesus may also be seen in our bodies."

### 18. Trials Cause Us to Have an Eternal Perspective

**2 Timothy 4:18 (NLT)** "Yes, and the Lord will deliver me from every evil attack and will bring me safely into his heavenly Kingdom. All glory to God forever and ever! Amen."

**Colossians 3:1-3 (NLT)** "Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth.<sup>3</sup> For you died to this life, and your real life is hidden with Christ in God."

**Philippians 3:14 (NLT)** "I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us."

# WEEK 7 – REVIEW

## Bible Character Study: NOAH

### 19. Trials Show Us God’s Faithfulness

**Deuteronomy 7:9 (NLT)** “Understand, therefore, that the Lord your God is indeed God. He is the faithful God who keeps his covenant for a thousand generations and lavishes his unfailing love on those who love him and obey his commands.”

**Psalms 119:90 (NLT)** “Your faithfulness extends to every generation, as enduring as the earth you created.”

**1 Corinthians 10:13 (NLT)** “The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure.”

### 20. Trials Teach Us to Be Diligent

**Galatians 6:9 (NLT)** “So let’s not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don’t give up.”

**Deuteronomy 6:17 (NLT)** “You must diligently obey the commands of the Lord your God—all the laws and decrees he has given you.”

**1 Corinthians 15:58 (NLT)** “So, my dear brothers and sisters, be strong and immovable. Always work enthusiastically for the Lord, for you know that nothing you do for the Lord is ever useless.”

### 21. Trials Teach Us Patience

**Psalms 37:7 (NLT)** “Be still in the presence of the Lord, and wait patiently for him to act. Don’t worry about evil people who prosper or fret about their wicked schemes.”

**Romans 12:12 (NLT)** “Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying.”

**Revelation 2:3 (NLT)** “You have patiently suffered for me without quitting.”



## WEEK 8 – REVIEW

### Bible Character Study: PETER

#### 22. Trials Get Our Focus Back on Christ

**Jeremiah 29:13 (NLT)** *“If you look for me wholeheartedly, you will find me.”*

**Matthew 6:33 (NLT)** *“Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.”*

**Proverbs 4:25 (NLT)** *“Look straight ahead, and fix your eyes on what lies before you.”*

**Hebrews 12:2 (NLT)** *“We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God’s throne.”*

#### 23. Trials Help Us See Our Pride So We Can Humble Ourselves

**1 Peter 5:6 (NLT)** *“So humble yourselves under the mighty power of God, and at the right time he will lift you up in honor.”*

**Proverbs 11:2 (NLT)** *“Pride leads to disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom.”*

**James 4:6 (NLT)** *“God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”*

**Proverbs 29:23 (NLT)** *“Pride ends in humiliation, while humility brings honor.”*

#### 24. Trials Show Us Our Need for God’s Mercy

**1 Peter 1:3 (NLT)** *“All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is by his great mercy that we have been born again, because God raised Jesus Christ from the dead. Now we live with great expectation...”*

**Ephesians 2:4-5 (NLT)** *“But God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so much, that even though we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God’s grace that you have been saved!)”*

**Lamentations 3:22-23 (NLT)** *“The faithful love of the Lord never ends! His mercies never cease. Great is his faithfulness; his mercies begin afresh each morning.”*

# WEEK 9 – REVIEW

## Bible Character Study: DANIEL

### 25. Trials Show our True Character

**Proverbs 10:9 (NLT)** “People with integrity walk safely, but those who follow crooked paths will be exposed.”

**2 Corinthians 8:21 (NLT)** “We are careful to be honorable before the Lord, but we also want everyone else to see that we are honorable.”

**2 Timothy 2:15 (NLT)** “Work hard so you can present yourself to God and receive his approval. Be a good worker, one who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly explains the word of truth.”

