

A photograph of a winding road shrouded in thick fog. In the lower right foreground, a dark car's side mirror is visible, reflecting the road ahead. The text is overlaid in the center of the image.

**TROUBLED
ON EVERY SIDE, YET NOT**



BY ELDER ULISSES SOARES

Of the Seventy

A few years ago I presided over the Portugal Porto Mission. One day as I drove to a city in northern Portugal to interview some missionaries, I came to a heavy mist on the road. Fog, common in that region during winter, was so dense that I

must be willing to submit to, and bear with patience, “all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon [us]” (Mosiah 3:19). Opposition in all things is part of the eternal plan of happiness (see 2 Nephi 2:11). But when we accept trials with humility, pleading to be comforted by the Lord through His Atonement, we have more confidence that we

DISTRESSED

could barely see the white lines dividing the lanes of the road. I feared that I might lose control of the car and cause an accident. I drove slowly, and by focusing my eyes on those faint white lines, I safely reached the town of Vila Real.

As I compared that simple experience to our mortal life, I realized that we all go through heavy mists of adversity throughout our earthly existence. But if we hold fast to the gospel of Jesus Christ and stay within its boundaries, there is no doubt that we will reach our final destination.

In the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord made a special invitation:

“Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

“Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” (Matthew 7:13–14).

To enter the strait gate of the gospel, we

can overcome our current challenges and we are better prepared to face future challenges.

In his second epistle to the Corinthians, the Apostle Paul declared:

“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’ sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh” (2 Corinthians 4:8–11).

According to the Apostle Paul, even though we may be troubled in times of adversity, we will not be alone, for the Lord Himself will take us by the hand. He will be at our side if we remain faithful and acknowledge His hand in all things (see D&C 112:10).

I have learned from my own experience that this principle is true. One of the missionaries



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servicing in Portugal fell down and broke a vertebra. He was servicing in a small town close to Portugal's border with Spain. The local hospital did not have the means to operate on him, so he was transferred to a hospital in Porto, where the mission headquarters was located.

I was worried as I drove to the hospital early that winter day. I had a plea in my heart that I might receive assurance that the missionary would not feel that he was alone. I asked God to comfort him, his family, and me. I asked the Lord to guide the hands of the surgeons who were to treat him so that they could alleviate his suffering.

At the hospital I reviewed the elder's medical report, done shortly after he arrived in the emergency room, and I explained to him what his surgery would entail. At exactly that moment, I felt in my heart the comfort that comes only from the Lord, and I told the missionary that we were not alone. Looking at him lying in that hospital bed, I realized that his countenance reflected peace and trust in the Lord.

He turned to me and said, "President, everything will be fine. I just need you to give me a blessing."

His great faith and the certainty he felt when asking for a blessing banished the anguish from my heart and gave me the courage I needed. I had repeated that same sentence—"everything will be fine"—over and over to our missionaries, and it was being put to a test right at that instant. As I saw that elder holding fast to the Lord during what was likely the most difficult challenge he had ever faced, I was confident that the life of Jesus was about to be manifested in the mortal flesh, as Paul declared to the Corinthians.

The missionary was operated on the next morning, and after his release from the hospital, he returned home to continue his treatment. The Lord not only brought comfort to our hearts while we were facing tribulation, but He

also blessed that young man, who is now married, studying, and working.

Overcoming challenges in this life is part of our Heavenly Father's plan. But He has not left us alone. He has given us prophets, revelations, scriptures, and all the help we need to follow the right path and not lose our way amid the fog of tribulation.

Facing adversity is not easy, but the knowledge we have of the blessings promised to those who face and overcome tribulation brings to our hearts the courage we need to press forward. In a revelation given to the Saints, the Lord taught the importance of facing challenges:

"For verily I say unto you, blessed is he that keepeth my commandments, whether in life or in death; and he that is faithful in tribulation, the reward of the same is greater in the kingdom of heaven.

"Ye cannot behold with your natural eyes, for the present time, the design of your God concerning those things which shall come hereafter, and the glory which shall follow after much tribulation.

"For after much tribulation come the blessings. Wherefore the day cometh that ye shall be crowned with much glory; the hour is not yet, but is nigh at hand" (D&C 58:2-4).

The Savior set the perfect example of how to endure tribulation, even when His suffering was at its greatest. He did the will of the Father, not turning aside from His divine mission. He fulfilled His responsibility amid much trial and tribulation. He sacrificed His life because of His love for each one of us, giving us the wondrous opportunity to repent and change our ways. This is the greatest comfort we can receive as we go through heavy mists in the course of our lives. As we hold fast to Christ, we will eventually reach our final destination and live with Him and our Heavenly Father, who love us so much. ■



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