



# Bringing Many Sons to Glory Through Suffering Part (2)

*But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings  
(Hebrews 2:10).*

*Who hath heard such a thin? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? **For as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children** (Isaiah 60:8).*

*Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness: **thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress, have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer** (Psalm 4:1).*

## **The Beauty of Contradictions**

“Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouth of lions, Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, **out of weakness were made strong**, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again: **and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance**; that they might have a better resurrection..... And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better things for us, that they without us should not be made perfect (Hebrews 11:33-35,39-40).

It is worthy of note in this great passage the description of the roll call of great men and women and the great escapades of faith performed by each one of them. Hebrews 11 is the honours roll of great men and women of faith throughout all ages. In this passage we were told of great men of faith who stopped the mouth of lions, men who quenched the violence of fire, men who escaped the edge of the sword through faith, women who received their dead raised to life again. But we were also told in this same passage of others who were tortured, not accepting deliverance through faith as well so that they may obtain a better resurrection. We were told of others who out of their weakness they were made strong. They were weak, had no strength in themselves but out of their weakness they were made strong. These ones too had faith, even though they were tortured and some of them were killed. In their weak and vulnerable situations, they had faith, and it was accounted unto them for righteousness. They too obtained a good report through faith.

## **God Spoke in a Still Small Voice**

This passage proves that we cannot put God in a cage. The God that we serve is a sovereign God. He God is his own interpreter. He is God all by himself. We cannot Pidgeon hole him. He works

and moves in divers ways his wonders to perform. We cannot create a single story or a single path for him. This is the beauty of contradictions. God is bigger than our experiences. God may be in our experiences, but we cannot define him by our experiences. A good example is the case of Elijah, after Jezebel had threatened Elijah the man of God, he ran away a frustrated man and he came under a juniper tree after a very long and tiring journey in a bid to flee from the hands of Jezebel (this in itself is a contradiction but God allowed it). The man of God was so frustrated that he requested God to take his own life. In that state the angel of the Lord appeared to him and touched him and asked him to rise and eat because the journey ahead of him was a very long one.

And the angel of the Lord said to Elijah, go forth, and stand upon the mountain before the Lord. And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind: and after the wind there was an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice and God was in that still small voice ([1Kings 19:11-13](#)).

Even though God has moved in the past in a rushing mighty wind ([Acts 2:2](#)), and he has spoken in a flame of fire out of the midst of a burning bush before ([Exodus 3:2](#)), He chose this time around not to speak in the wind or fire or even in an earthquake to Elijah because he is sovereign, he is God. He spoke to Elijah instead in a still small God. God's ways are past findings and cannot defined with our finite and limited minds. Just as the heavens are higher from the earth so his ways are higher than our ways. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgements, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been his counsellor? Who hath first given unto him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever Amen" ([Romans 11:33-36](#)).

In our walk with Lord, and in our quest for fullness, we must realize that our God is sovereign. He has the final word not us. Our relationship with Him should not be conditional, it should not be based on what we experience, or how we feel. Irrespective of our circumstances we must worship and serve him. We must come to place in God where we declare like Paul in [Romans 8:35,37-39](#) "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord".

Paul said, I have learnt that in whatever state that I found myself to be content. I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound: everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me ([Philippians 4:11-13](#)). Paul is saying in essence, my relationship with God transcends my experience, it transcends my circumstances. Whether I have money in my pocket or not Jesus is still Lord, whether I have or have not is immaterial, He is still the Lord of my life.

Even though He blesses me, but I do not serve him because of the blessings I get from him, I serve him because He is Lord of my life. This is the path to the crucified life. The single story of God as the father Christmas who dolls out blessings to us as presented today by the church is wrong. We serve God not because of the blessing we get from him, we serve him because he is God, and He deserves to be worshiped. If He then blesses us as we worship him that is fine. This one-sided

believe is the reason why the fellowship of many with God is shallow, it is the reason why our relationship and walk with God is fickle and lacks depth. We really do not know Him as we should.

