

## Back of an Elephant

While at a recent conference, a group of pastors was studying 1 Peter 3 and the Lord's call for all of us to submit to suffering for the sake of the gospel. During their discussion, one of the men who previously had been a missionary in Africa shared this interesting insight. He said, "When the Bantu people of Malawi pray for those who are suffering, they often do not pray for the suffering to be taken away. Instead, they pray 'MulunguNdi pasteni msana wa njovu.' This is translated, 'Oh, God, give me the back of an elephant!'"

Isn't it interesting that they understand that suffering is a gift from God to help people find him in his love and truth? So they ask for help to be strong under the suffering, before they ask for it to be lifted. Peter gives similar encouragement in 1 Peter 4:19, "Those who suffer according to God's will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good."

When we are suffering, it is beneficial for us to look to heaven with obedient eyes and to trust God as we pray for his help. He does care about us deeply and has many reasons for allowing suffering in our lives. And he loves to hear us ask for his strength to make us prosper under suffering.

This devotion provides encouragement to trust in God during times of suffering. The devotion was written by Pastor Don Patterson of Holy Word, Austin, TX