

# GOD TAKES CARE OF US 7-DAY READING PLAN

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- DAY 1 **Story of Noah** Genesis 6:9-9:17
- DAY 2 **Israelites Cross the Red Sea** Exodus 13:17-14:31
- DAY 3 **The Story of Gideon** Judges 6-7
- DAY 4 **David and Goliath** 1 Samuel 17:1-58
- DAY 5 **3 Men in the Blazing Furnace** Daniel 3:1-30
- DAY 6 **Daniel in the Lion's Den** Daniel 6:1-28
- DAY 7 **Jesus Calms the Storm and Feeds 5000**  
Mark 4:35-41 and Mark 6:30-44

**BELLY FLOPS**

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*Sovereign Lord, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you.*

—*Jeremiah 32:17*

**INTRODUCTION**

How do you handle it when something bad happens in your life? Let's say you try playing baseball or some other sport for the first time, and your team loses all of its games. Or say a school project you've put a lot of time into doesn't turn out well, and you get a bad grade. Do you get bent out of shape and treat it like a big disaster? Are you tempted to give up and not try so hard next time? Well, don't forget that God, the almighty creator and ruler of the universe, can take any bad situation in your life and use it to bless you in the long run. And when he does that, you're better off in the end than you were before the bad thing happened!

Today's devotion is based on Jeremiah 32:17, which says, "Sovereign Lord, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you." The devotion is called "Belly Flops."

**DEVOTION**

Rudy watched thousands of jelly beans pour into a large drum. He, his father, and his great-uncle Don were visiting the Jelly Belly candy factory. It was near San Francisco, where Rudy's great-uncle lived. "What does this do?" Rudy asked.

His father replied, "Listen to the tour guide, and you'll find out." Rudy had already seen how the soft middles of the jelly beans were made. And he'd learned how their hard shells were produced. Now the tour guide explained that the large drum was separating the perfectly shaped beans from the misshapen ones. Those would be sold as Belly Flops.

Rudy said, "Boy, I wish we could bag up everything that goes wrong and sell it."

His dad laughed. "Me too."

Smiling, Uncle Don said, "You gotta hand it to this company. They sure can turn lemons into lemonade!"

God is powerful and sovereign. That means he rules over everything! For this reason, he can take all the bad stuff that happens in the world and use it for good. When something goes wrong for you, trust God to make it work out right

## PEOPLE IN BIBLE TIMES

Joseph's brothers sold him as a slave. God used that bad event to put Joseph in power in Egypt. In that way, God saved many people from starving during a famine.

## QUESTIONS

1. Can you think of other "belly flop" stories in the Bible?

Some examples include: when the disciples were caught in a bad storm at sea, they got to see Jesus' power as he calmed the waves; when Elisha and his servant were threatened by soldiers, Elisha's servant got to see the army of heaven all around them; when Paul and Silas were thrown in prison, they got to witness God's power to release them—and they got to help the jailer become a believer!

2. God can use bad circumstances in people's lives to teach them good things. What kinds of things could God teach you as the result of a bad situation?

Some answers are: humility, good sportsmanship, perseverance, how to improve and do better next time, etc.

3. Romans 8:28 says, "In all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." Does this mean that God makes everything work out for everybody? Who is this promise for?

The answer is: This promise is for anyone who has put their faith in Jesus. It's one of the benefits of being part of God's family!

4. How would memorizing verses like Jeremiah 32:17 and Romans 8:28 help you face troubles in your life?

One answer is: it would encourage you to know that God cares about you, that he is willing and able to help you in any situation, and that things will turn out all right for you in the end.

5. If you knew a non-Christian who was going through a rough time, what advice could you give him or her based on Jeremiah 32:17 and Romans 8:28?

The answer is: You could tell him or her that God is awesome and great, and he will help them if they join his family. So the first step they should take is to believe in his Son, Jesus. After that, they will have the Holy Spirit with them to help and guide them, and they will also have the other members of God's family to turn to for help.

## Live It! Job 1:1-22

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### Bad Things Happen to Good People

Read Job 1. Can you find a verse that tells you Job was a good person? Find three terrible things that happened to Job.

Sometimes bad things do happen to good people. If something bad happens to you, you may feel as though you are being punished. But even if terrible things happen, this does not mean that God is punishing you.

What do you think happened to Job in the end? Read Job 42:12-17. What do you think will happen to you in the end if you love God as Job did?

# Live It!



Job 1:1-22

What verse tells you that Job was a good person? .....

List three terrible things that happened to Job. ....  
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What do you think happened to Job in the end? .....

What do you think will happen to you in the end if you love God as Job did? .....