

THE BIBLE VIEW

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"Lord, Why Am I in This Storm?"

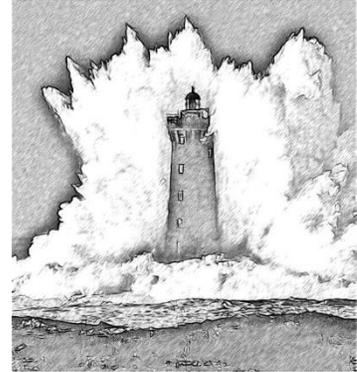
Bill Brinkworth

"By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. 3 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." Romans 5:2-5

Every single person has struggles. What God allows in a person's life is meant to help them grow closer, stronger, and more reliant on the Lord.

The trials another is going through may not seem to be so bad to others, but God knows that it is what is needed to test "their metal." After successfully going through their trials, they will be able to face future storms that are allowed in their life and even encourage those with similar experiences.

I was better able to realize the importance of our going through trials and tribulations after examining a picture of a lighthouse. This one particular lighthouse was engulfed in waves, yet it still was upholding its important purpose and was where it would do the most good.



A lighthouse is a tall structure which houses a bright light for sea-going vessels to see. In the darkest of nights or piercing through stormy weather, ships can immediately know that they are getting close to a shore-line or dangerous, submerged rocks by seeing the tower's warning beacon.

Although most lighthouses were constructed high above any danger from a storm's crashing waves, this one was not. This particular lighthouse was barely above sea-level where it often was battered by ocean's waves.

The picture was of the La Jument Lighthouse at the northwestern part of France. It was constructed in a place where there were many shipwrecks. Between 1888 and 1904 there were 31 wrecks in the lighthouse's area. A wealthy French man, who almost experienced death in a shipwreck, knew how important the lighthouse would be and financed its construction.

Because of its dangerous location and tumultuous engulfing waves, the beacon was started in 1904 but was not finished

until 1911. Its foundation was hewn in solid rock and barely stands out of the water. There are times that the 154-foot-tall tower is lambasted by 65 to 97-foot waves. Many pictures have been taken of the lighthouse boldly standing with waves appearing to cover the beacon completely.

Through all the hardships in its construction, it still stands and has saved many lives and shipwrecks. It was a savior to many because it was built with hardship in a place it was needed the most. If it did not experience all the violent waves it has, it would not be where it could warn and spare so many lives.

Like the La Jument lighthouse, those Christians that have faced tremendous hardships, trials, weathered their “storms,” and are still standing are an important encouragement and boost to the hope and faith of many around them. If they had not gone through such difficult times they may not have been the “light” that gives others hope and inspiration to withstand their storms. Most may not know why they faced so many difficulties, but God may have used their experiences to guide others to safe harbors.

Observing eyes are often on those that proclaim to be children of God. They are often scrutinized on how they behave in adversities, through trials, and in difficulties. When they react like the unsaved and scream, holler, and curse when in the pit of despair, the name of “Christian” gets one more black-eye as being a poor testimony.

However, those that may have had their foundations anchored by adversity enable them to continue to stand proud and tall after being bludgeoned by what the world recognizes as terrible experiences. They are the “lighthouses” that shine through the gloom of affliction. They are the ones that can give others hope that they too can weather their storms.

The survivors of tremendous adversity also show that a foundation based on biblical principles can help others weather through whatever they have to face. Their perseverance and strength proves that Christ can lead the way through whatever a person faces in life.

The pounding “waves” in your life can either make you shake your fist at God or draw you closer to Him for His help. How does the world see you faring through your trials?

Is your perseverance through what God has allowed you to experience a beacon of hope and victory, or is it a clear picture that you have no expectation or directing “light” to guide yourself through your trials? Be a La Jument Lighthouse and show that God can give you the strength to withstand your ordeal.

“The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.” *Psalm 18:2*

Good from Bad

Bill Brinkworth

What a world this would be if bad things never happened? However, since sin entered in, they always will.

