

Series: Psalms
Title: Thou Hast Dealt Well
Text: Ps 119: 65-72
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Psalm 119: 65: TETH. Thou hast dealt well with thy servant, O LORD, according unto thy word. 66: Teach me good judgment and knowledge: for I have believed thy commandments. 67: Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word. 68: Thou *art* good, and doest good; teach me thy statutes. 69: The proud have forged a lie against me: *but* I will keep thy precepts with *my* whole heart. 70: Their heart is as fat as grease; *but* I delight in thy law. 71: *It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes. 72: The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver.*

David asked God, "Teach me good judgment and knowledge: for I have believed thy commandments." So God sent David affliction. David declares the good judgment and knowledge God taught him through the affliction.

Proposition: By affliction, God is teaching us good judgment.

Lets' see some ways that God deals well with us through affliction.

JUDGEMENT THAT GOD HAS DEALT WELL

Psalm 119: 65: Thou hast dealt well with thy servant, O LORD, according unto thy word.

When God sends affliction, God grows his child in the good judgment and knowledge that by the affliction God has dealt well with us according to God's promise.

Each eight verses of this Psalm were most likely written at various times in David's life. Every section is almost a repeat of the one before it. David writes of his affliction then of his joy then of his thankfulness for mercy then of his determination to walk more diligently by faith looking to the Lord God. The next section begins with affliction then joy then thankfulness then more determination. This is the life of the believer. It is as if God is saying to us in providence what he moved Paul to write, "To repeat the same things to you is not grievous to me, for you it is safe." God chose his people in the furnace of affliction. It is how God teaches us and grows us in the grace and knowledge of Christ our Savior.

So David begins with this good judgment and knowledge that God taught him through his most current affliction, "*Thou hast dealt well with thy servant, O LORD, according unto thy word.*" In Hebrew it reads, "You have done good to your servant." David says of God in verse 68, "*Thou art good, and doest good.*" Verse 71, "*It is good for me that I have been afflicted that I might learn thy statutes.*" David does not say that it is good for me that I have been in prosperity but that I have been afflicted. "*Thou hast dealt well with thy servant, O LORD, according unto thy word.*" God deals well with his people in every way at all times, even in giving us sore affliction.

It is according to God's word, God's promise. God promises that he will only do his people good. Hear Christ speak to God the Father when we read verse 65, "*Thou hast dealt well with thy servant, O LORD, according unto thy word.*" The Lord Jesus suffered the worst affliction anyone ever suffered. "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered" (Heb 5: 8). He took our sin and was judged by God in place of his people. But it was the Father's promise to his Son that the Father would deal well with him. Hear the Lord Jesus say to the Father "*Thou hast dealt well with thy servant, O LORD, according unto thy word.*"

Beholding the faithfulness of God the Father dealing well with our Substitute, we are assured God will deal well with each sinner Christ has redeemed by his precious blood. God the Father promises his people that his Son will deal well with us. The LORD God gave his Son to be Head over his house. Our great Shepherd promises he will deal well with us.

Isaiah 52: 12: For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight: for the LORD will go before you; and the God of Israel *will be* your reward. 13 : Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. 14: As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men: 15: So shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for *that* which had not been told them shall they see; and *that* which they had not heard shall they consider.

Child of God when it seems worst, when God sends affliction in the form of sickness or loss of loved ones, loss of friends or poverty, God sanctifies it to the heart of his child and brings us to know, "*Thou hast dealt well with thy servant, O LORD, according to thy word.*" God promises that it shall be well with the righteous (Is 3: 10). Not with those who think they are righteous in themselves. But it shall be well with those who know Christ is our only Righteousness. The affliction is to keep us knowing Christ is our Righteousness. Therein, God deals well with us.

JUDGMENT TO BEHOLD OUR SIN AND NEED

Psalm 119: 67: Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word. 68: Thou *art* good, and doest good; teach me thy statutes.

God dealt well with David by making David know his own sin. The LORD dealt well with David by turning him to Christ, to keep God's word through faith in the Lord Jesus. God dealt well with David by bringing David to ask God to teach him more. In other words, God made David see his own sin and need of Christ to continually preserve him.

