

**"For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds by Christ."
2 Corinthians 1:5**

There is a blessed proportion. The Ruler of Providence bears a pair of scales—in this side He puts His people's trials, and in the other side He puts their consolations. When the scale of trial is nearly empty, you will always find the scale of consolation in nearly the same condition; and when the scale of trials is full, you will find the scale of consolation just as heavy.

When the black clouds gather most, the light is the more brightly revealed to us. When the night lowers and the tempest is coming on, the Heavenly Captain is always closest to His crew. It is a blessed thing, that when we are most cast down, then it is that we are most lifted up by the consolations of the Spirit.

One reason is, because *trials make more room for consolation*. **Great hearts can only be made by great troubles**. The spade of trouble digs the reservoir of comfort deeper, and makes more room for consolation. God comes into our heart—He finds it full—He begins to break our comforts and to make it empty; then there is more room for grace.

The humbler a man lies, the more comfort he will always have, because he will be more fitted to receive it. Another reason why we are often most happy in our troubles, is this—*through trials we have the closest dealings with God*. When the barn is full, man can live without God: when the purse is bursting with gold, we do without so much prayer. But once take our *gourds* are taken away, then we want our *God*; and for Him to cleanse the idols out of the house, then we are compelled to honor Jehovah.

"Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord." There is no cry so good as that which comes from the bottom of the mountains; no prayer

Trials and Consolations

half so hearty as that which comes up from the depths of the soul, through deep trials and afflictions. Thus, they bring us to God, and we are happier; for nearness to God is happiness. Come, troubled believer, fret not over your heavy troubles, for they are the heralds of weighty mercies.

Spurgeon