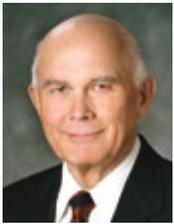


An Answer for Every “WHAT IF?”

“And [Jesus Christ] 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” (Alma 7:11).



THE HEALING POWER OF THE ATONEMENT

“[Jesus Christ] knows of our anguish, and He is there for us. Like the good Samaritan in His parable, when He finds us wounded at the wayside, He binds up our wounds and cares for us (see Luke 10:34). Brothers and sisters, the healing power of His Atonement is for you, for us, for all.”

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “He Heals the Heavy Laden,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2006, 7.

By Michael D. Woodbury

Several years ago my scooter slipped out from under me, and I fell in the middle of the road. Almost immediately I was hit by another vehicle—a large one—and dragged down the road. Those who reported the accident called it in as a fatality.

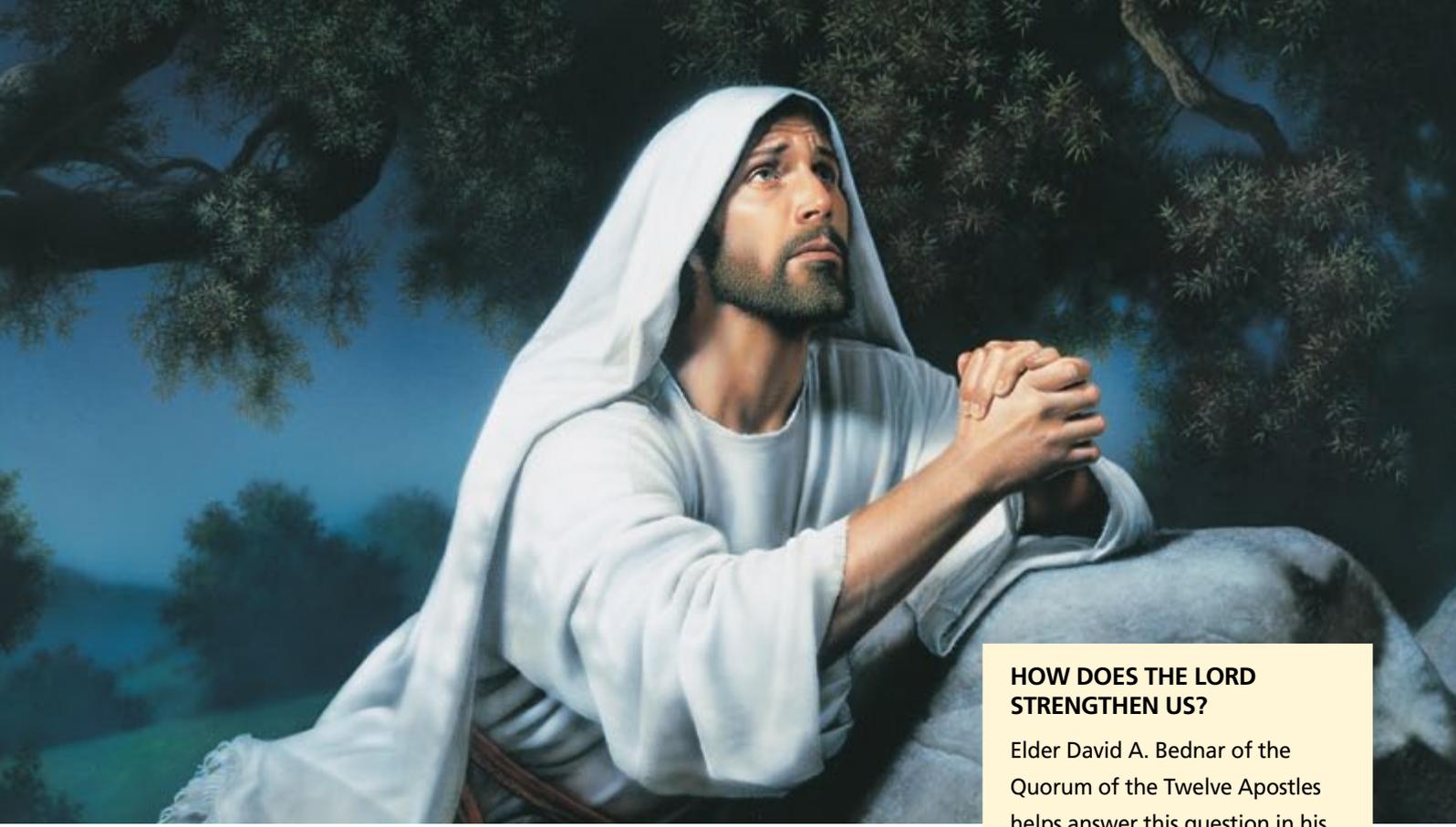
When paramedics discovered I was still alive, they rushed me to the hospital, where during the next several days I underwent a number of emergency surgeries. While I was on life support and unconscious, my father and others laid their hands upon me and, through the power of the priesthood, blessed me. From that moment on, the healing process was miraculous. But even more significant than what happened to me physically was what happened spiritually.

This experience opened my heart to the Savior’s influence. A week after the

accident, I regained consciousness and learned what had happened. I recognized that the Lord had protected me and allowed me to remain with my wife and children on earth. I found myself comforted, not abandoned, by God. Rather than feeling traumatized and overwhelmed by the recovery process that lay before me, I felt peace.

In the days that followed, my love for Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ reached new depths, and my desire to remain faithful all my life intensified. I saw the Lord’s love through the good people I encountered. And I saw that Heavenly Father heard and answered the prayers and fasting of people of many faiths on my behalf.

As I have shared this story with others, the “what if?” questions have been endless. “What if you had died?” “What if you



had been left unable to walk?” “What if you had to battle severe pain for the rest of your life?” The amazing part to me is that the Atonement provides an answer to every “what if?”

Because of the Atonement, I will be resurrected and any physical infirmity or pain will be wiped away. My wife, children, and I are sealed together as an eternal family. The Atonement made that possible too. If we move forward with faith in our Savior as we pass through the trials of life and endure to the end, the Atonement will provide the path we need to follow, with the glorious promise of eternal life waiting at the end. ■

“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 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 according to their infirmities” (Alma 7:12).

For more on this topic, see Matthew 11:28–30; 3 Nephi 17:7–9; and Bruce C. Hafen, “Beauty for Ashes: The Atonement of Jesus Christ,” *Liahona*, Apr. 1997, 39; *Ensign*, Apr. 1990, 7.

HOW DOES THE LORD STRENGTHEN US?

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles helps answer this question in his general conference talk “In the Strength of the Lord” (*Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2004, 76–78):

- “In the strength of the Lord we can do and endure and overcome all things.”
- “The enabling and strengthening aspect of the Atonement helps us to see and to do and to become good in ways that we could never recognize or accomplish with our limited mortal capacity.”
- “In the strength of the Lord and through His grace, I know that you and I can be blessed to accomplish all things.”

Consider sharing with another your testimony of the blessings that come as a result of the Atonement of Jesus Christ.