

231. What are God's Intentions when He Suffers Us to Endure Evil?

Now, no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Heb. 12, 11.

The first intention of God when He suffers His children to endure afflictions is to make them humble, to keep them from pride, to make them aware of the fact that they are but damnable sinners in the sight of their God, so that they will remain in the narrow way, which leads to eternal life, and not exalt themselves and come to eternal ruin. The apostle therefore says: "When we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord that we should not be condemned with the world." This is the first intention of God when He suffers us to endure afflictions.

Another purpose is that we should not seek our own glory in what we have done for Christ, but glorify God alone and cling to His grace. Our afflictions should disclose to us that we are but frail creatures, that we are as nothing before God and that He is everything. These afflictions, then, are not to be looked upon as evidences of divine anger. How should God be angry with His dear children, who believe in His dear Son? Neither does God afflict us to make us suffer for our sins. We have no sins to suffer for. Our sins are all forgiven. Jesus did all the suffering for us when He died on the cross for our transgressions. No; God sends us trials and tribulations from pure fatherly love, to keep us from losing our faith. It would be impossible for us to keep the faith in this world of temptations if God would not come to our assistance. *The days of affliction must prove and improve our faith.* When there is nothing in sight to support us, we must rely on the promise of our God that He will not forsake us. When there is no help, then we must look to the Lord alone for help. When Death stretches out his hand, then you must confidently lean upon Christ. Such are God's ways with His children when he desires to strengthen their faith. He suffers them to endure afflictions. "We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God."

Prayer.

O Lord, almighty God and heavenly Father, protect me and mine from a sudden evil death, from disaster brought on by fire or water, from pestilence and all manner of ills. I commend myself, my body, my soul, and all I have to Thy fatherly protection; Thy holy angel be with me that I need fear no ill. When I am comfortless and my heart is filled with nothing but anxiety, then let me flee to Thee, O Lord, and seek comfort for my despairing heart in Thy life-giving Word. After I have fought the good fight of faith and finished my course, I shall understand Thy wonderful ways which now are dark to me; and then I will praise Thee for guiding me as Thou didst. Amen.

I cannot read His purpose
Nor solve each mystery;
But all He sends is kindness,
And that does comfort me.

This devotion is one of 318 taken from *Daily Bread* by F. E. Pasche, published by CPH in 1926, but now in the public domain. They have been copied and reformatted by Rev. Bruce G. Ley and made available for distribution by pastors and missionaries. You may contact Rev. Ley at: pastorley@leychalet.com.

You are invited to go to www.scholia.net for the other devotions from *Daily Bread*.