

## **Week 4 - Answers to Your Deepest Longings: 40 Days through the Bible Rescue**

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**HS:** Hi First 5 friends! Today we're bringing you a weekend audio teaching connected to the chapters we studied this past week in the First 5 app. We just finished Week 4 of our study, *The Answers to Your Deepest Longings: 40 Days through the Bible*. My name is Hannah Schindler, and I get to serve on the First 5 team here at Proverbs 31 Ministries. Today we have joining us one of our First 5 writers, Kayla Ferris. How are you today, Kayla?

**KF:** Hi Hannah! I'm doing great. And just so excited to be here; thanks for having me!

**HS:** I'm so glad you're here! I know I have a big smile on my face. I'm so excited that we are continuing in this journey of forty days and if you've been with us for the past few weeks you've heard us call it, probably, the abbreviated name, *The 40 Days Study*. So, I can't wait for your teaching Kayla, but I'm going to read our major moments before we jump in.

- 1 Kings 1: David's son Solomon was anointed king and built the temple.
- 1 Kings 12: Israel was divided between the North and South.
- 2 Kings 25: The cities of both Samaria in the North and Jerusalem in the South fell, and the people of Israel were exiled.
- Ezra 6: The temple was rebuilt but without its original grandeur.
- Malachi 3: An impatient Israel was told by God through Malachi to wait for a messenger, and 400 years of "silence" passed, where no messenger of God spoke.

Okay Kayla, so this week we covered the longing for rescue. We finished the Old Testament in our *40 Days Study*. And I'm just so excited to hear what you have for us today, so go ahead and take it away!

**KF:** Alright, well thank you so much! As you mentioned, Hannah, we were talking about rescue this week, and that's really what I want to focus in on today. When I was a little girl, I can remember one time walking into Walmart, and somehow, I got separated from my mom. I don't know, I was probably hiding in the clothes racks or something. I always loved to do that; it used to drive her crazy. But this one time, I got lost. And I remember that panic in my belly when I looked around and I couldn't see my mom anywhere. And my eyes started filling up with tears, so after a while, I couldn't even see where I was going. But, to make a really long story short, a sweet little couple came up to me, and they helped me find my mom. It was a happy ending, but I will always remember what it felt like to be lost and to need rescued. So, now let's turn that story around. Now, I'm the mom, and sure enough, wouldn't you know, one time I was in, I had all my daughters with me in Hobby Lobby, and I looked back, and I noticed one of my daughters wasn't with us anymore and, oh my goodness, I am naturally a quiet person but in that moment, I just started yelling! As loud as I could, calling out her name. I didn't even care if people thought I was a crazy person because I was going to do everything in my power to find my girl. And so, I remember what it felt like to be lost, and I knew how scared she was going to be when she looked up and realized that she was alone. As we step into this teaching on rescue, I want you to have this picture of Jesus first and foremost in your minds. Jesus knows what it feels like to be lost. And I don't know if

that thought had ever really crossed my mind. But, when Jesus hung on the cross and He carried my sin, the scriptures tell us that God looked away. Jesus was completely alone in that moment. So, He knows what “lost” feels like. And so He did what only Jesus can do, and He became the rescue. I can guarantee friends that when Jesus sees that one of us is feeling lost, He comes running for us.

**KF:** Now, let's talk about rescue for a moment because, I mean, there's rescue and then there's RESCUE, right? The biggest rescue that we could ever receive is a rescue from our sin. Sin separates us from God, that is the most “lost” that we can be, and Jesus alone can rescue us from that. He saved us from that fate when He took on the cross. So, our number one rescue is salvation in Jesus Christ. But, maybe today, maybe you have accepted Christ, and yet you still have these longings for rescue from life's struggles. I mean, we can feel lost in the hard stuff of life, can't we? God cares about those things as well. So, whatever rescue that you're longing for today, I really believe that this message is for you. So, here's what we're going to do. We're going to go back over the five Old Testament sections of Scripture that we studied this week. It's going to be a little bit of a review, so if you missed a day, not a problem, we'll catch you back up. But, hopefully we are going to apply it in a fresh way because what we're going to do is we are going to develop five take-aways. And you might notice that I've kind of listed them in a math equation form. Don't let math scare you — trust me, it's going to be great; you'll be just fine. And then at the end, we're going to take those five equations, and we are going to finish with a little exercise that you can do at home. So, go ahead and grab a piece of paper and a pen for the end. Alright, Hannah, are you ready? Let's hit these five equations, let's do it!

