

BIBLE STUDIES

Exodus 3:7-10 – God brings deliverance

In the book of Exodus, we see God's powerful plan to bring deliverance to his people. For many years, the Hebrews suffered under the oppression of the Egyptians. When Pharaoh ordered that all Hebrew baby boys be killed, it may have seemed that evil was winning. Yet God was already at work. He preserved the life of Moses through the courage of his mother and the providential care of Pharaoh's daughter, who raised him in the palace.

As Moses grew up, he identified with his own people, but after killing an Egyptian, he fled to the wilderness of Midian. There he spent 40 years tending sheep. From a human perspective, Moses may have appeared to be a failed leader living in obscurity. But God was continuing to prepare him for the task ahead.

When the time was right, God called Moses to return to Egypt. The focus of the Exodus story is not Moses' abilities but God's intervention. God had heard the cries of his people and was determined to rescue them. He equipped Moses for the task, confronted Pharaoh through signs and wonders, and displayed his power through the plagues. Ultimately, it was God who brought Pharaoh to release the Hebrews and led his people out of slavery.

God also guided his people through the wilderness. Moses' years in Midian helped prepare him for leadership, but it was God who provided direction, protection, and provision every step of the way. Through the pillar of cloud and fire, through manna and water, God demonstrated that he was their deliverer and sustainer.

For the Hebrews living in bondage, it may have seemed that God was absent or unconcerned. Yet throughout those years, God was working behind the scenes to bring about their deliverance. The story of Exodus reminds us that even when we cannot see what God is doing, he hears our cries, remains faithful to his promises, and is always at work to rescue and redeem his people.

Yes. To help a group connect Exodus 3:7-10 with the experiences of persecuted Christians today, the questions can focus on God's awareness of suffering, his faithfulness during long periods of oppression, and how he works through his people.

Questions for discussion:

1. God says, "I have seen... I have heard... I know their sufferings." How might these words encourage Christians facing persecution today?
2. Why do you think it is important for persecuted believers to know that God sees and hears their suffering?
3. How can this passage help believers who feel forgotten, abandoned, or alone because of persecution?
4. How can hearing the stories of persecuted Christians strengthen our own faith?
5. What practical ways can our church support and stand with persecuted believers around the world?
6. What hope does Exodus 3:7-10 give to Christians who are suffering persecution today, and what hope does it give you personally?

Psalm 13 – Seeking deliverance

Psalm 13 is a prayer of someone desperately seeking deliverance. David likely wrote it during the time when King Saul was pursuing him and seeking to take his life. The repeated question, "How long?" appears four times, revealing the depth of David's suffering and his longing for God to intervene. He feels forgotten, abandoned, and overwhelmed by sorrow.

David's prayer reminds us that seeking deliverance begins with bringing our pain honestly before God. He does not hide his feelings. He tells God that he feels alone and that his enemies seem to be winning. His heart is filled with anxiety as he wrestles with his thoughts day after day. Those who live under constant threat, whether from persecution, imprisonment, violence, or other forms of suffering, often experience this same struggle. Fear and isolation can lead people to feel forgotten by both God and others.

As David focuses on his situation, his enemies occupy much of his attention. He imagines them triumphing over him and rejoicing in his downfall. Yet rather than remaining trapped in despair, David turns to God and actively seeks his help. He prays, "Look on me and answer me, Lord my God." David recognizes that his hope does not lie in his own strength but in God's ability to rescue him.

The turning point in the psalm comes when David shifts his focus from his circumstances to God's character. Although nothing has changed outwardly, he chooses to trust in God's unfailing love. His prayer moves from lament to confidence, from fear to faith. Seeking deliverance is not only asking God to change our circumstances; it is also choosing to trust him while we wait for his answer.

By the end of the psalm, David is rejoicing and singing praise to God. He is confident that God has heard him and will act on his behalf. His circumstances may remain difficult, but his heart has been transformed. He remembers God's goodness and places his future in God's hands.

Psalm 13 teaches us that when we are seeking deliverance, we can bring our deepest fears and questions to God. He invites our honest prayers, hears our cries, and meets us in our distress. As we turn our hearts toward him, he replaces despair with hope and helps us trust in his unfailing love.

Questions for reflection

1. How might this psalm encourage a Christian who has been imprisoned, displaced, or rejected because of their faith?
2. What can we learn from persecuted Christians who continue to worship and witness despite suffering?
3. How might the prayers of persecuted believers differ from our own prayers?
4. What specific challenges facing the persecuted church today should we bring before God?
5. What can we ask God to do in countries where believers face severe opposition?
6. How can we pray that persecuted Christians will experience God's presence and unfailing love, even when circumstances remain difficult?

2 Tim. 3:10-17 – Preparation for persecution

In his final instructions to Timothy, Paul prepares his young protégé for the reality of persecution. Rather than presenting the Christian life as easy or free from hardship, Paul teaches that suffering is a normal part of following Christ faithfully. Timothy has observed every aspect of Paul's life, including his teaching, way of life, purpose, faith, patience, love, and endurance. These qualities provided a model for Timothy to follow, especially in times of difficulty.

Paul then reminds Timothy of the persecutions and sufferings he endured. Timothy was not only aware of these hardships but had witnessed the impact they had on Paul's ministry. Yet Paul's purpose in recounting these experiences is not to focus on the suffering itself. He emphasizes that "the Lord rescued me from all of them." Timothy needs to understand both realities: persecution is certain, and God's faithfulness is certain. The God who sustained Paul can be trusted to sustain his people in every trial.

Paul goes on to make a sobering statement: "Everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted." Persecution is not an exception reserved for a few believers; it is a possibility for all who seek to follow Christ faithfully in a world that opposes the gospel. Timothy must therefore be prepared, not surprised, when opposition comes.

How does Paul tell Timothy to prepare? He points him to the Scriptures. Timothy has known the Holy Scriptures from childhood, and they have made him "wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus." Paul explains that all Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness. Through God's Word, believers are equipped for every good work and strengthened to remain faithful under pressure.

As we learn about Paul's persecutions and become aware of the persecution faced by Christians around the world today, we are reminded of the need to prepare ourselves spiritually. Preparation for persecution begins long before opposition comes. It involves building a strong foundation in God's Word, developing endurance and faith, and learning to trust God's faithfulness in every circumstance.

By grounding ourselves in God's Word and following the example of faithful believers who have gone before us, we can be prepared to stand firm, knowing that God remains with his people through every trial.

Questions for reflection

1. Paul says that “everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.” How should this shape our understanding of the Christian life today?
2. What encouragement might persecuted Christians find in Paul's confidence that “the Lord rescued me from all of them”?
3. Why is it important to prepare for persecution before it comes? How can churches help believers develop spiritual resilience?
4. What role does Scripture play in preparing Christians to remain faithful under pressure?
5. What can we learn from the faith, courage, and perseverance of persecuted Christians around the world today?
6. How can we practically support and pray for believers who are suffering for their faith, and what might God be teaching us through their example?