God's afflicting hand, blessed of God in the new man, makes the godly grow wiser. Only those already given good judgment come to Christ who is Wisdom asking him to teach us good judgement and knowledge. David comes to Christ asking, "*Teach me your statutes Lord.*"

One of the ways God teaches us his statutes is by sending affliction. Prosperity and ease make us rust. We become complacent, less guarded, less diligent in obeying and believing God. So God sends the fire of affliction to purge the dross "that we might be partakers of his holiness" (Heb. 12:10). Our Lord sits as a refiner, not to destroy us, but to bring forth the gold of his making.

Through affliction, God reveals personally to his child our own sins, our own pride, our own worldliness, our own disobedience to the God of all grace against whom we have sinned. By it, God teaches us good judgment and knowledge. He makes us judge ourselves the sinner. After David committed adultery with Batsheba and killed her husband, God brought David to cry out for mercy to God alone, confessing, "against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and clear when thou judgest" (Ps 51: 4) David not only confessed his deeds were evil, he confessed to God that his entire sin-nature was iniquity from his mother's womb. But with this affliction, God also increases his child in good judgment and knowledge that God judged our old man in his Son on the cross. Therefore, God is just and right to show us mercy for the sake of his dear Son. Thus he turns us into Christ the Way to trust him as he commands. So we glorify God because in great mercy and unchanging love to our souls, God did well by sending the affliction to turn us back to Christ for grace and mercy. God keeps us walking by faith in Christ Jesus. "We are chastened of the Lord that we should not be condemned with the world" (1 Cor. 11:32).

Thomas Watson said, "The sharp frosts of affliction bring on the spring flowers of grace."

God grows his child in faith and patience to wait on the Lord. He makes us humble ourselves under God's mighty hand. Unregenerate men blaspheme God's name when trouble comes. (Rev. 16:9) They take matters into their own hands to save themselves and condemn others. God's child may do so when the surprise of the trial first comes. But in due time God makes his child bear the rod patiently. When God killed his two sons, "Aaron held his peace." (Lev. 10:3). After God took Job's children and possessions, God made Job know, "the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord...Though he slay me, yet will I trust him." (Job 1: 21; 13: 20). When God declared his afflicting purpose to Eli, Eli said, "It is the Lord let him do what seemeth him good" (1 Sam 3: 18). Instead of murmuring, David was brought to glorify God for the affliction, "*Thou hast dealt well with thy servant, O LORD, according to thy Word.*" God has dealt well by the affliction when God makes us humble ourselves under his mighty hand. Conformity to Christ is not merely suffering affliction, it is trusting God's grace and strength, trusting Christ Jesus as we patiently bear it. It is giving God the glory, *as you suffer*. The Apostle says, "Behold we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy" (Ja 5: 11).

We would not know of the patience of Job, if God had not given him great affliction. But God sustains his child in the affliction so that God's grace is manifest to be the only way we stand. He maintains faith, hope, patience, meekness, and resignation to God's will in his child. He makes us experience the power of God's grace in reality. When God uses affliction like a hedge to shut up our way to Christ alone then he has dealt well with our souls.

JUDGMENT TO TRUST GOD ALONE

Psalm 119: 69: The proud have forged a lie against me: *but* I will keep thy precepts with *my* whole heart. 70: Their heart is as fat as grease; *but* I delight in thy law.

Through affliction, God gives us judgment and knowledge to believe God alone and to trust his Son alone. He gives us judgment to look to no other to save but God. God teaches us to cease from man--to cease looking to our own selves and to cease looking to others. He makes us look to Christ alone to save. By sending affliction, God made it so the only thing David could do was trust God.

What are these lies David said that the proud had forged against him? David had just confessed that he strayed from obeying the Lord? David confessed to God he had sinned and gone astray? Listen to David in Psalm 38:

Psalm 38: 17: For I *am* ready to halt, and my sorrow *is* continually before me. 18: For I will declare mine iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin. 19: But mine enemies *are* lively, *and* they are strong: and they that hate me wrongfully are multiplied. 20: They also that render evil for good are mine adversaries; because I follow *the thing that good is*.

