
Tribulation

D&C 101:1–9

When the Prophet Joseph Smith received this revelation on December 16, 1833, the Saints of Jackson County had been driven from their homes. In the revelation, the Prophet Joseph learned the reason why the Saints had suffered: “I, the Lord, have suffered the affliction to come upon them, wherewith they have been afflicted, in consequence of their transgressions. ... They must needs be chastened and tried. ... For all those who will not endure chastening, but deny me, cannot be sanctified” (D&C 101:2–4).

We learn from these scriptural verses that the Lord suffers affliction to come upon us because of transgressions and that enduring chastening leads to sanctification. To endure is to trust in the Lord. The Book of Mormon 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).

In his general conference address in October 2009, Elder L. Whitney Clayton spoke of a man in Peru who was weighed down by carrying a bundle of firewood. Elder Clayton compared the burdens of that man with trials we face in life—

Many years ago I walked at dawn through the narrow cobblestone streets of Cusco, Peru, high in the Andes Mountains. I saw a man from a local indigenous group walking down one of the streets. He was not a big man physically, but he carried an immense load of firewood in a huge burlap sack on his back. ... He leaned forward under his burden and walked with deliberate, difficult steps. ...

The memory of him bent forward, struggling down the street has become increasingly meaningful for me with the passage of years. How long could he continue to carry such burdens? Life presses all kinds of burdens on each of us, some light but others relentless and heavy.

Elder Whitney explained that “people struggle every day under burdens that tax their souls. Many of us struggle under such burdens. They can be emotionally or physically ponderous. They can be worrisome, oppressive, and exhausting. And they can continue for years.”¹ Under such circumstances, it is important to trust in the Lord, knowing “all things will work together for your good” (D&C 90:24). In other words, all things—whether adversity or success—will work together for our happiness and our eternal sanctification.

Elder James B. Martino illustrated this principle in his general conference address in April 2010 by sharing the story of a young boy who wanted to be a great baseball player:

With the desire to become the next mighty ballplayer, [the young boy] decided to go outside and practice. He held the baseball in one hand and the bat in the other, and he threw the ball into the air. With a wish to hit the ball as far as he could, he took a great swing, but the ball fell to the ground without even touching the wood of the bat. Not to be denied, he went at it again. As he was about to throw the ball in the air, his determination grew as the thought of a powerful hit came into his mind. But alas, the results were the same. The ball lay on the ground. But as any good ballplayer knows, you have three strikes before you are out. He concentrated even more, threw the ball in the air, and gave the mightiest swing he had ever attempted. As the ball again fell to the ground, the tears began to swell in his eyes. Then all of a sudden a great smile appeared, and he said, “What a pitcher!”

Elder Martino concluded his remarks by saying, “Each of us will face trials and tests, and as in this simplistic example, it is how we react to those difficulties that will determine our success and happiness.”²

¹ L. Whitney Clayton, “That Your Burdens May Be Light,” *Ensign*, November 2009.

² James B. Martino, “All Things Work Together for Good,” *Ensign*, May 2010.