



HHE

WILL TAKE UPON HIM THEIR INFIRMITIES



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A few years after my wife, Gisèle, and I returned from presiding over the Fiji Suva Mission, Gisèle was diagnosed with stomach cancer. The ordeal would eventually include three delicate surgical operations and complications that resulted in the complete removal of her stomach. It was at the height of watching my wife's suffering that I came to better understand the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

I remember feeling completely overwhelmed by what Gisèle was experiencing. What had she done to deserve such an affliction? Hadn't she served the Lord faithfully? Hadn't she lived the Word of Wisdom? Why couldn't He have prevented this illness? *Why?*

One particular night I let my heart and my feelings burst in prayer as I recounted to the Lord all of my frustrations. "I can no longer stand to watch my dear wife endure such pain!" I told Him. Then I decided to turn to the scriptures. I found these comforting verses about Jesus Christ in Alma 7:11–12:

"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

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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."

Until that moment I had not considered all that the Savior's wondrous Atonement entailed. I had not truly realized that Jesus Christ would take upon Him Gisèle's pain—or mine. I shifted my hurt and fear upon Him who takes "the pains and the sicknesses of his people." With this new understanding, I felt a heavy burden lifted!

Today, Gisèle is doing very well, as though she never had cancer. At her regular checkups, her doctor tells her that she is "a miracle." I am so grateful for her physical healing, but I am also grateful for the healing that I experienced, a healing of the heart. The comfort that is available only through the Savior gave me a peaceful assurance that everything would be all right.

Now whenever I face tribulation, my thoughts always turn to that powerful lesson and to what the Lord told the Prophet Joseph Smith: "The Son of Man hath descended below them all. Art thou greater than he?" (D&C 122:8). Remembering Jesus Christ's sacrifice invariably comforts me.

I am eternally grateful for our Savior's willingness to go through what He excruciatingly endured. I testify of His love, His mercy, and His watchful care for His children. He is our Savior, and I love Him. ■

More on this topic, see Elder Jeffrey R. Holland's April 2009 general conference address, "None Were with Him," at conference.lds.org.