

How God Can Use Adversity

“Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep Your word” (Psalm 119:67) Prosperity has a tendency to make people proud and self-sufficient. We don’t think we need God when we have our salary, our investments, our career, our homes, our health, and our family. But when an economy goes south, or a stock market crashes, or our home burns, hopefully we turn to God and are reminded of what really matters. We should not always be so afraid of pain, because often it is during times of prosperity that we will forget God. As the Israelites were poised to enter into the Promised Land, God said to them, “When you have eaten and are full, then beware, lest you forget the Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt” (Deuteronomy 6:11-12) Prior to this point, Israel had wandered in the wilderness for forty years. They were completely dependent on God for everything. Every day when they walked outside their tents, there would be manna waiting for them just like the morning paper. They would eat it for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, sort of like Thanksgiving turkey that keeps recycling. It was their meal from Heaven. God also directed them through the wilderness with a cloud by day and a fire by night. They had to look to the Lord completely. But then God brought them to the brink of the Promised Land, where they could see lush green hills and flowing rivers. They could see fruit the size of which had never been seen before. And they could hardly wait to get in. And so God said, in effect, “Now watch out, because when you get in there, the danger is that you will forget all about Me.” When pain hits, when tragedy strikes, when adversity comes, we pray – and we pray a lot. Adversity levels us and keeps us humble. And God can use adversity to bring us closer to Him.

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