**HS:** I'm ready.

**KF:** Our first Scripture this week was about King Solomon. Solomon, you remember, was really, really smart. His reign was a time of peace and comfort and wealth, and so at this point in history, it sure looked like this whole king thing was really working out well. And that was the danger. Sometimes we don't think we need rescue. We don't really feel the need for God's help. And so we get this false sense of security because there's a moment sometimes where it looks like our systems are working. And not only are they working, but they're really comfortable. And we really like feeling comfortable, don't we? Our friend, Karen McMary — she once shared something, and I just loved this, she said “comfort and ease are not fruits of the Spirit,” and that one got me! Like a little conviction going on. Comfort is not the goal of the Christian life. Comfort can make us complacent, and I want you to listen to this definition of complacent because it's so good: to be complacent is to be “self-satisfied and unaware of dangers.” And that's where Israel is during the reign of Solomon. And sometimes that's where I find myself too. So, comfort can be dangerous, which means that I'm blessed by anything that makes me dependent on God. And that brings us to our first point; our first take-away is this: A life that is dependent on God > worldly comfort.

The second day, we looked at what the kingdom of Israel looked like and how it broke apart and it divided into. And from this, we learned that human systems fail because they're created by humans. Even Solomon, who was supposed to be the wisest ruler on earth, even he was unable to create a fail-proof system that would outlast him. There's no wise human system outside of Jesus. And I think sometimes we're shocked when things fall apart. Whether, maybe, that's the government that lets us down, or the economy, or some other leader, or organization or self-help system ... when these things

fail us we can, kind of, feel betrayed. But I think God's word would just remind us today that there is no human system that can truly rescue us. Our only source of hope for a real and lasting rescue is found in Jesus. So our take-away Number Two: Jesus' rescue > human systems.

Day three, we looked at the period in history where the Jewish people went into exile. There is a long line of kings. Some of them are good; most of them not so much. The kingdom ends up being completely conquered by Babylon, just destroyed. And while this was a really hard thing to see happen, I think we all needed to see what happens to us apart from God. We cannot save ourselves. If left to ourselves, we fall into destruction. We just dig ourselves into giant holes that we're completely incapable of climbing out of. And it's almost like we can't help it, like it's just in our very nature as humans. Paul said in Romans 7:15, and I'm paraphrasing this, but basically he said, "You know, what I don't want to do, that's what I do, and what I want to do, I just can't seem to do it." And it's true, there is no rescue in our own might. And that's what makes Jesus' rescue so amazing! We put ourselves into this impossible situation but no matter what we've done or how bad it looks God's rescue is bigger. So, take-away Number Three: God's rescue > the mess we find ourselves in.

On Day 4, we learned that after 70 years in exile, God called His people to go back to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple. And, aah, there's just so much I love about this part! From the beginning of creation, God has made all of these promises. To Adam, to Abraham, to David, really big promises, and all along the way, God's people fail Him and abandon Him. And they thought they didn't need Him or they thought their systems would save them or maybe other gods would save them. And yet, even in all of their unfaithfulness God was still faithful to His promises. And so, we learn from this part of history God preserved a group of people to carry out His promise. He didn't abandon them. And so, here's what I want us to remember: God also made us a promise — He promises to rescue us! And He sent that rescue in the form of His son, Jesus. We are rescued for eternity and if our eternity is secure then we can know that one day all the other little rescues that we long for in this life, whether that's rescues from tears, or sadness or pain, all of it, one day He'll put an end to those as well! So our take-away Number Four: God's faithfulness = rescue.

And then, finally, Day 5, we looked at the last book of the Old Testament, Malachi — a book where God specifically promised a rescuer. And then, everything seemed to go silent for 400 years. Now that's some waiting, isn't it? But I do know that Jesus arrived and Jesus arrived at just the exact right moment and time. And because of that, I know that when He comes again, it will also be in the exact right moment and time because God's timing is perfect. And His perfect timing applies to any of the smaller things I await rescue from as well. You know, my rescue might be coming in the next minute, or it might be in a year or 20 years, or it might be in heaven. I don't know, but I know God's timing is perfect. He knows and sometimes I just have to remind myself of that fact. So our take-away Number Five: God's rescue = God's timing.

