Lesson 1

God Cares for Us in Trouble

OVERVIEW

Scripture
God frees His people from Egypt—Exodus 3:1–12:42

Bible Truth
God cares for us when we have troubles.

Life Response Aim
To call on God and praise Him for His care.

Memory Verse
“And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.”
Psalm 50:15, KJV

“And call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will honor me.”
Psalm 50:15, NIV

FOCUS
Uh-oh! Trouble!

DISCOVER
God Helps People out of Trouble

RESPOND
Examples of God’s Care

MATERIALS

- Bible, pencils

FOCUS
- No materials needed

DISCOVER
- Mural figures A, B, and C, from Sheet 1, Teaching Resources; background for mural as shown in the diagram on page 11
- Bible Picture 1, Teaching Resources
- Bible Ways, page 3
- Memory verse printed on paper or board

RESPOND
- Bible Ways, page 4
- Primary Days take-home papers

Preparing Your Heart to Teach

Read this week’s lesson text: Exodus 3:1—12:42.

- The life of a Hebrew slave was difficult, and made more difficult by Pharaoh’s obstinacy. What difficulties confront you at this point in your life?
- The Hebrews had to wait for deliverance while God dealt with Pharaoh. While the Hebrews were sheltered from much of the misery of the plagues, they were certainly aware of the plight of their Egyptian neighbors. And the Egyptians were aware that the Hebrews were not suffering the effects of the plagues. Yet what was the attitude of the Egyptians toward the long-suffering Hebrews?
- As you experience difficulties in your life, be aware of the difficulties that others are also experiencing. Maintain positive relationships and share with them the faith that gets you through.
Here's a fun game for your children to launch this week's lesson. Tell your boys and girls that you're going to describe some things that might happen to them. If your suggestion is something good, the kids will say nothing. But if your suggestion is something bad, they are to say, “Uh-oh! Trouble!”

Here are some suggestions.

- You have to take a test at school, and you have no pencil.
- Dad asks if you want an ice cream cone.
- It’s raining; Mom’s working, your older sister isn’t home yet, and you’re locked out of your house or apartment.
- You’ve sat on an anthill.
- Your neighbor called Mom to tell her what a nice child you are.
- The lifeguard just blew his whistle and is pointing at you.
- You forgot what time it is and arrive home an hour late.
- Lightning has struck the power wires near your house and all the lights have gone out.
- Your grandma sent you some money.
- You spilled milk on the baby’s head just as Mom came into the kitchen.

Can you tell something that’s happened to you that was “Uh-oh! Trouble!”? Point out that “trouble” could mean breaking rules and getting caught, or being in a situation that is difficult or dangerous in which you don’t know what to do. Let several girls and boys share experiences. After each one relates an experience, make comments such as, That wasn’t any fun, was it? You must have really been afraid!

(Important: Make note of the real-life troubles your students tell about; they will help you tailor your lessons to their needs. You’ll also refer to them in next week’s lesson.)

TRANSITION → Everyone who is living now or has ever lived in the past has had troubles. Today our Bible story is about some people in trouble. If you listen closely, you’ll find out something to help you the next time you’re in trouble.

**ENRICHMENT IDEAS**

**Circle Story**

As a group, create a story about a child who gets into an Uh-oh! Trouble! situation. Allow each student a set amount of time to add to the story by dividing the available time by the number of students. (For a large group try doing two circles.) Let the last person know that he or she needs to bring the story to an end. Students will enjoy hearing the story later if you can record it. Begin something like this: (Andy) couldn’t wait for his birthday party. He was seven years old! But he was worried because his parents sounded like they hadn’t even started planning the party.

After the storytelling, comment on the kind of problem your character got into and how it is like or not like those your students have. Then use the transition at the end of Focus.

** Helpers**

Describe several situations that could be trouble for 6 to 8 year olds and have students tell who might be able to help them; accept all reasonable possibilities. For a more active approach, have students act out asking for help. For the transition, use the one in Focus with the additional point that sometimes we can’t get out of the problem by ourselves; we need help. Some possible situations:

- You fall off your bike and it feels like you broke your leg.
- You’re shopping and get separated from your parent.
- You’re sitting in church and start to feel sick right when the pastor starts speaking.
Draw the mural beforehand, as pictured on page 11. As you tell the Bible story, lightly tape figures A, B, and C from Sheet 1, Teaching Resources, on the mural as shown below. This mural will be used in Lessons 1–6.

Student interest will increase if you have them recite the repeated lines with you (“Now, that was trouble!” and “But God cares.”) If your Primaries have learned about Moses in the past—many will know the birth story—you may want to give them an opportunity to tell what they know about him.

