

On The Other Side ...

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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. He never had wealth; nor did he even have health.

His entire lifetime was one spent in poverty and unfathomable living conditions. Because of his ailments, he could not work. 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 seen or 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 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.

The full-length version of this article is available at: <http://www.openthoumineeyes.com/articles/otherside.html>

Unscramble This Verse

el dtu rob	_____:
eb	__
od G	____,
eel bv ie	_____
ni	__
oy ru	_____
ey	__
her at	_____
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Now write the verse:

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On The Other Side of The Valley

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, and we leave that place, there usually is a calmness in our life that does not leave any hint of what preceded it. The storm passed. Things changed. We are not in the pit of despair, but on a mountain on the other side of a difficult experience.



The hard times you are going through, or will go through, will one day pass. Hang on 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. A great, all-seeing God can lead you through the trying experiences.

Hard times are not a modern

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Start Using Religion

Author Unknown

Jim happened to meet the preacher on the street one day, and during the conversation told him of all the troubles he had had during the past year. He wound up with: "I tell you right now, preacher, it's enough to make a man lose his religion."

"Seems to me, Jim," the pastor told him quietly, "It's enough to make a man use his religion."

Sunshine Through Rain

Author Unknown

Help me to see the sunshine through the rain.

What I count loss may somehow be gain.

*Help me to sing when I would cry
Knowing that thou art
standing by.*

"He who knows no hardships will know no hardihood. He who faces no calamity will need no courage. Mysterious though it is, the characteristics in human nature which we love best grow in a soil with a strong mixture of trouble."

— Harry Fosdick

On The Other Side of ...

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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. Later, he was lied about and thrown into prison.

There he interpreted the meaning of two men's dreams from his prison cell. He saw God had 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 interpret 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 mountaintop.

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 had been no rain, he certainly must have faced ridicule by his neighbors.

Noah pressed on. 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 worst 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.

However, this was the time to trust God. He knew he had never deserved the 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 from the valley where

he now found himself.

The valley got deeper. Illness piled upon his loss. 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. 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.

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. The waves hammered the vessel. The sky blackened. 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 insurrec-

tion. After insisting on being thrown overboard to stop his raging God, the unwilling crew obliged. Jonah sank down into the dark, deep waters. The storm immediately ceased. The deck was crammed with instant believers. They knew it was not a coincidence. 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 have obeyed.

After what seemed an eternity of loneliness and darkness, the imprisonment ended. The whale vomited Jonah 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 their 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,

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"Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble." — Job 14:1