So now let's apply these five take-aways that we just went over with a little exercise. Go ahead and take out your sheet of paper, and at the top of it, I want you to write: "My rescue plan, my rescue plan." And what I want you to think of is — think of something in your life, something that you would like a little rescue from. Is it family issues, or a situation with your child? Is it work, or health or finances? Go ahead

and write that down, and I'll give you just a minute. I'll tell you when I did this exercise myself, I honestly, I wrote down COVID-19, because I'm so ready to be done with this. This has been a wild year, but I love so much what this exercise has reminded me of, and so that's what I'm hoping it really does the same for you as well! Whatever your rescue longing is. So write that down.

**KF:** Okay, now we're going to apply the five take-aways to your situation today. So, our first take-away was that God's rescue > comfort. We want the discomfort of this thing to go away, right? But instead, I want you to write down: Number One: This is an opportunity to need God." This is an opportunity to need God. And friends, needing God is good. Alright, our second take-away was that Jesus > human systems. So what I want you to do, write: "Number Two," and then write down if there are any human systems that you have been looking towards to save you. So, for an example, on my list, you know I wrote down things like maybe the government or scientists. So write yours down, any human systems that you may be looking towards. Now hear me out, I'm not saying that these are bad — we need advisors, and counselors, and doctors, and leaders and scientists. These are great and wonderful, but what I want you to remember, out beside that list that you just made, I want you to write down, these (pointing to your list) "these are not greater than God." Remember that, our worship in our hearts belongs to God; He is greater than anything here. Alright, now, if we're going to go to take-away number three, which was God's rescue > the mess we find ourselves in. So the next thing I want you to write down is "Number Three: This is not bigger than God! COVID-19 is not bigger than God, is it? Whatever it is that we are facing, God is bigger than this! Now, number four, we learned that God's faithfulness = rescue. So we're going to write down these three words next. "Number Four: God will rescue. God will rescue!" Because He will, because He's faithful to us. But the last thing I want you to write down, three more words for number five, "in His time." Because as we learned, God's timing is perfect. God will rescue in His time. And the next time that you start struggling and that longing for rescue inside of you starts to feel really overwhelming, I want you to come back to this list and just look over these again and remind yourself that your rescue plan is in the hands of a powerfully good God who loves you so, so much!

**HS:** Hmm, I love that. I love that you just said: "My rescue plan is in God's hands." I'm finishing writing it down right now, guys. So if you all then write that down, write that down! Thank you, Kayla. I love how you put pen to paper for us. You gave us action steps here at the end and let us live in this and experience it and really look at what it looks like to know that God will rescue. And like, and that it is all in His perfect timing, and even though it may not be our timeline, that's okay. It's kind of like Job in the Bible. I don't think Job's timeline would have made sense to anybody. What God was doing in his life — from taking everything away from him and how long it took God to return and bless him abundantly more — and most people, I feel like, I don't know how long we would've signed up to stay in Job's mindset and not to blame and curse God, but there's this perfect timing. And it's in God's time. Thank you, Kayla, for breaking all of this down for us, and I know this phrase "rescuer," this word "rescue" can be maybe overwhelming for some people, maybe feeling the need for rescue is so deep, it's so serious, whatever you're going through, and I just want you to hear right now that God sees you. That you are not alone, no matter what you are going through, that the Lord is with you, that He is your Savior, He is your Provider and that He loves you! And that He is a good God, no matter any circumstance! And so, I just hope that this is something that we can all apply to our lives. I believe this is something we all need;

we all need rescuing from something. And, Kayla, kind of like how you applied it, here in 2020 as we record this of COVID-19, that's definitely something that a lot of people, I feel like, could put into practice with what you shared with us. So, thank you so much for this teaching. Okay, so let me go ahead and close us in prayer.

Father God, we thank You so much for, like Kayla shared, sending Your son Jesus to be that ultimate rescue for us, that Jesus hung on the cross for our sins and took on shame, took on sin, so that we don't have to do that. But, so that He can be our ultimate Rescuer. And so, God, I thank You so much for this teaching. We thank You for Your timing being so perfect. God, I pray for any situation that our First 5 friends are going through, for them to see that You are still a good God and that You are there to rescue them. God, I don't know what people are going through right now, but You do. You hear the cries of Your children's hearts. And so, Lord, I pray that You meet people, You meet Your children in a place so intimately, so vulnerably, and allow Your children to just know that You are right there with them. And so, Lord, we love You, we thank You and we praise You for all that You have done in our lives. All that You are doing and all that You will do. In Jesus' name, Amen.