God Helps People out of Trouble

God Calls Moses to Lead His People

(Exodus 3:1–5:1)

One day Moses was taking care of his sheep out in the desert, near Mount Sinai (Horeb). Suddenly he saw a very strange sight! It was a fire in the desert!

No, it wasn’t trouble. A bush was on fire, but the bush wasn’t burning up. When Moses went closer to see this wonder, he heard a voice calling, “Moses! Moses!”

As you can imagine, Moses was afraid.

No, it wasn’t trouble. It was God calling Moses. God was about to give Moses a very special job to do. God said, “My people in Egypt have been slaves for a long time, and the Egyptians are very mean to them.” Moses knew that God’s people were forced to work very hard making tons of bricks for big buildings. They made the bricks out of clay they dug up and straw the Egyptians gave them.

Now, that was trouble!

But God cares when His people are in trouble. So the Lord told Moses, “My people have asked for My help, so I am sending you to Pharaoh, the leader of the Egyptians. Tell him to let My people go.”

Moses was surprised to be asked. “Why did You choose me?” he asked. “I can’t do that kind of job. I’m not even very good at talking to ordinary people, much less to the king of Egypt!”

Now, that was trouble!

But God cares when His people are in trouble. So the Lord told Moses, “I’ll be with you; and you can have your brother Aaron’s help.”

So Moses and Aaron went to Egypt. When Moses got there, he told the leaders of God’s people that God cared for them, and He would help them in their trouble. When God’s people heard this they bowed down to worship God.

Moses Confronts Pharaoh

(Exodus 5:2-21)

Moses went to see Pharaoh and told him, “God says, ‘Let My people go.’ ”

But Pharaoh just got angry with Moses. “I’ll never let my slaves go!”

Pharaoh called in the bosses who made the slaves work hard and told them to make the slaves work harder. “Tell them they won’t be given any more straw to use in making bricks. They’ll have to find their own straw—and make just as many bricks as before. And if they don’t do it, you will whip them.”

Now, that was trouble!

God’s people were upset when they heard what had happened. They were angry at Moses too. “What have you done to us?” they complained. “It’s your fault that we have to work harder.”

God Sends Plagues on Egypt

(Exodus 5:22–10:29)

Moses left Pharaoh and prayed to God. He told God what was happening, and God told him what to do. “Go to Pharaoh and warn him that I will change the water in the Nile River to blood. The fish will die, and the Egyptians won’t have any water to drink.”

Now, that was trouble—for the Egyptians! Moses did what the Lord commanded, and God turned the water to blood.

But Pharaoh still refused to listen.
Seven days later God sent Moses back to see the Egyptian king. This time, Moses warned Pharaoh that God would send millions of frogs into Egypt. The frogs would jump into the Egyptians’ food and cover the ground so people would have to step on frogs when they walked. Now, that was trouble—for the Egyptians! But Pharaoh wouldn’t listen, and the millions of frogs hopped out of the river and covered the land. When that happened, the king called Moses and promised to let God’s people go. But when the frogs were gone, Pharaoh changed his mind!

So Moses warned him again—God would fill Egypt with flies. The flies would swarm all over the Egyptians but would not bother God’s people. Now, that was trouble—for the Egyptians! But Pharaoh wouldn’t let God’s people go, and the flies came. God cares for His people, and He will help when His people are in trouble.

Well, again Pharaoh promised to let the slaves go; and again, when God took the flies away, Pharaoh went back on his promise. Yes, that was trouble for the Egyptians. God brought nine terrible plagues on Egypt, and the king promised again and again to let God’s people go. But every time he broke his promise. And that meant terrible trouble for the Egyptians.

God Delivers His People
(Exodus 11–13)

Finally God told His people to get ready to leave Egypt. “I’m going to send one last plague, and then Pharaoh will let you all go. Tonight I’m going to bring death to the firstborn in every Egyptian family! But if you do what I tell you to do, your families will be safe.” Yes, that was trouble—for the Egyptians.

That night the plague of death visited the Egyptians. The next morning when Pharaoh woke up, his oldest son was dead, and the firstborn of all his people were dead. In sorrow and anger, Pharaoh called Moses and told him, “Get those people out of Egypt at once! Go and worship your God—you’re free!” And God’s people—the men, women, and children and all their animals—left Egypt.

Show Bible Picture 1. God’s people had been slaves in Egypt for a long time. But God cared for them. And when God’s people asked for help, God used His great power to help them out of the trouble they were in.

Ahead of time write out the memory verse on the board or a large sheet of paper. Teach motions to go with each phrase and practice them.

Phrase 1: [Hold hands together as if praying.]
Phrase 2: [Hold arms over head as if to shelter from danger.]
Phrase 3: [Open arms wide and look up.]
Phrase 4: [Clap hands and cheer.]