Many think that hard things should not happen to good people or Christians, but they do! Just because a person is born into the family of God, does not mean he will be exempted from the consequences of natural disasters, disease, aging, others' actions, and death. Being saved from Hell does not magically put a force field around a person. Yes, God does protect us many times, but it still rains on the "just and the unjust." (Matthew 5:45). Calamities and hard times will happen to everyone many times in their lives.

God could certainly protect us from all misfortunes, but the trials and tribulations in our lives often do much to strengthen us and get us closer to Him. It is during the hard times that we should grow closer to God, and trust Him to carry us through them. It is also during those times that our faith can grow, as we see his mighty hand of deliverance.

Many great and wonderful things have happened because of the "bad" times. Here are some "bad" events that happened to godly people in the Bible, and how God used those events to bring honor to Himself, to bless those going through the dilemma, and to bless others:

- Noah. If Noah did not obey God and sweat for many years building the Ark, mankind would not have had a second chance.

- Abraham. If Abraham had not come to the point that he chose God over everything else, including his son's life, he may not have had God's blessings on him and his generations.
- Joseph: If Joseph's jealous brothers had not thrown him in the pit and sold him into slavery, he never would have been second-in-command to the pharaoh and been able to help his family during a time of drought and starvation.
- Children of Israel: If they never were in hard bondage in Israel, they may have accepted their plight and never turned to God for deliverance. Think of all the mighty miracles they saw, when He answered their prayers.
- Moses: If he had never kept his father-in-law's, Jethro's, sheep and suffered loneliness in the wilderness, he would never have been in the place to see the burning bush and be called to be God's people's leader.
- Moses: If the people of Israel were not pursued by the angry Egyptian pharaoh, they never would have seen the Red Sea part, nor have seen their enemy destroyed, and not have known that God would guide them.
- Ruth: If Ruth had not been faithful to her mother-in-law and worked to support her, she never would have met the man she was to marry.
- Hannah: If she had never gone to the temple to pray with a broken heart because of her barrenness, and made a vow until God to dedicate the child to Him,

she may never had been the mother of Samuel and given Israel a godly leader.

- Elijah: If Elijah never stood faithful to God when it was not popular, Israel may have indulged longer in the idolatry of Baalism.
- Nehemiah: If Nehemiah did not love God and wept for Jerusalem, Jerusalem would never have been rebuilt.
- Job: If Job had never been tested by Satan, he never would have had twice as much wealth and belongings as he had had originally (Job 42:12-13).
- David: If David had not had hard times and heartbreaks, he never would have helped write much of the book of Psalms which has encouraged and blessed billions of people.
- Daniel: If Daniel was never a captive of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, he never would have been able to interpret the king's dream and spare the lives of the other wisemen (Daniel 2) or be the leader he was.
- Paul: If Paul was not shipwrecked on Malta, the island's ruler's father would never been healed of his fever.
- Jesus: If Jesus never was mocked, persecuted, whipped, beaten, or lied about, we would never have escaped our due punishment in Hell.

Sometimes hard times do come to people to turn them in a godly direction, or stop them from doing more damage to themselves or others. The difficult tribulations can get them closer to God, so they can see his mighty hand in

helping them. Other times the trials can be to change a situation to the way God has planned.

There are people that spend their whole life mad and blaming God for the death of a loved one or for a trial they went through. Do they possibly think that death will be missed by their loved ones, or that they will have a perfectly sheltered life because they are so “good”?

Hard times will and do come to everyone. No one is exempt. Those times are either a time to foolishly shake your fist at God, (which can only make matters worse), when you need Him the most, or to draw close to Him and see His mighty hand produce “good” from what seemed “bad”.

Why should bad things not happen to us? Are we more special than even God’s only son, who also went through hard times? God has a plan for all that happens in our lives, even though its purpose may be cloudy when we are going through it.

When going through a “valley”, it is the time to call for the God of the mountain. He sees what we are facing, and is willing to guide us through the hard times. It is during those difficult times we should get close to Him and seek His help.

“God often digs wells of joy with the spade of sorrow!” — *Author Unknown*