

The ABC's on the Word of God

Affliction acts as a means of wholesome discipline leading the godly to more highly value the truth and promises of God:

טוב עשית עם־עבדך יְהוָה בְּדַבְרְךָ:
טוב טעם ונשת למגני פי במצותיה האמנותי:
גִּרְם אַעֲנֶה אֲנִי שֶׁגַּג וְעִלְמָה אִמְרֵתֶךָ שְׁמֵרֵתִי:
טוב־אתה ומוטיב למגני הקוד:
טפלי עלי שקר וזים אני בכל־לבו אצור פקודי:
טפש בתלב לבם אני תורתך שששעתי:
טוב־לי כי־עצתי לִפְעֹן אֶלְמֵד הַקּוֹדֶה:
טוב־לך תורת־ךָ טאלפי נוב ונקס:

גִּדְוָה עֲשִׂיתִי וְכִנְיִנִי כִּי־לִבִּי וְאֶלְמָתָה מִצֹּדֵקֶיךָ:
וְרֵאיוֹתֵי וְשִׁמְחוֹתֵי כִּי לְדַבְרֵךָ תִּחְלֹתִי:
נִדְעֵמִי וְהֵדָה כִּי־צָדֵק מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ אֶזְמִינָה עֲנִתֵמִי:
וְהִרְצֵא חֶסֶדְךָ לְתַלְמִינִי כִּי־אִמְרֵתֶךָ לְעִבְדֶּיךָ:
וְכִאֲנִי רָחֵמֶיךָ וְאֶחְנֶה כִּי־תִרְחַמֶּנִּי שְׁשִׁיעֵנִי:
נִכְשָׁו וְזִים כִּי־שָׁקֵר עֲנִיתִי אֲנִי אֵשֶׁת בַּפִּקּוּדֶיךָ:
לְשׁוֹבֵי לִי נִרְאִה וְיִדְעוּ עַדְתֶּיךָ:
וְהִירְלִי תַמִּים בְּחַסְדֶּיךָ לִפְעֹן לֹא אֲבוֹשׁ:

ט

- In the previous stanza we saw the need for 'thoughtful self-reformation,' the need to order one's life:
- In this stanza the psalmist dwells on the LORD's sovereign hand in ordering or directing our lives:
- Previously in stanza [7] 'Daleth' (vv. 25-32) there was a focus on 'running the LORD's way' (v. 32) (5x [vv. 26, 27, 29, 30, 32] in that stanza a line began with the word "way" [דָּלֶת]):

- Here in this stanza [ט] 'Teth' the word "good" [טוב] begins 5 lines (vv. 65, 66, 68, 71, 72):
 - The Positive Value of Suffering – "Good to Me" [טוב־לי] (v. 71, cf. Deut 8:16)
 - The Preciousness of the Torah – "Good to Me" [טוב־לי] (v. 72)

טוב עשית עם־עבדך יְהוָה בְּדַבְרְךָ:
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 - Note the graphically portrayed divine origin of the Torah [תִּירַח] – "Of Your Mouth" [פִּיךָ]
 - The Precious Character and Positive Acts of God – "Good You are and Doing Good" [טוב־אתה וטוב־אתה] (v. 68)

- I. The Benefits of Affliction – As to Me (vv. 65-72)**
- II. The Benefits of Affliction – As to Others (vv. 73-80)**

I. The Benefits of Affliction – As to Me (vv. 65-72)

A. The Surprising Benefits of Affliction (vv. 65-67)

1. The Confession of the LORD's Goodness (v. 65a)

➤ In spite of –

- The Contempt (v. 22)
- The Personal Persecution (v. 23)
- The Derision Generally (v. 51)

- The psalmist's evaluation is that God's dealings with him (עַם עֲבָדֶךָ) have been good and gracious:
- Everything that has befallen him is the good and well-meaning appointment of the God of salvation according to the plan and order of salvation of His word:

I. The Benefits of Affliction – As to Me (vv. 65-72)

A. The Surprising Benefits of Affliction (vv. 65-67)

1. The Confession of the LORD's Goodness (v. 65a)
2. The Request for Further Enlightenment (v. 66a)
 - He confidently prays for a sense of 'taste' (טַעַם):
 - The request is for a fine 'taste' and 'delicate feeling' which are like a new sense:
 - He desires a palate for life:
 - That he might profit more from God's providential dealings:

