

Divine Perspective about Adversity

1. Adversity is to be expected.

(John 16:33) "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world."

- You may have peace – P.A.Subj echo – possible for us to have peace
- You do have tribulation – PAI echo – certain that we will have adversity
- Thlipsis – pressure, affliction, oppression, trouble, distress

(1 Peter 4:12) Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you;

- Don't be surprised – P.P.Imp – xenizo – surprise guest, unexpected event
- Passive – taken by surprise – adversity overwhelming our preparation

(Phil 1:29) For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake,

- God's gift: privilege of suffering for Christ – something to be expected
 - Mankind is naturally motivated to pursue pleasure & prevent pain
 - We build our belief/behavior system to maximize pleasure & minimize pain
 - It is normal for us to hope that our circumstances will be pleasant, not painful
 - To accept and expect suffering and adversity requires a change of thinking.

2. Adversity is designed to be beneficial – a blessing

(James.1:2) "Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, (v3) knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. (v4) And let endurance have its perfect result, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing."

- Necessary part of God's plan for His children's growth unto maturity
- Builds endurance when we trust God's promises to handle adversity

(2Thes 1:3-4) Super growth occurs as they endure persecutions and afflictions

- Adversity accelerates our growth – huperauxano – forces us to grow or faint
(Deut 8:2-3) Exodus – God led you into the dessert – to humble you, reveal what was in their hearts, allowed them to go hungry so He could feed them – man does not live by bread alone but by every from the mouth of the Lord.
- Adversity reveals our limitations/helplessness – total dependence upon God's Grace
- Adversity reveals our OM belief/behaviors – grumble, complain & demand our agenda

(Heb 12:5-11) God's training – conviction → peaceful fruit of +R

- God uses adversity to convict of us of wrong thinking – elencho – convince of guilt
 - God uses all things in life to produce good for us (Rom 8:28)
 - God allows adversity to "persuade" us to choose to trust & depend upon Him
 - God uses adversity to reveal our helplessness and need for Him
 - God uses adversity to reveal our Old Man beliefs that jeopardize our relationships.

3. God is totally in control of adversities He allows – walking with a safety net

(Job 1:8-12; 2:3-6) Satan requests access to Job – God limits the intensity & duration

- God drew the line that where Satan could go and not go.
 - (Lk 22:31) Satan requests permission to attack Peter – Jesus prayed for Peter
- Exaiteomai – ask, beg, demand – note that he has to ask
 - (2Cor 12:7) Paul's thorn in the flesh – demon induced illness – limited by God
- God was in control of Paul's adversity – left for his benefit
 - God allowed it, refused to eliminate it – preventative suffering – grace sufficient (1Cor 10:13) all trials are limited to your capacity – God provides a way to escape/endure
- Adversity is tailor made for your stage of growth – God's perfect training program
- God's provision in it – spiritual, biblical view of suffering that enables us to endure it and benefit from it.
 - (1 Pet 5:10) after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen & establish you.
- After you have suffered for a little while – God controls the duration of adversity
 - God is our safety net in any and all circumstances of life – there is no danger
 - (Psalm 61:3) For You have been a refuge for me, A tower of strength against the enemy.
 - Even our worst enemy is limited to challenging us according to our capacity
 - When we view adversity through God's eyes, we can endure and benefit from it

4. God wants us to embrace adversity as a joyful occasion because of what it produces.

(James 1:2) Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.

- Consider – hegeomai – add up the facts & reach a conclusion – time to rejoice
- Produces – katergazomai – produce under pressure – hammer out

(Romans 5:3) And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance;

- Exult – kauchomai – boast, brag, take pride in – embrace and rejoice
- Brings about – katergazomai – produce under pressure
 - When our focus becomes our spiritual progress, we can see the benefit of adversity
 - As we grow in our desire for God, we want to embrace whatever brings us closer
 - As we understand that adversity produces growth and growth brings us closer, we find joy, pride and reassurance in God's training through adversity.

(Romans 8:16) “The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, (v17) and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him. (v18) For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.”