### **Paul's Thorn in the Flesh**

In order to help us gain some further insights into the paradoxical nature of Paul's ministry let me take you through a number of translations of the Bible using the same set of verses. Nothing can be more contradictory than the words of Apostle Paul in these verses. Herein is the mystery and the beauty of contradiction, herein is the beauty of a life that is totally sold out to God, a crucified life. As John the Baptist eloquently declared "He must increase, but I must decrease" ([John 3:30](#)). It takes a man who has come to a deep realization of the fact that in our flesh dwelleth no good thing, and that the arm of the flesh will fail to see and experience the glory and the power of God. We must come to the end of ourselves so that Christ can be manifested in us. We must decrease so that he can increase. It is in our weakness that his power will be made perfect in us. We must recognize that we are nothing so that his power can rest upon us.

It takes a crucified life to glory and take pleasure in one's infirmities/weakness, so that the power of Christ may rest upon us and work through us. It takes total humility to come to a place where we take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches and insults, in necessities and deprivations, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when we are weak, that is when we are made strong. Only God could have worked this out in the life of a man. Only a spiritually minded man can do this.

What makes sense to the spiritual minded person seems to be contradictory to the natural man's mind. What could be more contradictory to the natural man's mind than when Paul says when he is weak, then he is strong. This looks like a contradiction, but embedded in this statement of Paul is a divine principle that can change our lives completely if we understand it. How can a man take pleasure in infirmities, insults and reproaches, necessities and deprivations, persecutions and distresses? No man in his right mind will associate these things together. It takes the power of God to bring a man to this point. At this point it is not the man at work any longer but the power of God that is working in the man both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Let's take a look at a number of bible translations of this statement of Paul. They reveal the depth and the power of Paul's experience -

"Three different times I begged the Lord to take it away. Each time he said, "My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness". So now I am glad to boast about my weakness, so that the power of Christ can work through me. That's why I take pleasure in my weakness, and in the insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles that I suffer for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong" ([2 Corinthians 12:8-10](#), New Living Translation NLT).

"Three times I appealed to the Lord about this, that it would depart from me, and he said to me, my grace is sufficient for you, because the power is perfected in weakness, therefore rather I will boast most gladly in my weakness, in order that the power of Christ may reside in me. Therefore, I delight in weakness, in insults, in calamities, in persecutions and difficulties for Christ sake, for whenever I am weak, then I am strong" ([2 Corinthians 12:8-10](#), The Lexham English Bible).

"At first I didn't think of it as a gift, and begged God to remove it. Three times I did that, and then He told me, my grace is enough; it's all you need. My strength comes into its own in your weakness. Once I heard that, I was glad to let it happen. I quit focusing on the handicap and began

appreciating the gift. It was a case of Christ's strength moving in on my weakness. Now I take limitation in stride, and with good cheer, these limitations that cut me down to size – abuse, accidents, opposition, bad breaks. I just let Christ take over! And so the weaker I get, the stronger I become" (2 Corinthians 12:8-10, Message Bible).

"For this I thrice besought the Lord that it might depart from me. And he said to me, My grace suffices for thee; for my power is perfected in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather boast in my weakness, that the power of the Christ may dwell upon me. Wherefore I take pleasure in weakness, in insults, in necessities, in persecutions, in straits, for Christ: for when I am weak, then I am powerful (2 Corinthians 12:8-10, Darby Bible).

"For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said to 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. Therefore, I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then I am strong (2 Corinthians 12:8-10, King James Version KJV).

### **Though He slay Me**

"Though he slays me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him. He also shall be my salvation: for an hypocrite shall not come before him" (Job 13:15-16). Job trusted God in spite of everything he went through. His friends asked him to curse God and die, it was that bad; but he refused to curse God instead he trusted God. He served God in his pain, he served God in all his infirmities. He said even if God decided to slay him he will still serve him. Except the level of our commitment comes to this level I am afraid we shall not experience God's full and total deliverance in our personal life and in our land.

Esther made the difference in Israel at a very critical time because she was ready to die for a course she believed in, she gave up everything for the just course of her people but God rose up and defended her "Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat or drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I PERISH, I PERISH" (Esther 4:16).

Esther did what no one has ever done before. What she did had no precedence, no one ever did such a thing, it was not according to the law at the time. No one dared to go in unto king without an invitation from the king. But Esther did. She realized that putting herself in such a vulnerable situation is the key for God's power to be manifested on her behalf. She understood what it meant to be weak so that she can be strong. She laid down her life as it were, she laid her life at the feet of the king. She put herself at the mercy of the king so that the King of Kings can arise and fight on her behalf. She said if I perish, I perish but did she perish? No she did not.

