

# Five Scriptures

**THAT  
WILL HELP  
YOU GET  
THROUGH  
ALMOST  
ANYTHING**

*Why do bad  
things happen,  
even to good  
people? Thanks  
to modern  
revelation,  
we have a  
few answers.*

BY JOHN BYTHEWAY

The past few years have produced a lot of scary headlines. We've seen it all, from large scale to small scale, from international terrorism to the breakdown of individual families. Innocent people, even children, are not spared. Why do these things happen? Philosophers and theologians have wrestled with that question for centuries.

However, as Latter-day Saints, we have something many philosophers and theologians don't have. We have revelation, both ancient and modern. So, rather than just asking why these things happen, let's ask a slightly different question: What do we know for sure? Let's explore five scriptures that will help us find comfort in the things we do know.

**Scripture One**  
**We Know That God Loves His Children!**  
 (1 Nephi 11:17)

Early in the Book of Mormon, an angel asks Nephi a tough question, "Knowest thou the condescension of God?" Nephi answers, "I know that he loveth his children; nevertheless, I do not know the meaning of all things" (1 Nephi 11:16–17). Nephi's answer is a perfect statement for us to remember in times of trial. We don't know the meaning of all things. We don't have all the answers to explain all the tragedies in the world and in our own neighborhoods. However, we *know*, we are *sure*, that God loves His children.

Something wonderful happens when we really know, without a doubt, that God loves us—our questions completely change. Instead of asking, "Why did this happen to me?" or "Why doesn't God care about me?" we say, "Well, I know God loves me; I *know* that. So what can I learn from this experience?"

Sometimes we think our trials come

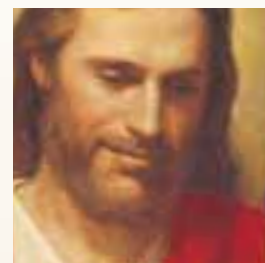
because we did something wrong. That's not always true. Adversity is simply part of earth life. From it we can grow and progress if we choose to. Yes, some trials come because of our own disobedience, but many trials are simply part of life.

The scriptures contain many examples of righteous people who suffered: Abraham, Abinadi, Joseph of Egypt, Joseph Smith, and even Jesus Christ. The fact is, bad things happen to good people. Brother Truman G. Madsen once asked President Hugh B. Brown of the First Presidency (1883–1975) why the Lord would put Abraham through the experience of being asked to sacrifice his own son. Obviously God knew that Abraham would be willing to do anything God commanded, and if that was so, why did the Lord put him through such a test? President Brown answered, "Abraham needed to learn something about Abraham" (*Joseph Smith the Prophet* [1989], 93).

God already knows what we're made of, but perhaps He wants *us* to learn what we're made of. I think we would all agree that we learn more from our tough times than from our easy times. Sometimes bad things happen to good people. We don't know the meaning of all things, but we know God loves His children! And because He loves us, He will never desert us.



*Why did this happen to me?*



*Something wonderful happens when we really know, without a doubt, that God loves us.*



*Everyone on earth has agency, and sometimes those who misuse it have an impact on many innocent people.*



**Scripture  
Two**

## **We Know That God Allows Evil to Exist in the World**

**(Moses 7:26–33)**

Sometimes our trials are a direct result of someone using their agency to do evil. Often when tragedy strikes, someone will say, “Well, it must have been God’s will.” What exactly is “God’s will”? It seems to me that God’s will is that we choose righteousness over wickedness! However, He also desires that we have a choice in the matter.

In the Pearl of Great Price, Enoch sees a frightening vision. “And he beheld Satan; and he had a great chain in his hand, and it veiled the whole face of the earth with darkness; and he looked up and laughed, and his angels rejoiced” (Moses 7:26).

Chains often symbolize bondage in the scriptures, and Enoch sees Satan looking up and laughing at the world in chains. Enoch also sees the Lord, who looks down on the sinful world and weeps. Enoch asks:

“How is it that thou canst weep, seeing thou art holy, and from all eternity to all eternity?” (Moses 7:29).

