

TROUBLES TURNED TO BLESSINGS

Myra Brooks Welch, perhaps best known for her song "The Touch of the Master's Hand," did not realize her talent until she was forced to use a wheelchair. Instead of becoming bitter she began using a gift that had heretofore lay undiscovered, and her poems have been a blessing to people through-out the world. She came to the point where she would pat the arm of her wheelchair and say, "I thank God for this." She realized that without the affliction that placed her in that chair she might never have honored God nearly as much nor been nearly so useful to others.

Any affliction that makes us more concerned for others than we are for ourselves is a priceless blessing. Any hardship that makes us a contributor and a giver rather than a user and a taker is worth far more than it costs. Anyone that the Lord is pleased to make useful in His kingdom to any great extent must, figuratively speaking, have his or her wheelchair. With Paul it was a "thorn in the flesh" to buffet him and prevent him from becoming exalted in himself, and to make him ever mindful of his dependence upon the Lord. And with us it is likewise necessary that we have some infirmity to crop the wings of our human pride and teach us that there is nothing else in the world as important as serving the Lord. We must have something to drive us often to the throne of grace and teach us that God's grace alone is sufficient to bear us safely across the tumultuous sea of life.

Let us never complain of our troubles, for if the Lord chooses to sanctify our trials and tribulations they will prove to be the channel of some of our greatest and most valuable lessons and blessings. When the Lord comforts us in our tribulation, He does so that we may benefit others (II Cor. 1:4-6), and anyone who benefits others has not lived in vain. And remember, God can make a wheelchair a golden chariot with wings.---Elder Ralph Harris