I. The Benefits of Affliction – As to Me (vv. 65-72)

A. The Surprising Benefits of Affliction (vv. 65-67)

1. The Confession of the LORD's Goodness (v. 65a)
2. The Request for Further Enlightenment (v. 66a)
 - He looks to them, he trusts (יִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה) in them (cf. 42b, 43b) as his guides (cf. 24b):
3. The Confession of Confidence in the LORD's Commands (v. 66b)
 - "Sweet are the uses of adversity"
4. The Confession of Correction (v. 67)
 - The afflictions, which he has suffered, have been good for him:

I. The Benefits of Affliction – As to Me (vv. 65-72)

A. The Surprising Benefits of Affliction (vv. 65-67)

- B. The Benefits of a Resolute Heart and Rejoicing in Affliction (vv. 68-70)**
- God is good and does good, therefore we can be ready pupils in His school:
1. Commitment to Learning – Teach Me (לִמְנִי) (v. 68b)
 2. Commitment to Wholehearted (בְּכָל־לֵב) Trusteeship (בְּאֵזֶר) of His Word (v. 69)
 3. Commitment to Develop True Sensitivity of Heart Delighting in the Torah (v. 70)
 - Their heart (לִבָּם) is 'dull, insensitive to spiritual things' (עִיִּם כְּחַלְמִים):
 - My heart is unlike theirs – "delight" (שִׂשְׂוֹן) (v. 70):

I. The Benefits of Affliction – As to Me (vv. 65-72)

A. The Surprising Benefits of Affliction (vv. 65-67)

B. The Benefits of a Resolute Heart and Rejoicing in Affliction (vv. 68-70)

C. The Benefits of the School of Affliction (vv. 71-72)

1. He Learned the LORD's Word (v. 71b)
2. He Learned to Value the LORD's Word (v. 72)

I. The Benefits of Affliction – As to Me (vv. 65-72)

II. The Benefits of Affliction – As to Others (vv. 73-80)

- In the previous stanza there was the benefit of affliction upon the psalmist (vv. 65a, 67-68a, 71-72)
- But here we see his desire for his affliction to benefit and touch others (vv. 74, 79)

I. The Benefits of Affliction – As to Me (vv. 65-72)

II. The Benefits of Affliction – As to Others (vv. 73-80)

- A. Agents in Affliction (vv. 78, cf. 69a, 73a, 75)**
1. The Hostile People (vv. 78, 69a)
 - a) The Arrogant (סַוְוִי) – Who Subvert with a Lie (v. 78)
 - b) The Arrogant (סַוְוִי) – Who have Forged a Lie (v. 69a)
 2. The Faithful LORD (vv. 75, cf. 73a)
 - a) The LORD (יְהוָה) – Who has Made and Established (v. 73a)
 - b) The LORD (יְהוָה) – Who Afflicts in Faithfulness (v. 75)
 - Life's pressures are in the Potter's hands:

I. The Benefits of Affliction – As to Me (vv. 65-72)

II. The Benefits of Affliction – As to Others (vv. 73-80)

A. Agents in Affliction (vv. 78, cf. 69a, 73a, 75)

B. Aim in Affliction (vv. 74, 79, 80)

1. That Others May Experience Joy (יִשְׂמְחוּ) through His Steadfast Hope (יִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה) (v. 74)
2. That Others May Turn to Him (יִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה) in Learning (v. 79)
 - May their knowledge be enriched from his experience:
3. That He Might be Inwardly Integrated Around the Word (יִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה) (v. 80)

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II. The Benefits of Affliction – As to Others (vv. 73-80)

A. Agents in Affliction (vv. 78, cf. 69a, 73a, 75)

B. Aim in Affliction (vv. 74, 79, 80)

C. Appreciation of the Word in Affliction (vv. 73-78)

1. Discernment (v. 73b)
 2. Confidence (v. 74b)
 3. Knowledge (v. 75a)
 4. Comfort (v. 76)
 5. Delight (v. 77b)
 6. Meditation (v. 78b)
- It is in the school of affliction that one learns rightly to estimate the worth of God's word and its power:

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