

## Trail of Trials

- Psalm 35:13-14- When my prayers returned to me unanswered, I went about mourning.”
- Psalm 6:2-3, 6-7- Have mercy on me, LORD, for I am faint; heal me, LORD, for my bones are in agony. My soul is in deep anguish. How long, LORD, how long?...I am worn out from my groaning. All night long I flood my bed with weeping and drench my couch with tears. My eyes grow weak with sorrow; they fail because of all my foes.”
- Psalm 37:1-2- Do not fret because of those who are evil or be envious of those who do wrong; for like the grass they will soon wither, like green plants they will soon die away.”
- v. 7- “Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him; do not fret when people succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes.”
- *It was in the pain that they encountered God.* God was waiting in the fire. A miracle was waiting in the pain! Those who avoided the fire, avoided God. Those who avoided pain, missed a miracle.
- If happiness is the goal of your life, then pain is the enemy. And if pain is the enemy, then we’ll do anything we can to avoid the enemy. However, when we avoid pain, many times we’re avoiding God because God is often inviting us into pain in order to show Himself to us, in order to reveal deeper levels of Himself; God will invite us into a dark place in order to transform and develop us.
- James 1:2-4- Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, 3 because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. 4 Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.
- Trials of many kinds = testing of faith = perseverance. Perseverance finishing it’s work = mature, complete, not lacking anything.
- There is a process between anointing and appointing. David was anointed King around 15, he’s appointed king at 30. At 17, Joseph has a dream that his brothers will bow down to him. Twenty-two years later, at age 39, Joseph sees the dream become a reality.
- David comes back to the city he’d been hiding in and he finds that the entire city had been “destroyed by fire and their wives and sons and daughters taken captive. 4 So David and his men wept aloud until they had no strength left to weep. 5 David’s two wives had been captured—...6 David was greatly distressed because the men were talking of stoning him; each one was bitter in spirit because of his sons and daughters. But David found strength in the Lord his God.” 1 Samuel 30:3-6
- Isaiah 40:29-31- He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

- Biblical waiting is active waiting. Waiting in expectation. The word in Hebrew means: to expect, to patiently tarry.
- Psalm 37:1-7,9- Do not fret because of those who are evil or be envious of those who do wrong; for like the grass they will soon wither, like green plants they will soon die away. Trust in the LORD and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture. Take delight in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this: He will make your righteous reward shine like the dawn, your vindication like the noonday sun. Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him; do not fret when people succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes...For those who are evil will be destroyed, but those who hope in the LORD will inherit the land.
- Genesis 45:7- But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance.”
- Kimberly Henderson- “I would have pulled Joseph out. Out of that pit. Out of that prison. Out of that pain. I would have cheated nations out of the one, God would use to deliver them from famine.
  - I would have pulled David out. Out of Saul’s spear-throwing presence. Out of the caves he hid away in. Out of the pain of rejection. I would have cheated Israel out of a God-hearted king.
  - I would have pulled Esther out. Out of being snatched from her only family. Out of being placed in a position she never asked for. Out of the path of a vicious, power-hungry foe. I would have cheated a people out of the woman God would use to save their very lives.
  - I would have pulled Jesus off. Off of the cross. Off of the road that led to suffering and pain. Off of the path that would mean nakedness and beatings, nails and thorns. I would have cheated the entire world out of a Savior. Out of salvation. Out of an eternity filled with no more suffering and no more pain.
  - And oh friend. I want to pull you out. I want to change your path. I want to stop your pain. But right now I know I would be wrong. I would be out of line. I would be cheating you and cheating the world out of so much good. Because God knows. He knows the good this pain will produce. He knows the beauty this hardship will grow. He’s watching over you and keeping you even in the midst of this. He’s promising you that you can trust Him. Even when it all feels like more than you can bear.
  - So instead of trying to pull you out, I’m lifting you up.”
- “In all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” Romans 8:28