

There Is Another ...

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of loneliness and darkness, the imprisonment ended. The whale vomited him out into shallow waters. He saw sunshine again. There was a second chance to do what he was supposed to do.

Jonah ran willingly to the awaiting city to warn them of the eventual doom for their wickedness. He had a heart about the matter then. He knew quite well that no one could escape the wrath of an all-seeing God, and that the price tag on sin was not pleasant. The valley of despair, and of not being used of God, was viewed from a mountain of "I learned my lesson the hard way."

Lazarus. Lazarus had a lifetime of valleys: one after another. There was much that he never had. He never had decent clothing, wealth, nor health. His entire lifetime was one spent in poverty and unfathomable living conditions. His sustenance was obtained by begging. He had little hope, until the day he heard about a loving God that loved even him, in all his filth and squalor. It was He whom he then trusted.

Even though his life was still hard, it was His God that supplied his daily needs. Perhaps, if it were not for his pitiful condition, he would not have known about a God that could get him through one valley after another.

Then one day, Lazarus' valleys ended forever. He left his diseased

and lice-infested body behind, and found himself in God's paradise forever. Many of those that seemed to have it all when he was on earth, now glared up at him from their position in a dark, hopeless hell. He found himself on an eternal mountain; one that would never end.

While in this flesh, each one of us will go through valleys. Some of these trials are allowed to help get us in the place where God wants us. Some, to give us a new start with a better life. Trials sometimes happen in our life that others may see how God helps us through the hard times. It is even possible that the difficulties are brought on as we have defied what our God has commanded us to do. Sometimes they are just our portion in life. No matter the reason or the circumstances, there is still a God to be close to through that valley. The darkness that is seen during those times may only be the shadow of the next mountain God has ahead for us.

For us to be
growing, we must
be constantly
knowing. —Joe Aldrich

The Bible View



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There Is Another Side of The Valley

By Bill Brinkworth



When standing in the valley of difficulty, we many times only see the trials and tribulations that surround us and do not see any hope for the future. After the ordeal is over, things change. We many times find ourselves on a mountaintop on the other side of a difficult experience.

The hard times you are going through, or will go through, will one day pass. Persevere through them. Draw close to God through the difficulty. It certainly is not the time to shake your fist and be angry with God. Life has its trials.

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If All Others

Author Unknown

*If all the others came like you
Would there seldom be a
vacant pew?
Or would the opposite be true
If all the others came like you?*

*If all the others gave like you,
How much giving would your
church do?
Would the bills be paid as they
fall due,
If all the others gave like you?*

*If all the others worked like
you,
How much service would your
church do?
Would the Master's plan be
carried through,
If all the others worked like
you?*

**Outward losses drive
good people to their
prayers and weak
people to their curses.**

—Henry

There Is Another Side ...

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A great, all-seeing God can lead you through the trying experiences.

Hard times are not a modern situation. Everyone has had them. In biblical days, hard times came for:

Joseph. Joseph faced what seemed like a lifetime of tragedies after his brothers turned against him. After throwing him in a deep pit, they sold him into slavery. Matters got worse. Later, he was lied about, and thrown in prison.

There, he translated the meaning of two men's dreams from his prison cell. He saw God used him to reveal their meaning. The interpretations came true. One man died, but the other man's life was spared, and he was restored to the high government position as pharaoh's butler; just as God had revealed it to Joseph.

Then one day the butler did remember, and Joseph was summoned to translate another dream. It was the dream of the pharaoh. After reliably interpreting the leader's dream, Joseph was rewarded for his assistance. He was given riches, power and was mightily used to help God's people. If he had not gone through all those hard times, he would never have reached a place of usefulness and plenty. Soon all those valleys were shadowed as he viewed them from a tall, prosperous mountain-top.

Noah. Noah heard God tell him to do a difficult task, and he obeyed. The cost to be obedient was not cheap. As he built a huge boat in an area where there was no rain and little water, he certainly must have faced ridicule by his neighbors.

Noah pressed on, however. He labored. He sweat. He did what he was commanded. Then the rains started. The flood came. Perhaps he heard the screams of the once scoffing neighbors pleading to come in to hide in the ark's safety. However, he was safe within the bowels of the vessel where God had locked Noah and his family in. The valley of humiliation had passed. He was on the mountain of protection with a mighty God that he had obeyed.

Job. Job had a life of plenty. He heard about the one, true God and obeyed Him. He found obedience was easy. The closer he got to God, the more the loving God blessed him. Those around him could easily see the blessings. Life was good

Then came the worse 20 minutes of his life, as one runner and employee after another came to tell him of his great losses. The past mountaintop of blessing was dwarfed by a vast, deep valley of difficulty where he found himself.

However, this was the time to trust God. He knew he never

deserved God's blessings in the first place. He had far more than any others did. Life was still good; although the shadow of past mountains was a distant glimmer of the valley where he found himself.

The valley got deeper. Illness piled upon his lost. Friends turned against him. Even his wife failed to support him. The sun finally came out. The trials were over. God saw that Job passed the test of tribulations with steadfast love and obedience. Job could still be trusted with valuables, houses, and authority. God's blessings returned after one trying year of agony. He now was given twice as much as he originally had been given. God was still good on the other side of the valley of hardship.

Jonah. Jonah was a prophet and was used of God. One day his obedience to God took a back seat.

Maybe there was convenient passage to go the wrong direction from God's obedience to the city of Nineveh. Maybe he even determined that the cheap ticket or the convenient, empty seat on the boat to Tarshish was proof that it was okay with God.

.....
• *When I consider my crosses,*
• *tribulations, and temptations,*
• *I shame myself almost to*
• *death, thinking what are they*
• *in comparison to the suffering*
• *of my blessed Savior, Jesus*
• *Christ.* -- Martin Luther
.....

He moved off the mountaintop of serving God after he boarded that vessel. The circumstances of ease stopped as a mighty God's wrath rained and blew on his vessel. Seasoned sailors panicked over the ensuing storm. Jonah was in a valley, and not alone.

He recognized he had not gotten away with his disobedience, and that the convenient circumstances were not God's will. Jonah knew who it was that was stopping him from his insurrection. After insisting on being thrown overboard to stop his angry God, the unwilling crew obliged. Jonah sank down into the dark, deep waters. The storm immediately ceased. The deck was crammed with instant believers. A great and powerful God had ended the valley of no hope for them.

For Jonah, the valley caused by his disobedience grew deeper and deeper; as the waters engulfed him. A strange feeling it must have been as a large, obedient whale swallowed the drowning man. Life still continued for Jonah, but now it was in the lonely, darkness of the whale's belly. In the valley of despair there was time to think. There was time to wonder why he had not first obeyed when he was told. There was time to know if he had to do it all over again, he would obey.

After what seemed an eternity
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