Repeat the memory verse with actions several times. You’ll use the actions and verse again next week.

To review the kind of trouble God’s people had, have your students complete page 3 in Bible Ways. While they work, discuss the lesson.

• What kind of trouble were God’s people in?
• How did they find out that God cared for them in their trouble?

Preparing Personal Murals

Your students may enjoy having their own copy of the unit mural. Give each one a strip of shelf paper about 12" x 48". Give each a black crayon or marker to draw lines like the ones on the mural you made. Note: You may need to draw these lines in pencil for younger Primaries for them to trace over. Encourage your students to draw pictures of the people you have placed on the class mural. When the pictures are completed, let students retell the stories using the figures they have drawn.

ENRICHMENT IDEAS
God helped His people when they had trouble. And when we call on God to help us with our troubles today, He will help us too. God cares for you, just as He cared for His people in Moses’ time.

God is so powerful He doesn’t even have to perform miracles to help us!
• Remember those “Uh-oh! Trouble!” times of yours that you told us about? Can you tell a way God has helped you solve the problem? Let the children share. (For example if it’s raining and we’re locked out, He probably has a neighbor we can visit for a while. If we have a test to take and forgot our pencil, God’s probably provided a friend or our teacher with an extra pencil for us.)

God really can help us. Sometimes His answer doesn’t come right away, and sometimes His answers might surprise us, but we know He cares and will be with us when we have trouble.

**Enrichment Ideas**

**Action Alternative**

Let your boys and girls develop a fresh look at ways to apply a lesson to help with a problem in their lives.

Relate an incident like the following, and ask your students to tell which part of the Bible story might help you trust God and make the right choice.

I have a friend I’d like to tell about Jesus, but my friend isn’t interested in God. I worry about what to say. What if my friend doesn’t understand? What if my friend is upset when I try to share? What can I remember from today’s Bible story that might help me trust God and speak up?

(The story of God promising to help Moses and be with him when he was afraid he wouldn’t know what to say)

If you have any real-life experiences that fit, share them; otherwise, use some “what if” situations.

**Learning Memory Verses**

Throughout all lessons, plan creative ways to help students learn memory verses. While they are learning the words, be sure students are also learning the meaning and application of the verses.

To show their progress in memorizing, children may each make a basket of apples, using the patterns on pages 29–30 of *Bible Ways*. Each child will need one basket, 13 apples (red, yellow, or green), and a set of Bible verses duplicated from the memory verse sheet in *Teaching Resources*.

As the children learn their verses, they may cut out the apples, glue a verse to each apple, and add them to their baskets. If they can repeat a verse the following week, provide additional stickers to add to their chart.

**Worship Ideas**

**Music**

Choose songs to reinforce the lesson theme from your available resources. A suggested unit theme song, “For the Fruit upon the Tree,” is on page 12.

**Worship Activity**

Review the real-life experiences of God’s care in times of trouble shared by leaders and students, and help students see that God has provided help through the people who were there. Or, use a story from a Christian biography collection that demonstrates God’s care.

**Words of Worship**

Ask students to think of a sentence to tell God how they feel about His taking care of them. Ask them to share their ideas as one-sentence prayers.
Mural Sketch for Lessons 1–6

Before beginning Unit 1, draw this sketch on a piece of roll paper—butcher paper will be the most durable, or use newsprint or a paper tablecloth. Lessons 1–6 give directions for placing figures from Teaching Resources onto the mural. If possible, fasten the mural to a classroom wall.
For the Fruit upon the Tree

Ascribed to Mary M. Dodge, 1831-1905

W. K. Basswood, 1839-1902

For the fruit upon the tree, For the birds that sing of Thee,

For the earth in beauty dressed, Father, mother, and the rest,

For Thy precious, loving care, For Thy bounty everywhere.

REFRAIN

Father, we thank Thee! Father, we thank Thee!

Father in heaven, we thank Thee. Amen.
Circle the hidden pictures. 
Tell something about each one you find.

Did God’s people know right away that God was taking care of them? 
When you have trouble, how do you know God is still caring for you?
When I Need God’s Care, He Is Always There!

Think of a time God has cared for you in trouble. Draw a picture of what happened.

A Verse to Remember
And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.
Psalm 50:15
“I feel sick, Mama,” Rosa said. “I can’t go to school.”

Mama looked at Rosa. “Where do you hurt, Little One?” she asked.

“It’s my stomach, Mama,” Rosa said.

“And do you think it will hurt tomorrow?” asked Mama.

“Oh, yes!” Rosa said quickly. “It is very bad!”

Mama smiled at Rosa. “We must figure out what kind of stomachache this is.”

“What do you mean?” Rosa asked.