The three Hebrew children Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused to fall down to worship the image which king Nebuchadnezzar made. They said to the King, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us out of thine hand, O King. **But if not, be it known unto thee, O King, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up**" (Daniel 3:16-18).

They knew fully well that God could save them, he could heal them, he could deliver them from the hands of Nebuchadnezzar. God is abundantly able to do so, they had no doubt in their minds, but they also understood the other side of God. They knew that God is sovereign, they knew that

they were not serving God just so he could deliver them from trouble. They knew in their hearts that only the one and true God deserves to be worshipped no matter what. They said to themselves, even if God decides not to deliver us for whatever reason best known to Him, we will still not bow to the graven images of the King. This is the level of commitment that is missing in the church today.

We have been taught a single story about God, and we have built our relationship with God around this single story. We see only one side. We see the side of blessings. We do not see the side that requires us to carry our cross daily and follow him faithfully no matter what. This is the reason why the church is weak and beggarly. This is the reason the church is full of noise makers devoid of the power of God. These are the reasons why the Elijahs of God are nowhere to be found. This is the reason why the church is not making the impact it ought to make in our land.

But God is raising a Gideon's army in our time. Men who will not seek their own alone, men who will not care about themselves, men who will hold their weapons in one hand and lap the water with the other hand. These are men who understood that even though they have to quench their thirst, they will not allow that to override the interest of God in their lives. God's interest is first no matter what. If we put God first in our lives, He God will put us first in his scheme of things. The eye of the Lord runneth to and fro all the earth looking for men whose hearts are perfect towards Him, men who are sold out to God, men who are ready to decrease and become nothing so that He God can increase in them, men who are ready to humble themselves under the mighty hand of God, so that the power of God can rest on them and be made manifest in their lives ([2 Chronicles 16:9](#)).

### **Death Worketh in Us, But Life in You**

"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; **always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.** For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus's sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. **So death worketh in us, but life in you** ([2 Corinthians 4:7-12](#)). Paul asserted that even though we have the treasure in this earthen vessel, the excellency of power is of God, and not of us. This vessel housing the excellency of power which is our body must be broken, so that the power can flow out from us. We must bear our cross daily, and bear about in our bodies everything that symbolizes the dying of our Lord Jesus, so that the life of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

The alabaster box of ointment of spikenard which is very precious had to be broken so that the precious ointment in it can be poured out ([Mark: 14:3](#)). Paul said "I die daily" ([1 Corinthians 15:31](#)). We must daily deny ourselves, we must die to self, we must die to the things of this world. The seed of corn must fall to the ground and die, otherwise it will abide alone. We must surrender our will to Him totally. Our hearts cry should be "not my will oh Lord, but let your will alone be done in my life". Death must work in us, so that life can flow in to the lives of the people we minister to.

The vessel must be broken so that the precious ointment in it can flow to the world all round us. We need many more men in the ministry today that are truly broken. Too many in the ministry today are fixed in their ways, proud, and unable to repent and listen to the Lord. If we must see revival in the church this situation must change. The Lord is close and ready to manifest himself

only to those who are of a broken heart, and of a contrite spirit. The afflictions of the righteous may be many, but the Lord delivers him from them all ([Psalm 34:18-19](#)).

We need to sow to ourselves in righteousness, we need to breakup our fallow grounds: for it is time to seek the LORD, so that he can come and rain righteousness upon us ([Hosea 10:12](#)). The Lord is willing to pour water upon him that is thirsty, he that is willing to open up and break up his or her fallow grounds. He is willing to pour His spirit upon our seed, and His blessings upon our offspring ([Isaiah 44:3](#)).

“If my people, who are called by name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land” ([2 Chronicles 7:14](#)). It takes a man that is broken to be truly humble. God needs to break our will. We need to see him, when we see him, then we shall see ourselves and we will be able to truly humble ourselves before him. When Isaiah saw the Lord, he cried out Woe is me! For I am undone; I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts ([Isaiah 6:5](#)). We need to humble ourselves and pray and seek the face of God. And turn from our wicked ways; then the Lord will hear our prayers, forgive our sins, and heal our land.

**Source:**

[www.eveningtime.org](http://www.eveningtime.org)

March 2020 Newsletter Edition