**2 Timothy 4:7 (NLT)** “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have remained faithful.”

### 26. Trials Give Us Opportunities to Pray for Our Authorities

**1 Timothy 2:1-2 (NLT)** “I urge you, first of all, to pray for all people. Ask God to help them; intercede on their behalf, and give thanks for them. <sup>2</sup> Pray this way for kings and all who are in authority so that we can live peaceful and quiet lives marked by godliness and dignity.”

**1 Peter 2:13-14 (NLT)** “For the Lord’s sake, submit to all human authority—whether the king as head of state, <sup>14</sup> or the officials he has appointed. For the king has sent them to punish those who do wrong and to honor those who do right.”

### 27. Trials Prove the Sincerity of Our Convictions

**Romans 12:2(NLT)** “Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.”

**1 Peter 2:12 (NLT)** “Be careful to live properly among your unbelieving neighbors. Then even if they accuse you of doing wrong, they will see your honorable behavior, and they will give honor to God when he judges the world.”

**1 Thessalonians 2:4 (NLT)** “For we speak as messengers approved by God to be entrusted with the Good News. Our purpose is to please God, not people. He alone examines the motives of our hearts.”

# WEEK 10 – REVIEW

## Bible Character Study: MOSES

### 28. Trials Help Us Overcome Our Insecurities

**Proverbs 3:25-26 (NLT)** “You need not be afraid of sudden disaster or the destruction that comes upon the wicked, for the Lord is your security. He will keep your foot from being caught in a trap.”

**Psalms 27:3 (NLT)** “Though a mighty army surrounds me, my heart will not be afraid. Even if I am attacked, I will remain confident.”

**Hebrews 10:35 (NLT)** “So do not throw away this confident trust in the Lord. Remember the great reward it brings you!”

**Philippians 4:13 (NLT)** “For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.”

### 29. Trials Give Us Opportunities to Deal with Difficult People

**Matthew 5:44-45 (NLT)** “But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! <sup>45</sup>In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven. For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust alike.”

**Hebrews 12:14 (NLT)** “Work at living in peace with everyone, and work at living a holy life, for those who are not holy will not see the Lord.”

### 30. Trials Allow Us to See How Much We Need Other People

**Ecclesiastes 4:12 (NLT)** “A person standing alone can be attacked and defeated, but two can stand back-to-back and conquer. Three are even better, for a triple-braided cord is not easily broken.”

**Hebrews 10:24-25 (NLT)** “Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. <sup>25</sup> And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.”

**1 Thessalonians 5:11 (NLT)** “So encourage each other and build each other up, just as you are already doing.”

## Bonus Benefits of Trials

### 31. Trials Give Us Compassion for Others

**2 Corinthians 1:3-4 (NLT)** “All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is our merciful Father and the source of all comfort. <sup>4</sup>He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us.”

### 32. Trials Can Bring Salvation

**Acts 16:27-31 (NLT)** “The jailer woke up to see the prison doors wide open. He assumed the prisoners had escaped, so he drew his sword to kill himself. <sup>28</sup>But Paul shouted to him, ‘Stop! Don’t kill yourself! We are all here!’ <sup>29</sup>The jailer called for lights and ran to the dungeon and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. <sup>30</sup>Then he brought them out and asked, ‘Sirs, what must I do to be saved?’ <sup>31</sup>They replied, ‘Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved, along with everyone in your household.’”

### 33. Trials Teach Us to Trust God

**Proverbs 3:5 (NLT)** “Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding.”

**Psalms 31:14 (NLT)** “But I am trusting you, O Lord, saying, ‘You are my God!’”

**John 14:1 (NLT)** “Don’t let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me.”

### 34. Trials Make Us More Dependent on God

**John 15:3-5 (NLT)** “You have already been pruned and purified by the message I have given you. <sup>4</sup>Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me. <sup>5</sup>‘Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing.’”

### 35. Trials Teach Us to be Thankful

**1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (NLT)** “Always be joyful. <sup>17</sup>Never stop praying. <sup>18</sup>Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.”

**Ephesians 5:20 (NLT)** “And give thanks for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”