

PS 119 & AFFLICTION

I. BRIEF REVIEW OF PS 119 "LOVING THE BIBLE"

A. vs 97 sets the theme

1. The psalmist's chief emphasis is on loving God's Law

B. He gives five reasons for LOVING God's Law

1. Reason # 1: It gives true wisdom (vvs 98-100)

- a. He names three groups that the Word has made him wiser than
 - 1). Enemies
 - 2). Teachers & elders

2. Reason # 2: Holds the believer to the path of righteousness 119.101

3. Reason # 3: **God** is believer's teacher through the Word 119.102

4. Reason # 4: The Word is sweeter than honeycomb 119.103

- a. Psalmist's choice of Hebrew words indicate he is likely thinking of the promises or sayings of God

5. Reason # 5: Hating every wrong path 119.104

- a. We are to learn to love the good, but also to hate evil

C. Before this description, he gave reasons for deciding value of the word

1. Ps 119.65-67

You have dealt well with Your servant,
O LORD, according to Your word.
Teach me good adiscernment and knowledge,
For I believe in Your commandments.
Before I was afflicted I went astray,
But now I keep Your word.

2. God gave him affliction to realize what he had lost in adhering to the commands, statutes, and precepts of God's Word

3. We're going to study what and why affliction is a bit deeper, and then return to our psalmist's conclusion
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II. WHAT IS AFFLICTION ?

A. Definition

1. "Anything causing pain or distress; suffering; calamity."

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Elwell, W. A., & Beitzel, B. J. (1988). Affliction. In Baker encyclopedia of the Bible (Vol. 1, p. 34). Baker Book House.

2. "The word 'affliction' is a word that brings to mind physical and mental suffering. Someone who is afflicted is disturbed or possibly frightened because of danger, pain, or some kind of distress".

Carpenter, E. E., & Comfort, P. W. (2000). In Holman treasury of key Bible words

B. Difference among sources of affliction

1. Origin of affliction

- a. # 1: Genesis curse from original sin

Gn 3:16-17

To the woman He said,

"I will greatly multiply

Your pain in childbirth,

In pain you will bring forth children;

Yet your desire will be for your husband,

And he will rule over you."

Then to Adam He said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat from it';

Cursed is the ground because of you;

In toil you will eat of it

All the days of your life.

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Rom 8:18-21

- 1). This provided the impact of events/conditions in a sin-afflicted world to the end of time

- b. # 2: The cosmic conflict between Satan and Jesus Christ cited

- c. World system affliction is common to every human in every time

Job 5.7

For man is born for trouble,

As sparks fly upward.

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2. Further God disciplines believers through trials/afflictions in at least two ways

- a. God allows affliction for a purpose, but not sending it
 - b. God deliberately sends affliction for a reason & outcome
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C. Scripture gives several sources & types of affliction

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1. From OT

a. National affliction, resulting from the oppression of a political entity

Neh 9.9

You saw the affliction of our fathers in Egypt,
And heard their cry by the Red Sea.

b. Social affliction, resulting from a perversion of the law

Isa 3.14-15

The LORD enters into judgment with the elders and princes of His people,

“It is you who have devoured the vineyard;
The plunder of the poor is in your houses.
What do you mean by crushing My people
And grinding the face of the poor?”
Declares the Lord GOD of hosts.

c. Moral affliction, as God’s retribution for sin

Job 4.7-9

“Remember now, who ever perished being innocent?
Or where were the upright destroyed?

“According to what I have seen, those who plow iniquity
And those who sow trouble harvest it.

“By the breath of God they perish,
And by the blast of His anger they come to an end

d. Natural affliction

Gen 16.11

The angel of the LORD said to her further,

“Behold, you are with child,

And you will bear a son;

And you shall call his name Ishmael,

Because the LORD has given heed to your affliction.

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e. Spiritual affliction

1 Sam 16.14

Now the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and an
evil spirit from the LORD terrorized him

2. From NT

a. God uses it to induce humility

2 Cor 12.7

Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me — to keep me from exalting myself!

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b. God uses it to promote holiness

1 Pet 1.6-7

In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

1 Pet 4.1-2

Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose, because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, so as to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men, but for the will of God.

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c. God uses it to promote endurance for end times / end of life

Jam 1.3-4

knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing

d. God uses it to build believer's experience for the instruction of others

2 Cor 1.3-4

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God

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e. It comes from natural causes

Jam 1.27

Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

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f. Persecution because of faithfulness to Christ

2 Cor 6.4-5

but in everything commending ourselves as servants of God, in much endurance, in afflictions, in hardships, in distresses, in beatings, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in sleeplessness, in hunger

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g. God use it to build discipline for the purpose of Christian maturity

Heb 12.6

FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES,
AND HE SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES

h. Comes as pain resulting from personal sin

Gal 6.7

Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap

i. Occurs to give glory to God

1 Pet 4.14

If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you

D. Believers guaranteed affliction

1. It is common to every human in every time

Job 5.7

For man is born for trouble,
As sparks fly upward.

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2. Jesus indicated trials and sorrows for his followers

Jn 16:33

"These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world."

3. Paul taught that entrance to the kingdom of God comes with many tribulations

Acts 14:22b

"Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God."

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4. Afflictions must not shake a Christian's faith

1 Thess 3:2-3)

we sent Timothy, our brother and God's fellow worker in the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you as to your faith, so that no one would be disturbed by these afflictions; for you yourselves know that we have been destined for this

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5. Afflictions a finishing up of the remainder of Christ's suffering
for his body, the church

Col 1:24

Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the church, in filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions.

Phil 1.29

For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake,

- a. Christ's suffering and death was sufficient to purchase salvation
 - b. Paul indicates that it is the believer's privilege to suffer for Him
 - c. And Christ does suffer when a believer suffers
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