David had sinned. God afflicted him. The Spirit turned David to confess his sin to God. He turned David's feet to God's testimonies to keep his word and trust the Lord alone. Yet, God's chastening was not enough to these men. They forged lies against David. Some accused David of having never believed the Lord. They imagined deceits against him all the day long. But God made David know that David could not save himself from these men. The good judgment God teaches in that situation is this, David was silent toward them while he cried to the LORD to save him.

Psalm 38: 21: Forsake me not, O LORD: O my God, be not far from me. 22: Make haste to help me, O Lord my salvation.

God made David cease from man: himself and all others. But God gave David the good judgment and knowledge to believe God's word and trust the Lord alone to save. Christ promises to each elect who Christ redeemed, "*I will be with him in trouble!*" (Ps 91:15). So the Spirit of God sustains faith in his child in the fire. By these afflictions, God weans us from this world. He crucifies us unto the world and the world to us so that we know our home is not on this side of the Jordan but in heavenly Canaan. God gives thorns and briars in this place so we cannot find rest. God says to us "surely this is not your rest" (Mic 2: 10). By afflictions, God makes us know more how shipwrecked the body of this death is so that we groan to be delivered by Christ Jesus, the Captain of our warfare.

The good judgment and knowledge is that God keeps us from hewing out broken cisterns that can hold no water and keeps us coming to the Fountain of living Waters as he commands (Jer 2: 13). He keeps raising our affection to Christ at God's right hand where we behold our life, from whom we find grace and mercy and strength to carry on as he commands. So, as God commands,

Romans 5: 3: [by Christ] we have access by faith into this grace where we stand, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. 4: And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: 5: And hope maketh not ashamed because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

Believers really do glory in trials. It is because we know that by the affliction God makes us trust Christ more. He makes us more cautious not to trust in our own strength nor in any man's. He makes us humble under God's mighty hand. Through affliction, God makes us a little less quick to give advice to others in their problems, less boastful of what we have done or would do if we were in their place, and less critical of others who fail. He makes us speak to our fallen brethren to restore them; we speak less about ourselves, less about their sins and more about the grace of our Lord Jesus who has put away the sin of his people and who never fails make his redeemed stand.

JUDGMENT TO VALUE THE WORD OF GOD ABOVE ALL

Psalm 119: 71: *It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.* 72: *The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver.*

We praise God for afflictions because through afflictions, God makes us value our Redeemer and his everlasting covenant word more than anything in this world. David had *thousands of gold and silver*. So this is not a poor man envious of the rich. But through affliction, God taught David that Christ, in whom every promise is yes and amen, is better than thousands of gold and silver. "For all the promises of God in him *are* yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us" (2 Cor 1: 20).

Horatio Spafford learned this. He believed God. God gave him thousands of earthly gold and silver. Brother Spafford became a prominent Chicago lawyer. He owned properties throughout the city. The Lord gave him a beautiful wife, four daughters and a son. Then God sent him affliction. First, their son died. Then the Great Chicago Fire destroyed most of his real estate investments. He decided to take his family on a vacation to Europe. So he sent his wife and children ahead. He planned to join them after finishing some business. Then he got news the ship had sank. His wife sent a telegram which had only these two words, "*Saved alone.*" All four daughters had drowned. On the way to meet his wife, when he got to the place where the ship had sank, the captain told him it was the spot. The Lord gave him these words:

When peace like a river attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea billows roll
Whatever my lot,
thou hast taught me to say
It is well, it is well, with my soul

Though Satan should buffet,
though trials should come,
Let this blest assurance control,
That Christ has regarded my helpless estate,
And hath shed His own blood for my soul

My sin, oh, the bliss of this glorious thought
My sin, not in part but the whole,
Is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more,
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, o my soul

It is well, it is well with my soul

In those words, brother Spafford wrote what David declared in verse 65. If God works this good judgment and knowledge in his child through afflictions then we will surely say, "*Thou hast dealt well with thy servant, O LORD, according unto thy word.*"

Amen!