

Selected readings from Morning and Evening: Daily Readings, By
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Reading 91

“Show me why you contend with me.” Job 10:2

Perhaps, O tried soul, the Lord is doing this to develop your graces. There are some of your graces which would never be discovered if it were not for your trials.

Do you not know that your faith never looks so grand in summer weather as it does in winter? Love is too often like a glow-worm, showing but little light except it be in the midst of surrounding darkness. Hope itself is like a star—not to be seen in the sunshine of prosperity, and only to be discovered in the night of adversity.

Afflictions are often the black foils in which God sets the jewels of his children’s graces, to make them shine the better. It was but a little while ago that on your knees you were saying, “Lord, I fear I have no faith: let me know that I have faith.” Was not this really, though perhaps unconsciously, praying for trials?—for how can you know that you have faith until it is exercised?

Depend upon it, God often sends us trials so that our graces may be discovered, and that we may be certain of their existence. Besides, it’s not merely discovery, real growth in grace is the result of sanctified trials. God often takes away our comforts and our privileges in order to make us better Christians. He trains his soldiers, not in tents of ease and luxury, but by turning them out and using them to forced marches and hard service. He makes them ford through streams, and swim through rivers, and climb mountains, and walk many a long mile with heavy knapsacks of sorrow on their backs. Well, Christian, may not this account for the troubles through which you are passing? Is not the Lord bringing out your graces, and making them grow? Is not this the reason why he is contending with you?

“Trials make the promise sweet;

Trials give new life to prayer;

Trials bring me to his feet,

Lay me low, and keep me there.”