



Collateral damage - March 7, 2015

Should there be a warning sign for those new Christians being added to the kingdom that there will be difficult times ahead?

Too late. The bible is our guide, our warning sign.

RSV Romans 15:4 For **whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction**, that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope.

It's easy to become discouraged when everything is going wrong. It could be financial, family, friends, legal, government, social....

We should find comfort when reading how others persevered under serious conditions.

Job had everything going for him then everything that he loved, cared about or worked for dissolved in a very short time span.

RSV Job 1:14-19

14 and there came a messenger to Job, and said, "The **oxen** were plowing **and the asses** feeding beside them;

15 and the **Sabeans fell upon them and took them, and slew the servants** with the edge of the sword; and I alone have escaped to tell you."

16 While he was yet speaking, there came another, and said, "**The fire of God** fell from heaven and **burned up the sheep and the servants**, and consumed them; and I alone have escaped to tell you."

17 While he was yet speaking, there came another, and said, "The **Chaldeans formed three companies**, and made a **raid upon the camels** and took them, and **slew the servants** with the edge of the sword; and I alone have escaped to tell you."

18 While he was yet speaking, there came another, and said, "**Your sons and daughters** were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house;

19 and behold, a great wind came across the wilderness, and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young people, and they **are dead**; and I alone have escaped to tell you."

RSV Job 2:7-8

7 So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord, and afflicted Job with **loathsome sores from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head**.

8 And he took a potsherd with which to scrape himself, and sat among the ashes.

Paul was frequently in difficult situations once he became a Christian as he mentioned in 2Cor11:23-28

RSV 2 Corinthians 11:23-28

23 Are they servants of Christ? I am a better one--I am talking like a madman--with far greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless beatings, and often near death.
24 Five times I have received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one.
25 Three times I have been beaten with rods; once I was stoned. Three times I have been shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been adrift at sea;
26 on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brethren;
27 in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure.
28 And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure upon me of my anxiety for all the churches.

Life is not a golden path of peace comfort once you become a Christian. One may say God tempts you but that would be false because God tempts no one – James1:13

Jas 1:13 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, and **he himself tempteth no man:**

What Jesus does is prove you like He did Abraham when the Lord told Abraham to offer his son Isaac on the alter. The Lord stopped Abraham from killing Isaac. Anyone can say that they would stand up for the Lord and follow his every command. Situations are brought about sometimes by our own words to show if we are approved of God, 2Tim2:15, by practicing what we preach.

2Ti 2:15 Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God,

When you are in the midst of troubled waters and are calm – it's because God has brought about previous situations in your life at ever increasing intensity that you have overcome and have become stronger in the faith towards Him. If you are facing a major challenge in your life without having worked your way up past the smaller challenges then you might lose heart and reject God's direction. King David honed his fighting skills by being a shepherd and battling a lion and bear before God sent him to slay Goliath.

When the Israelites left Egypt they didn't know how to fight so God led them on the long route around the land of the Philistines so they wouldn't encounter warfare – Ex13:17-18. God taught them how to fight in ever increasing battles so that they could take on the giants that were in the promise land.

Exo 13:17 And it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that **God led them not by the way of the land of the Philistines**, although that was near; for God said, Lest peradventure **the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt:**
Exo 13:18 but God led the people about, by the way of the wilderness by the Red Sea: and the children of Israel went up armed out of the land of Egypt.

There will be giants in your life but you can be an overcomer in Jesus.

Regards