

## The “Bad” Times

Bill Brinkworth

No one likes troubles, trials and tribulations, but we all will or have had them. Since all will encounter them in our lives, it only makes sense to view them in the proper light.

These “bad” times many times are sent by God to make us into what He desires us to be. They will teach us lessons in life’s school that will never leave us the same. It can be for this reason God preserved the words in James 1:2-4:

*“My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; [trials] Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.”*

We are to take these hard times as “joyful times”. How can anything as miserable as some have experienced be joyful? Usually a lesson is learned and thankfulness is realized after the fire of tribulation is passed through – when we’re out on the other side of the calamity. It is then we can have “joy”.

After one goes through so many “temptations”, and remembers how they benefited from those experiences, one can develop the right attitude the next time unpleasantness comes into view. “Ah, I don’t like the class,

but the lesson I will learn will be worth it.”

The Bible gives us many different reasons why hard times come into our lives. Those amidst trials learn many lessons:

✿ Some did not learn their lesson when taking the “course”. Later on they faced harder training further down life’s path, because they never learned it the first time.

✿ Sometimes these tempestuous times are meant to strengthen us. We can be made stronger when we are awed at His deliverance from the impossible. When we get to that point, we can look back and say, “Only God could have gotten me through that”.

*See Deut. 10:21.*


✿ Other times our turbulent trials build our faith after we see what God has done. After passing through enough testings, and remembering how we were delivered in the past, we have faith that He will guide us through the next time. *See I Sam. 12:24*

✿ Part of what happens when our faith is strengthened is that we are taught. We learn more about Him, what He can do, what He will not do, and His other character traits when we see God work in our lives.

The lessons are many that can be taught from life’s trials. Israel, when they were led through the wilderness, learned to fear and

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# The Bible View



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## Why Me?

Bill Brinkworth

Paul was a man used greatly of God. With God’s helping hand this evangelist survived shipwrecks, beatings, persecutions, imprisonments, and other ill treatment.



With God’s miraculous help this man was used in healings, revivals, and many miracles. However, as used of God as he was, Paul still had a personal ailment (II Corinthians 12: 7)

Commentators have strained at attempting to name Paul’s “thorn in the flesh”. God has chosen not to make clear to us what it was. No matter what it was, Paul made it clear that it was an infirmity he faced. Three times Paul pleaded with God to remove the malady from him (II Cor 12. 8). God’s answer was “... My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness ...” (II Cor. 12: 9).

Here was a man that had seen glorious things in the third heaven (vs. 2-4), and had been

delivered from many horrible things; yet God wanted Paul to experience this physical problem. God could have easily healed his body, but His answer was that God’s grace was enough for him to live with the problem; and that Paul’s infirmity would be a vehicle to make him spiritually stronger.

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## God Knows the Way

Author Unknown

*God knows the way of the righteous,  
Even though it be dark and drear;  
He knows when we’re tired and weary,  
Our burdens too heavy to bear;  
We ask, as the shadows lengthen,  
‘Lord, lift Thou this burden of care!’  
And often, His voice replieth,  
‘My child, I placed it for you there!’  
With grace that is all-sufficient,  
That you might grow stronger in Me,  
So trust, weary child, your Father,  
He knoweth and careth for thee!’*

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## Why Me?

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If God would allow one of His great spiritual warriors to face such a battle, we too should not be surprised if we face health problems or other problems. As it is with most trials, we can do one of two things, when going through a testing. We can either shake our fist at God and be angry with him, which is not the wise thing to do when we need Him the most; or get close to Him and rely on Him to get us through the struggle.

Paul chose not to be foolish and get angry at God. He decided if God allowed him to go through the problem, then he was going to have a good attitude about it (vs. 10) and give God the glory. In doing so, Paul was learning exactly what God wanted him to learn; that when he was weak, he was the strongest through God's help (vs. 10)!

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obey God. Jonah's experience also taught him to obey – the first time. Paul's blinding experience on the road to Damascus taught him there is only one way to please God; and it was His way, not the traditions or religions of man. After Jesus healed the blind

man from a lifetime of darkness, the man learned of His power. All these events changed the lives of the ones going through what they had originally thought were unwanted times. What would they have been like, if they didn't go through them?

Certainly, tough times can change us. Jonah's attitude was surely changed after his stay in the whale's belly. Saul had a new perspective on persecuted Christians after he was one. Joseph was certainly appreciative of all the hardship he went through, when he saw how it prepared him for his future. We can lose all our self-righteousness in a hurry, when we face trials and realize that in those times only God can make the difference.

Reading the Scriptures one can easily see how the hard times were used to teach God's people how He could protect them. God has used hornets, earthquakes, darkness, disease, fear, and water, just to name a few, to guard His own. What an unforgettable lesson must have been learned, when they got to see the mighty works of their protective Father.

Hard times can also direct us. The trials we go through many times change the direction we are going and put us on the course He desires – much like

the detour that no one likes. If our route were not changed by the detour, we would end up in the construction workers' freshly dug trench, possibly damaging our vehicle and ourselves. The many extra miles were worth the aggravation we could have faced in the body shop or even in the hospital. When we look back on what could have happened, we can be joyful about what did not happen and thankful for God's direction.

Not all trials are punishment from God, but some are. Our miseries can be an act of God to correct us when we do wrong. A good punishment will change wrong behavior – and quickly. When God's people were doing wrong, God sent enemies, bondage, plagues, and a host of other deterrents to change their mindset. Parents sometimes have to punish their child for wrong behavior; our heavenly Father sometimes needs to do this, too.

Not too many people get excited when terrible things happen to them but as you will learn; if you have not already, there is much to be learned from the "bad times". Not one spiritual and close-to-God Christian got that way without going through a lot of heartaches. Sometimes the most spiritual have gone through the most. There is a connection. Hard times can have a positive effect on us, if we learn our lesson properly.



## In Moody's Bible

*Dr. Harry Ironside*

In the margin of Moody's Bible, opposite Phillipians 4:19, I found his notes there:

- § "The Christian's bank note: from the President of the bank — 'My God'.
- § Promise to pay — 'Shall supply'
- § The amount — 'all you need'
- § The capital of the bank — 'according to his riches in glory'
- § The cashier's name — 'Christ Jesus'"

The amount, Moody noted, was left blank in order that each one might write in the measure of his need. Fortunately, Heaven's bank is always available. The Cashier is always present. The capital of the bank has never been impaired.

The Christian is to ask largely, according to his present need, and must use at once the riches provided. Christ's promises are more than beautiful sentiments to be hung upon the wall for decorative purposes. They are not intended as life-savers for use only in time of shipwreck. In the presence of such divine provision, there is no excuse for spiritual poverty.

***"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."*** — Phillipians 4:19

*Some cry, "Why me" when they go through a trial. My question to them is, "Why shouldn't it be you?"*