

## **ILLNESS AND DISABILITY AS A SIGN OF STRENGTH**

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When we or our loved ones fall ill or become disabled (temporary or permanently), there are those who will try to make us believe we are being punished by God for having done something wrong. They might try to convince you to see your illness as a sign of spiritual weakness or failure. As interesting as this point of view is, I find it to be a rather depressing point of view. I think we are better off thinking of illness and disability in opposite terms. Try to see illness and disability as a sign of spiritual strength, rather than spiritual weakness.

In fact, we should choose to see most challenges in life as signs of spiritual strength. Look at Job and his challenges. Was he being punished by God for spiritual weakness, as his three friends claimed, or, was Job's challenges a sign of his spiritual strength? Job's tragedies resulted from Satan's attack, and not as punishment from God. Why did Satan attack Job? Because Job was a man of spiritual strength, a blameless and upright man who feared God and shunned evil.

Likewise, when we are spiritually strong, is when we will be tested the most, and fall under attack by Satan. Satan will try to weaken our spiritual strength by making us ill and disabled. Satan does not want spiritually strong people around, he wants us to weaken. Satan thrives on the weak, but becomes weakened by the strong. Thus, he does not need to attack the weak, but he will attack the strong in an attempt to make them weak. And illness and disability is a perfect attack. As humans, we are guided by our physical circumstances. If our physical side, such as our health, is weakened, then it is easy for our spiritual side to quickly follow too - we may feel discouraged in our Faith. However, it is in times such as these, when our physical side is weakened, that we must rely on our spiritual side to be strong. And often, it is through experiencing physical weakness that we get to learn to know our spiritual strength.

So next time you fall ill, or witness a loved one's illness, maybe you should remember what you read today, and take the illness as a compliment and a sign of spiritual strength rather than a curse and sign of spiritual weakness? Think of the illness as an indication that you, or your loved one, is a person of such spiritual strength that Satan became concerned and launched an attack. Try to remember, that the challenges of illness and disability could quite possibly be signs of spiritual strength.

I hope these words can help you gain some new perspective and help you feel better.