

I know that that sounds like a strange concept. But there can be some blessings related to aches and pain. You have probably heard someone say something like, “getting old is not for sissies.” That's because of the aches and pains older people usually have. Sometimes those aches are physical resulting from the lifestyle we lived when we were younger, but not always. Some are simply the aging process while others may not be physical at all but rather emotional burdens. There are times such burdens make us feel abandoned or worse feel all alone; and feeling alone is a terrible feeling. But rest assured that no matter how bad it gets, no matter how heavy the load you are carrying, if you put your trust in the one in whom you put your faith (i. e. our Father In Heaven) you can rest assured that He is capable of lifting you up and through your burdens. We can know that from previous experience and also from Biblical examples. We have examples in the bible of godly men who suffered at various times and in various ways that received strength from the Lord along with the Lord's blessings. I want us to consider three: Job, David, and Paul. One

FIRST, THE PATRIARCH JOB. Job was a righteous man who had been blessed with prosperity and was the father of ten children; seven sons and three daughters. We learn from scripture that Satan tempted Job in an effort to turn him against God. In the process Job's ten children were gathered together in the home of Job's eldest son and were all killed during a strong wind. Can you begin to imagine the emotional heartache this must have been? Some of you have lost a child but to lose ten children at once would be devastating.

But that was not all. His enemies stole his large herds of domestic animals. In addition to losing his children, he lost much of his material possessions and source of livelihood. How much more can one person take. Well when you think thing could get no worse, they do. Job also lost his good health. Job became very sick being covered with boils all over his body. *Job 1:20-22 Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, (21) And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD*

gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD. (22) In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly. What an attitude!

Then in Job 2 you have Job's wife. Instead of being an encouragement unto him, his wife said, (9)“*Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Curse God, and die*” But Job did not turn against or away from God. (10) *But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.*

At what point would you have thrown up your hands and quit. I doubt many would have remained faithful had they faced the hardships of Job. In his darkest hour, JOB TURNED TO GOD for his strength. *Job 13:15, Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him.* After all these things happened to Job, three friends accused him of doing something wrong to have brought all of those unpleasant losses upon him. Neither accusations nor condemnations effected Job’s affirmation in his faith in God.

Now Job had some weak moments, some moments of despair. There was a time that he would express his wish that he had never been born, but in his pain sorrow and weakness he still did not turn against God. Consequently, the Lord helped Job through his adversities and in the end Job was blessed more than before. *Job 42:10 And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before.* In time Job was restored to health, with a new family, and with twice as much livestock than he previously had.

Then we have David, the great king over Israel; a man referred to AS A MAN AFTER GODS OWN HEART. David, the singer of songs, at times fell short of God's glory.

There was a time when kings went to battle but David stayed in Jerusalem. One evening David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of

the king's house and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon. **2 Samuel 11:3** *And David sent and enquired after the woman. And one said, Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite? (4) And David sent messengers, and took her; and she came in unto him, and he lay with her.*

Knowing what problems this little episode led to, note some things David should have done.

- Instead of looking on, he should have looked away.
- Instead of following after, he should have fled.
- Instead of lying with her, He should have leaned on God.

And because David gave into sin; it cost him more than he wanted to pay. But in all his troubles, David never turned against God; instead he turned to God for healing and guidance. Listen to what David says. **(Psa. 119:71)** *It is good for me that I have been affected; that I might learn thy statutes."* Do we let our problems bring us closer to God.

The Apostle Paul spoke of his thorn in the flesh (2 Corinthians 12:7-10). *And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. (8) For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. (9) And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. (10) Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.* Evidently the Apostle Paul's thorn in the flesh kept him humble before the Lord. Those of us who are Christians should have a positive outlook on life even when we face the aches and pains of life.

Should you face problems and difficulties because of your Christian convictions and values, rejoice is such. ***1 Peter 4:12-16 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: (13) But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. ... (16) Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.***

In writing to the church in Smyrna John would say, ***Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. (Revelation 2:10)***

Almost a century ago, our nation became a very strong people because of what they had to endure during The Great Depression and World War II. They are at times referred to as THE GREATEST GENERATION. Similarly, Christians in enduring trails become a great generation. It's through trials that our character is formed. ***Romans 5:3-5 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; (4) And patience, experience; and experience, hope: (5) And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.*** If everything always went well for us; if we never had any aches and pains; if we never felt heavy laden, then there would be of knowing how strong your faith is. So, instead of allowing our difficulties in life cause us to become disheartened, let us turn to God for strength. Let us lean on Him for endurance, guidance and comfort. If we do, then in the end ***God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. Revelation 21:4***