“Stomachaches are caused by many different things,” Mama said with a knowing look.

“Tell me what things,” Rosa said. “Sometimes they come from being afraid. When your papa and I moved here from Mexico, I was afraid. Your grandparents were

“And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.” Psalm 50:15
old, and you were very small. Papa and I had to take care of all of you. My stomach hurt often.”

Rosa blinked. “Did it get better?”

“Yes,” Mama said. “I prayed because I was afraid of many things then.”

“Did God really hear your prayers, Mama?” Rosa asked.

“Yes, God always hears our prayers, Rosa,” Mama said. “And God answers too. I prayed that you would be safe and happy.”

“I am afraid, Mama,” Rosa said.

“Why do you think you have an afraid stomachache?” Mama asked.

“There’s a mean dog that lives at that old yellow house,” Rosa replied. “He jumps on the fence and growls when I walk to school. I can see his teeth.” A tear rolled down her cheek.

“So that is your fear, my little Rosa,” Mama said.

“God can’t help with a mean dog, can He?” Rosa asked.

“God cares for us, and He can do anything if we ask Him,” Mama said. “I will pray with you, and you can give your fear to Jesus.”

After they prayed together, Rosa went to school. She came close to the yellow house. Her stomach began to hurt. Rosa heard the mean dog, but she couldn’t see him. She walked very slowly.

Finally, Rosa was in front of the house. She could hear the dog growling. She closed her eyes and tried to picture Jesus protecting her.

Rosa opened her eyes. The dog was on a long chain hooked to the house. Rosa could see that he could not reach beyond the fence. She was safe!

“Oh, thank You, dear Jesus,” Rosa whispered. “You do take care of me. You can even help with mean dogs!”

Think It Over

Troubles happen. Draw a circle around any of these troubles that have happened to you. Tell someone how God helped you.
A Rebus Story about God's Help
David and the Giant (A Story from the Bible) by Vivian Brashear

Jesse’s youngest son, David, took care of his father’s sheep. David loved the sheep. The sheep were safe with David.

But one day a giant snatched one of the sheep. David killed the giant. “God helped me do it,” said David.

Another day a giant snatched one of the sheep. David killed the giant. “God helped me do it,” said David.

David obeyed when his father asked him to take food to his brothers who were fighting in God’s army. When David reached his brothers, he heard loud noises. A giant was frightening God’s army.

“I can kill the giant,” said David. “God will help me.”

David put a little stone in his sling. Then he slung the stone around and around. Out flew the stone and struck the giant in the head. The giant fell to the ground. David ran to the giant and killed him. “God helped me do it,” David said.
God Helps His People Escape

Moses went to the cruel Pharaoh of Egypt and said, “God says, ‘Let My people go.’”

“Who is God?” asked Pharaoh. “I won’t let His people go.” The ruler wanted to keep the hard-working people.

But God wanted His people to go to the land He had promised them. He wanted the people to be able to worship Him freely.

So God sent nine different plagues upon Egypt. All the water turned to blood. But Pharaoh refused to let the people go. The Lord filled the land with frogs. Still Pharaoh refused. Then came lice, flies, sickness of cattle, painful sores called boils, a hailstorm, grasshoppers, and darkness. Still Pharaoh refused to let God’s people go.

Finally God told Moses, “In every house in Egypt, the oldest child will die. But My people will be safe if they do as I command. They must mark their doorposts with lamb’s blood. They must pack everything they own and get ready to travel. They are leaving Egypt tonight!”

Then God sent His worst plague. All the oldest children in Egypt died—even Pharaoh’s son. Now the ruler was afraid. He told Moses, “Get out of our land at once! Take everything with you!”

So God’s people marched out of the land of Egypt that night.

To Talk About
- How did God take care of His people?
- How does God take care of you?
Compliment your teaching with these fun and easy to use classroom resources designed to make every lesson memorable.

Teaching Guide
The Teaching Guide is designed to help you get the most out of your preparation and class time. Included are full lesson plans, teacher training resources, age-appropriate tips, a teacher’s devotional, and more.

*One per teacher recommended.*

Teaching Resources
Increase student participation through the use of a variety of learning aids for your classroom. Included are games, story cards, flannel graph, teaching pictures, a sheet of memory verses in NIV and KJV versions, and more!

*One per class recommended.*

Bible Ways
Designed for in-class learning, each lesson has two pages with activities such as puzzles, word searches, and rebus stories. Two pages include memory verses, posters, holiday projects, and an individual attendance record.

*One per student recommended.*

Primary Days
These weekly papers of nonfiction and fiction stories, puzzles, word searches, and suggestions for family activities will encourage student and parent interaction during the week so that Bible learning translates to daily living.

*One per student recommended.*