



# **Persecution & Hardships Bible Study**



Have you ever gone through a really hard trial before? \_\_\_\_\_

If it was a past trial, what happened at the end (how did it all work out)?

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\*\* We are going to be looking at a few people in the Bible that had to endure trials and hardships. Some of these stories may be very familiar to you, so pray and ask the Lord to open your eyes to new things and to teach you through His Word.

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Trials come in many forms, you can face difficulties in any area of life, including but not limited to; finances, loss of a loved one, sickness, being slandered, persecution for being a Christian and having family members who are unbelievers, just to name a few. Throughout the Bible study I will ask you “what kind of trial is he/she going through” and these are the kinds of things I want you to list.

### **Read Esther 3:12-14**

What kind of trial were the Jewish people facing?

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### **Read Esther 4**

How did Mordecai and the Jews react?

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What was Esther's initial response to Mordecai's request?

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Read verse 14 carefully. What kind of outcome for the Jews did Mordecai believe was going to be brought about?

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What was their battle plan in the end?

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**Read Esther 5:1-2 and chapter 7**

In the end, how did God come through for them?

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No matter what you are going through, remember that God is in control. He holds your life in the palm of His hand. You are in the place you are right now for a specific reason. Ask the Lord what His plan is for you at your place of work, in your home, church or whoever you are. Remember that two of the greatest weapons God has given us to overcome trials and hardships are FASTING and PRAYER!!!!

**Read Job 1:1-5**

Describe Job's character.

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**Read Job 1:6-12**

What was Satan doing?

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Why was he roaming the earth?

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**Read Job 1:13-22**

List the types of trials that Job was facing.

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What was his reaction in verse 20?

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**Read Job 2:1-10**

Again, what was Satan doing?

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What kind of new trial was Job facing?

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How did his wife feel about the whole thing?

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What was Job's reaction?

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I love reading about Job because he was so incredibly godly. While he had his flaws, he loved and trusted the Lord. I cannot even imagine facing all the trials Job did. After reading through this story though, I was reminded again that our battle is not against flesh and blood (Ephesians 6:12). Satan is roaming the earth looking for someone to devour. He tried everything within his power to get Job to sin and walk away from the Lord. However, Job's reaction was probably the complete opposite of what Satan was hoping for. After the first set of tragedies, Job fell down in WORSHIP!! Even after the second set of trials, his faith was proved genuine and he did not sin against the Lord. I think that Job recognized God's sovereignty and instead of holding onto the good things in this life, he held onto the promise of a new life and the things that awaited him in Heaven, his and our real home.

### **Read Philippians 1:12-29**

What kind of trial is Paul going through?

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What is Paul's overall attitude?

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In verse 14, what is happening as a result of Paul's trial?

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Why is Paul able to rejoice in the midst of his imprisonment?

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Paul is another man whom I highly respect and admire. Instead of blaming God for his imprisonment, he rejoiced in his circumstances. The reason he was able to rejoice was because his eyes were fixed on Jesus and not his circumstances. His focus was not on himself but the Lord!! The gospel was being preached as a result of Paul's actions and attitudes. When we go through trials, unbelievers are constantly looking to our reactions and what an amazing testimony it is to them of God's love and faithfulness when we choose to honor God regardless of what difficulties we are forced to face in this life!

**Read 1 Peter 2:18-25**

What kind of trial did Jesus face?

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How did He respond?

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Jesus is our perfect example of how we should live. Although He was perfect and blameless in every way, He was wrongly accused, beaten and crucified. While it breaks my heart to think about the pain and suffering He had to face, it was God's plan of salvation for us, His beloved. While Jesus suffered for false accusations, he did not retaliate, He did not condemn, He did not slander back or seek revenge, instead He entrusted Himself into His Father's hands. He suffered unjustly so that we may have life and because of Him, we have the hope of a new life in heaven where all there will be no more sadness, tears, heartache or trials. While we may have to face all kinds of trials here on earth, we have the hope of a Faithful Father, a Loving Savior and a home in Heaven!!!

### ***Application***

What are some battle plans for times of trials?

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What areas do you need to grow in so that you can honor God in the midst of trials?

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### **While facing trials remember.....**

God is for you (Romans 8)

God loves you (the whole Bible)

Our battle is not against flesh and blood (Ephesians 6)

God is faithful and will not tempt you beyond what you can bear (1 Corinthians 10)

The Lord is our avenger (Romans 12)

God works ALL thing our for our good (Romans 8)

There will be rewards in heaven if we honor Him in our trials (James 1)

Our home is in heaven (Revelation 7)

We hope you enjoyed this Bible study compliments of Powerline Productions.

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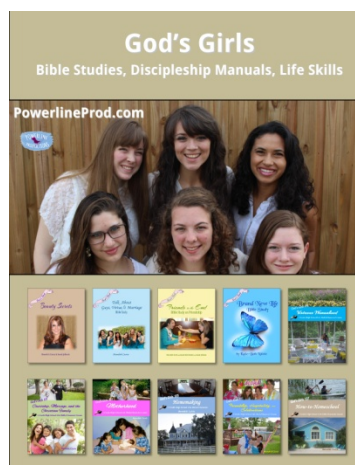
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