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| Site logo image | Martha Rodman posted: " We think you ought to know, dear brothers and sisters, about the trouble we went through in the province of Asia. We were crushed and overwhelmed beyond our ability to endure, and we thought we would not live through it. 2 Corinthians 1: 8 NLT. Paul b" [**Faith Encounters**](http://faithencounters.impart.org)  |

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We think you ought to know, dear brothers and sisters, about the trouble we went through in the province of Asia. We were crushed and overwhelmed beyond our ability to endure, and we thought we would not live through it. 2 Corinthians 1: 8 NLT.Paul begins this second letter to the church in Corinth with some of the most hopeful scriptures we can rely on when difficult trials come our way. He reminds us very clearly: all praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is our merciful Father and the source of all comfort. 2 Corinthians 1:3 NLT. Hmm, do you believe that He is the source of all comfort? Last week I went through a difficult spiritual and emotional battle. Have you ever had one of those? It was later in the evening, and I tried to call my son, but he didn't answer. (Found out the next day, his phone was on "do not disturb" because he wasn't feeling well.) So I turned to the Lord and said, "Well, Jesus, I guess it's just you and me, again". During those battle times, I know that He is the only one who could really give me the peace and comfort I needed...but I still wanted someone with skin on. I actually apologized to Him, for not acting like He was enough. Gratefully, His peace came and the battle was won.There is a promise we can cling to that is found in the next verse. He comforts us in all our troubles so we can comfort others. 2 Corinthians 1:9. My friends, I want to remind you that all of your trials and difficulties are not just for you alone, but as we allow Him to comfort us, we can pass on that comfort to others and strengthen God's church. It becomes God's domino effect--touching lives with our story, which they can share yours and their own and it gets passed on to many. 2 Corinthians 1:8 is interesting to me. Paul writes, we think you ought to know, dear brothers and sisters, about the trouble we went through in the province of Asia. We were crushed and overwhelmed beyond our ability to endure, and we thought we would never live through it. It is hard to read and really comprehend that he and his friends were so crushed and overwhelmed that they thought they were not going to make it. Even in my spiritual battle the other day, no matter how tough it was, I knew I was going to wake up and be ok. I admitted to the Lord that my soul felt crushed and overwhelmed. But nothing like Paul and his friends must have felt, they thought they were going to die.But the next verse shows us Paul's perspective on the trial. In fact, we expected to die. But as a result, we stopped relying on ourselves and learned to rely only on God, who raises the dead. 2 Corinthians 1:9. Even though Paul had endured a lot by the time of this writing. By the time he wrote 2 Corinthians he had been on at least three different missionary journeys, including the one he describes in this passage. It only seems fitting that he had already learned to rely on the Lord, but here he states we stopped relying on ourselves and learned to rely only on God. That in itself is amazing, but he adds the tag line: who raises the dead. Paul depended upon the power of God to do and endure what he was called to do. So should we. He might have wanted to quit, but he didn't. Paul goes on to write: And he did rescue us from mortal danger, and he will rescue us again. We have placed our confidence in him, and he will continue to rescue us. Paul expected to need rescuing again! Most of us today would be grateful for one rescue, and decide that is enough! But he set himself to run his race, no matter what the cost and where it took him. Have you done that? Have you settled in your heart, that no matter what, you will follow Him and His ways? He continues with: And you are helping us by praying for us. Then many people will give thanks because God has graciously answered so many prayers for our safety. 2 Corinthians 1:11. NLT.I know someone whose mother distributed smuggled Bibles illegally during the Cold War. Even though they knew people who were arrested and tortured for their faith, they were willing to risk their own imprisonment for their brethren's sake. Other than those I know personally, the only "persecuted" believers I know are those who have been mocked by friends and family, but never in "mortal" danger. Reading through Voice of the Martyrs magazine, there are people all over the world who are being physically tortured for their faith. I think the Holy Spirit wants to strengthen us to stand, equipped with the armor of God no matter our trial. If we are not in the midst of active fire, what is our job? According to these scriptures, we are to pray for them and share their stories. We aren't to compare ourselves among ourselves about who has it worse. We are to run our own race, chosen by Him. It is my heart to encourage you, no matter where you are. As I read this scripture, I found so much comfort knowing that God is helping my family and their battles learn to rely on Him even more. We are trusting Him to answer our prayer for His glory, not our own. No matter what kind of trial you are facing today, please know that there is hope in Him. Learning to rely on Him is never a bad thing. God wants His people strong in the battle and without. Father, I thank you for Paul's words to us this day. I thank you that you are the Comforter who not only comforts us in our trials, but teaches us how to comfort others. I ask you to teach us how to further rely on you and your ways, in Jesus' Name, amen.  |

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