The Lord answers in what I think is one of the saddest passages of scripture:

“Behold these thy brethren; they are the workmanship of mine own hands, and I gave unto them their knowledge, in the day I created them; and in the Garden of Eden, gave I unto man his agency;

“And unto thy brethren have I said, and also given commandment, that they should love one another, and that they should choose me, their Father; but behold, they are without affection, and they hate their own blood” (Moses 7:32–33).

Clearly, what the Lord desires is that we love one another and choose to obey Him.



But some do not. They are “without affection.” Everyone on earth has agency, and sometimes those who misuse it have an impact

on many innocent people. This scripture provides evidence that the Lord notices the tragedies on the earth and that He is affected by them.

Many of the bad things that happen are contrary to God’s will. But remember that man’s will is temporary, and ultimately God’s will is what will be done.

There are other questions in all of this, too. How many acts of premeditated evil has God prevented? How many of these tragedies could have been much worse? There is no way we could know. Sometimes we see things on the news and ask, “How could God allow this to happen?” Could it be that one day we’ll discover that God prevented much more than He allowed?

How many times has someone prayed that “we might get home in safety,” and we actually did? How many traffic accidents has He helped you avoid? How many times has He inspired you to do something that saved someone from injury? We will never know in this life.

The plan of happiness allows for agency, and therefore it also allows for evil. There is no flaw in the plan.

*How could  
God allow  
evil to  
happen?*



## Scripture Three

### Our Work Is Not Finished!

(Alma 14:13)

Sometimes people need to look to someone else who relied on Christ's Atonement and was able to make it through a terrible tragedy.

As you recall, Alma and Amulek taught the people of Ammonihah. Some of them were so wicked that they responded to the message by building a bonfire and throwing the believing women and children into the flames. They forced Alma and Amulek to watch the horrible suffering.

"How can we witness this awful scene?" Amulek asks.

Alma answers: "The Spirit constraineth me that I must not stretch forth mine hand; for behold the Lord receiveth them up unto himself, in glory."

Those who believed in God were received unto Him in glory! They died, but they were going to a glorious place.

Amulek says, "Perhaps they will burn us also."

Alma replies, "Be it according to the will of the Lord. But, behold, *our work is not finished*; therefore they burn us not" (Alma 14:10-13, emphasis added).

In other words, don't let this tragedy define your life! You still have your own mission. Like Alma and Amulek, perhaps you were spared because your work is not finished!

After making such a statement, the obvious question becomes, what about those who die in such tragedies? Does that mean their work is finished? Perhaps their work *on earth* is finished, but apparently there is more work to do in the spirit world.

Death is just another milepost in the plan

of salvation. One mission president noted the sadness experienced by families who send a missionary out into the field. He also observed the great joy experienced by the mission president and his wife as they welcome a new missionary into their area. The very same event brings different feelings to different people depending on where they are. Similarly, those who are left behind feel sadness at the passing of their loved one, but there is great joy in the spirit world as the departed spirit enters into the next phase of his or her eternal existence.

The best way to prepare for death is to live life at its fullest. I believe the Lord will hold us accountable for what we did with our lives whether we have trials or not, whether we marry or not, and whether our life is easy or not.

Needless to say, Alma and Amulek witnessed an awful scene. I wonder if they were ever able to forget what they saw. How did they survive? The answer lies in Scripture Four.

## Scripture Four

### The Atonement Is Not Just for Sinners

(Alma 7:11-12)

This scripture teaches us that Jesus not only suffered for the things we do that are wrong, but He also suffered for the things which happen *to us*—things over which we have no control. Alma taught:

"And he shall go forth, suffering pains and afflictions and temptations of every kind; and this that the word might be fulfilled which saith he will take upon him the pains and the sicknesses of his people.

"And he will take upon him death, that he may loose the bands of death which bind his people; and he will take upon him their

*Don't let tragedy define your life.*



*We may never have all the answers in this life.*

infirmities, that his bowels may be filled with mercy, according to the flesh, that he may know according to the flesh how to succor his people” (Alma 7:11–12).

