

**Sweet are the uses of Adversity**  
**Or**  
**Shun not the Struggle, It's God's Gift**  
**Or**  
**Adversity Brings out the Best in Man**

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William Shakespeare, that great doyen of English literature, wrote this lovely line way back in the 16 century, about 400 years ago. But even today, it remains as true as it was when it first crossed that great dramatist's mind. Everybody desires prosperity. Who does not want to be rich? Why does not want to roll in wealth, move about in air-conditioned cars and enjoy all the luxuries of life? But wishes are not horses. Had they been horses, beggars would have been the first to ride.

Man, by nature, is a selfish and ease-loving creature. The poor fellow was living a life full of ease, luxury and blessedness in the garden of Eden when the cruel gods pushed him down on this earth saying:

“Go, and earn thy living by sweat of thy brow.”

He had to come down and face and mighty challenge of life. He did not know how to do it but the adverse circumstances he was placed in, taught him to fight the battles of life. Through his heroic struggle against the adverse circumstances, he came out of the forest, changed the face of the universe and landed on the moon. All this could not be possible if man had been blessed with prosperity.

It is in the very nature of adversity to bring out the best in man, develop his latent abilities, and lead him on to a path of prosperity and progress. Shakespeare was right when he said about adversity that:

“Like the toad, ugly and venomous

It wears a precious jewel in its head.”

A great writer once said," God brings men into deep waters, not to drown them, but to cleanse them. Adversity throws up a challenge; a slip, a careless action and laziness can mean disaster or death. One has to rise to the occasion, be on the guard, put up the best of the fight with his back to the wall. This fight makes him stronger, bolder and wiser.

Adversity brings out all the qualities in man. It makes him humble, patient and self-reliant. Humility is the mother of other virtues. Thus, adversity proves to be a much better school than prosperity. The history of the world is the story of the survival of the fittest, a story of those who fought against adverse circumstances and achieved great victories.

Some people foolishly believe that wealth can solve all problems. One may be able to buy the best of pens with one's wealth, but can that improve a man's hand-writing? A wealthy, but ugly woman, may purchase the best of cosmetics with her money but can she become really beautiful? A prosperous rich man, stricken with paralysis or cancer can buy health? Certainly not. The real qualities of head, hand and heart, can be attained only through struggle in adversity. It is adversity alone that teaches you to play the game of life as a real player. Can a fighter enjoy a victory if the enemy is weak and broken? Prosperity makes a man lazy and lethargic and makes him a good-for-nothing fellow. He falls a prey to all evil habits and fails to get real joy in life.

Human history is full of examples of several great men who were born and brought up in the school of adversity only. Sh. Lal Bahadur Shastri was born in a very poor family. But poverty brought out his real greatness and he rose to be the Prime Minister of this great country.

Adversity not only brings a man to the pinnacles of glory in this world, it also brings a man nearer to God. It is only in pain, sufferings and misfortune that one remembers God. Prosperity too dazzling to let a man see God. Lord Christ had rightly said, "Blessed are the poor." He also said," It is easier for a camel to pass through a needle's eye than for a rich man to enter Heaven."

Every dark cloud has a silver lining. The darkest the night, the nearer the dawn. Adversity therefore, has its own sweetness. A learned poet has rightly said:

"We are not there, to play, to dream to drift,

We have hard work to do and loads to lift

Shun not the struggle, it's God's gift