

The background is a warm, golden-hued illustration. In the upper center, a person's silhouette is visible in a doorway, looking out. In the lower right, a person is sitting on a hill, looking towards the left. The overall atmosphere is one of contemplation and spiritual journey.

**TITLE**

**TEMPTATIONS,  
TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS**

## Scripture Reading: Psalms 71:1-8

In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust: let me never be put to confusion.

**2** Deliver me in thy righteousness, and cause me to escape: incline thine ear unto me, and save me.

**3** Be thou my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort: thou hast given commandment to save me; for thou art my rock and my fortress.

**4** Deliver me, O my God, out of the hand of the wicked, out of the hand of the unrighteous and cruel man.

**5** For thou art my hope, O Lord God: thou art my trust from my youth.

**6** By thee have I been holden up from the womb: thou art he that took me out of my mother's bowels: my praise shall be continually of thee.

**7** I am as a wonder unto many; but thou art my strong refuge.

**8** Let my mouth be filled with thy praise and with thy honor all the day.

**In **Psalms 71:20** the Psalmist acknowledged that he had seen 'troubles, many and bitter.' His troubles, pressures and worries were not occasional or trivial. They were numerous and serious. Usually, as we emerge from one battle, there is another one around the corner. This is the challenge of life.**

You will be very surprised that the bible has a lot to say about trials, temptations, and tribulations. I believe the reason is because, whether we like it or not, it will come.

**James 1:2** says, 'Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds.' **John 16:33** says, 'In the world you will have tribulations.'

**1 Corinthians 10:13** says, 'No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.'

## **1. Definition**

The Bible describes three different types of challenges in life a Christian may experience: temptations, trials, and tribulations (which are listed in order of severity).

## A. Temptations

In **Matthew 26:41**, Jesus said, 'Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.'

From the biblical perspective, temptation may be defined as a scenario where a person finds himself in a situation where he is compelled by 'an opportunity to sin' and to do something he knows is wrong. This situation may have occurred as a result of the desires of our sinful nature (**flesh**) and may have been facilitated by an evil influence.

## B. Trials

A trial is a test of our faith, patience, and stamina as we experience negative situations in life. Trials may involve struggle with family and business relationships, a temporary sickness, constraining circumstances or 'walls' that hinder our progress, financial hardship, a job loss, accident, and so forth. In addition, the length of trials can vary from short to long, have a beginning and an end, may have an effect upon our emotions, may cause undesired physical responses such as stress, and may have varying degrees of difficulty to persevere.



## **C. Tribulations**

Tribulation is much worse than temptation or trial. Tribulation comprises severe hardship, adversity, distress and even death – due to oppression and persecution – because of a faith in Jesus Christ. Biblical examples of tribulation are segmented into past, present, last days, and after death.

## 2. Take confidence in the LORD

**Psalms 71:1** 'In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust: let me never be put to confusion.'

Most commentators assume **Psalms 71** is a prayer of an old man who is being persecuted.

**2 Samuel 15:7** says, 'And it came to pass after forty years, that Absalom said unto the king.'

**Psalms 71:6**, 'From my birth I have relied on you.'

Bible commentator titled Psalms 71 as '**Older in years, strong in faith.**'

He has a holy confidence of faith, strengthened by a long and remarkable experience. In the psalms we see three key aspects of what that reliance on God involves:

## A. Prayer

Here is a prayer that you can pray: 'I run for dear life to God... get me out of this mess (this is found in verse 1-2 under message bible translation). **Romans 12:12 says,** 'Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.'

Verse 2 is a series of four prayer requests (matching the prayer request in verse 1.)

- **Deliver me**
- **Rescue me**
- **Incline your ear**
- **Save me**

## **B. Patience**

Verse 5 says, 'You keep me going when times are tough...I've hung on you.'

## **C. Praise**

You can praise God before, during and after battles you face: 'I'll never run out of praise' (v.8, MSG). You can say, 'LORD, thank you that I can rely on you as I look to the future and the battles ahead

### **3. Take courage from being with Jesus**

**Acts 4:13** 'When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus.'

David encouraged himself in the LORD. Three times, God commanded Joshua and all of Israel to be '**strong and courageous**' before Joshua began his military campaign. Why David and Joshua can be courageous? Because God will be with them. Likewise, for us, we can take courage from being with Jesus.

Peter and John may not have had much formal education, but they had been to '***school with Jesus.***' They were his disciples. They had been to the '***College of God's Word***'. And now they were studying at the '***University of the Holy Spirit.***'



Authentic Christianity is bound to lead to opposition and trials of one sort or another. In the book of Acts, the disciples have been put in jail and literally on trial. Peter was in jail. Paul and Silas were in jail. Effectively, they were charged with *the crime of being Christians*.

## 4. Take care to Please God

### 2 Samuel 12:14

<sup>4</sup> However, because by this deed you have given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme.'

### Job 1:7-8

The LORD said to Satan, "Where have you come from?" Satan answered the LORD, "From roaming through the earth and going back and forth in it." Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job?"

One of the worst things that can happen is when a person who claims to believe in God gives an opportunity for the enemy to blaspheme the Name of God.

Nathan tells David, 'By this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme.'

The word '**blaspheme**' can be translated as '**spurn.**' It means that you have 'spurned the LORD' by your deed. You have treated or rejected with scorn or contempt by your deed.

The worst part is found in **2 Samuel 12:12**; 'you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, and under the sun. Our secret sins will be brought to light.'

Therefore, we have the twin realities of:

- the sins of the father are passed on to the children
- individual responsibility.

Our actions do have consequences in the lives of others. When you study this whole chapter of David's life, it puts trepidation and shock and dread inside you.

In **Job 1:7** the word '**Satan**' is literally, 'the Accuser. This is a Hebrew term that speaks of 'adversary' or '**accuser**'.

This is a Hebrew term that speaks of "**adversary**" or "**accuser.**" The implication is that Satan was one of the sons of God who had free access to the throne of God. The phrase 'from roaming about on the earth and walking around' is an idiomatic phrase for Satan's full knowledge of events on planet earth.

Amazingly, God forgave David even this enormous sin.

This is the great difference between David (whom God forgave when he sinned) and Saul (whom God did not). Whereas Saul tried to justify himself (see 1 Samuel 15), David simply admitted everything. He said, **'I have sinned against the Lord'**. In effect he just said, **'I'm sorry!'**