The words “sin” or “sins” do not appear anywhere in those two verses. But notice the other words—things in addition to sins that Jesus took upon him: *pains, afflictions, temptations, sicknesses, and infirmities*. Alma and Amulek must have relied on the Atonement of Christ to get them through the sadness, the nightmares, and the emotional trauma of the tragedy in Ammonihah. We must rely on the Atonement to help us through our personal tragedies as well.

## Scripture Five

### One Day, the Lord Will Reveal All Things (D&C 101:32–36)

We may never have all the answers in this life. The newspapers, the cable news networks, and the politicians will be debating the causes and solutions to our modern problems for years. The faithful will look for answers in the scriptures, where the answers don’t change. And one day, the Lord will return and answer all our questions:

“Yea, verily I say unto you, in that day when the Lord shall come, he shall reveal all things—

“Things which have passed, and hidden things which no man knew, things of the earth, by which it was made, and the purpose and the end thereof” (D&C 101:32–33).

Think of the perplexing questions regarding the creation of the universe, the origin of the dinosaurs, and the age of the earth. This scripture assures us that one day, the Lord will reveal “things of the earth, by which it was made, and the purpose



and the end thereof.” But that’s not all! The list continues:

“Things most precious, things that are above, and

things that are beneath, things that are in the earth, and upon the earth, and in heaven.

“And all they who suffer persecution for my name, and endure in faith, though they are called to lay down their lives for my sake yet shall they partake of all this glory.

“Wherefore, fear not even unto death; for in this world your joy is not full, but in me your joy is full” (D&C 101:34–36).

### The Ultimate Answer

You may have noticed the title of this article, “Five Scriptures That Will Help You Get Through *Almost* Anything.”

Ultimately, it is not the scriptures that help get us through things, but the Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the scriptures testify. He is the one who will help us get through *anything* and *everything*. Because of Jesus Christ, we can remove the word “almost.” Jesus didn’t *almost* conquer death and hell; He conquered it. Jesus didn’t *almost* accomplish the infinite and eternal Atonement; He accomplished it. The language of the scriptures is absolute when it comes to power of the Savior. (See the list on the next page.)

Finally (and most important for our discussion), in the midst of our trials and adversity, He promises us the power to overcome all things with no *almost*. “By giving heed and doing these things which ye have received, and which ye shall hereafter receive—and the kingdom is given you of the Father, and *power to overcome all things*”

(D&C 50:35, emphasis added).

While we may not have all the answers in this life, the Lord does, and we can trust Him more than anyone or anything in this world. He will help us get through *everything*.

So what do we know for sure, from sources whose answers don't change? We know that God loves His children. We know that part of His plan is to allow evil to exist in the world. We know that if we're still alive, we have a work to accomplish. We know that the Savior suffered not only for our sins, but also for our pains and afflictions, and we know that one day He will conquer the evil one, answer all our questions, and bless us with a fulness of joy. **NE**



*He promises  
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## THE LORD IS OVER ALL

Ultimately, it is the Lord Jesus Christ who will help us get through *everything*. The language of the scriptures is absolute when it comes to His power. Notice the absence of the word *almost* in the following verses:

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**D&C 88:6**—Jesus descended below *all* things.

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**Alma 7:11**—He suffered temptations of *every* kind.

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**Hebrews 4:15**—He was tempted in *all* points as we are, yet He is without sin.

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**D&C 58:22**—He subdued *all* enemies under His feet.

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**D&C 50:41**—He overcame the world.

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**John 1:3**—*All* things were made by Him.

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**D&C 50:27**—*All* things are subject unto Him.

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**2 Nephi 9:20**—He knoweth *all* things.

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**D&C 88:41**—He comprehendeth *all* things.

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**D&C 101:16**—*All* flesh is in His hands.

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**John 14:26**—Through the Holy Ghost He will bring *all* things to our remembrance.

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**Matthew 19:26**—He taught that with God *all* things are possible.

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**Romans 8:28**—Because of Him, *all* things that we experience will work together for our good.

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