

# Adversity

True to the Faith, 8-11

1- As part of Heavenly Father's plan of redemption, you experience adversity during mortality. Trials, disappointments, sadness, sickness, and heartache are a difficult part of life, but they can lead to spiritual growth, refinement, and progress as you turn to the Lord.

2- Adversity comes from different sources. You may at times face trials as a consequence of your own pride and disobedience. These trials can be avoided through righteous living. Other trials are simply a natural part of life and may come at times when you are living righteously. For example, you may experience trials in times of sickness or uncertainty or at the deaths of loved ones. Adversity may sometimes come because of others' poor choices and hurtful words and actions.

## Responding to Adversity with Faith

3- Your success and happiness, both now and in the eternities, depend largely on your responses to the difficulties of life.

4- An account in the Book of Mormon illustrates different responses to adversity. The prophet Lehi and his family had been traveling in the wilderness for several days, using their bows and arrows to hunt for food. The family encountered difficulties when Lehi's sons lost the use of their bows. Laman and Lemuel's bows lost their spring, and Nephi's broke. Hungry and tired, Laman and Lemuel began to complain against the Lord. Even Lehi began to murmur. Nephi, on the other hand, refused to be discouraged. He went to work. He recounted: "I, Nephi, did make out of wood a bow, and out of a straight stick, an arrow; wherefore, I did arm myself with a bow and an arrow, with a sling and with stones. And I said unto my father: Whither shall I go to obtain food?" Humbled because of Nephi's words, Lehi asked the Lord where they should go for food. The Lord answered his prayers and led Nephi to a place where he could obtain food. (See 1 Nephi 16:15–31.)

5- When some people face adversity, they are like Laman and Lemuel. They complain and become bitter. They ask questions like "Why does this have to happen to me? Why do I have to suffer this now? What have I done to deserve this?" But these questions have the power to dominate their thoughts. Such questions can overtake their vision, absorb their energy, and deprive them of the experiences the Lord wants them to receive. Rather than responding in this way, you should follow Nephi's example. Consider asking questions such as, "What am I to do? What am I to learn from this experience? What am I to change? Whom am I to help? How can I remember my many blessings in times of trial?"

6- Different kinds of adversity require different responses. For example, if you are stricken with illness, you may simply need to be patient and faithful. If you suffer because of others' words or actions, you should work toward forgiving those who have offended you. If you are a victim of abuse, you should seek help immediately. If trials come because of your own disobedience, you should correct your behavior and humbly seek forgiveness.

7- Although some of your responses to adversity will vary, one response should be constant—your trust in Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. The prophet Alma taught, "Whosoever shall put their trust in God shall be supported in their trials, and their troubles, and their afflictions, and shall be lifted up at the last day" (Alma 36:3).

## Trusting in Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ

8- When you trust in the Father and the Son, you are confident that They love you perfectly—that They want you to be happy and that They will help you grow spiritually. You

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keep the commandments. You seek to know Their will, and you do what They require even when you desire something else. Your prayers for relief are accompanied by the understanding that Heavenly Father will not resolve all matters immediately— that He may allow you to wait so you can continue to learn and grow. Through it all, you find comfort in the assurance that the Savior understands your trials perfectly. As part of His infinite Atonement, He took upon Himself “the pains and the sicknesses of his people.” He took upon Himself “their infirmities, that his bowels may be filled with mercy, according to the flesh, that he may know according to the flesh how to succor his people according to their infirmities” (Alma 7:11–12). Because He has experienced your pain, He knows how to help you. If you look to Him in faith, He will strengthen you to withstand any trial you experience.

9- As you strive to trust the Lord during times of trial, remember the following counsel given through the Prophet Joseph Smith:

10- “He that is faithful in tribulation, the reward of the same is greater in the kingdom of heaven.

11- “Ye cannot behold with your natural eyes, for the present time, the design of your God concerning those things which shall come hereafter, and the glory which shall follow after much tribulation.

12- “For after much tribulation come the blessings” (D&C 58:2–4).

### **Finding Peace and Joy during Adversity**

13- You can find peace and joy even when you wrestle with challenges and sadness. The Book of Mormon includes an account of a righteous people who learned this truth. Suffering in bondage under a cruel ruler, they poured out their hearts to God (see Mosiah 24:8–12). The Lord answered:

14- “Lift up your heads and be of good comfort, for I know of the covenant which ye have made unto me; and I will covenant with my people and deliver them out of bondage.

15- “And I will also ease the burdens which are put upon your shoulders, that even you cannot feel them upon your backs, even while you are in bondage; and this will I do that ye may stand as witnesses for me hereafter, and that ye may know of a surety that I, the Lord God, do visit my people in their afflictions” (Mosiah 24:13–14).

16- The people responded with faith, and “the burdens which were laid upon [them] were made light; yea, the Lord did strengthen them that they could bear up their burdens with ease, and they did submit cheerfully and with patience to all the will of the Lord” (Mosiah 24:15).

17- Like these righteous people, you can “submit cheerfully and with patience to all the will of the Lord,” knowing that He will strengthen you in your trials. He has promised, “All things wherewith you have been afflicted shall work together for your good, and to my name’s glory” (D&C 98:3).

Additional references: Hebrews 4:15–16; 2 Nephi 2:11–24; Mosiah 23:21–22; D&C 105:6; 121:7–9; 122

See also Forgiveness; Hope; Peace; Plan of Salvation; Repentance

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