

The Blessedness of Divine Discipline and Teaching

Ponder: After discipline and instruction comes rest.

Scripture: “Blessed is the man whom You instruct, O Lord, and teach out of Your law, that You may give him rest from the days of adversity” (Psalm 94:12-13a, NKJV).

“Here, take this medicine. I know it tastes awful, but take it anyway. You need it. It’s good for you. You’ll feel better later.”

Did you think your parents hated you when they made you take your medicine? But now you know better. They loved you and wanted you to be well again.

Our Heavenly Father also loves us. He disciplines us and teaches us from His word, not because He gets some perverse, sadistic pleasure from seeing us suffer, but because He wants us to be better than we are, to be more like Jesus.

The inspired writer of Psalm 94 pleaded with God to punish the wicked who were abusing His people. Those persecuting God’s heritage foolishly thought the Lord didn’t see or care (v. 7). But of course God saw! “He who formed the eye, shall He not see?” (v. 9). And certainly He cared, yet He allowed His people to experience abuse as a discipline. It was for their benefit, and the psalmist understood it that way. The word “instruct” in v. 12 carries the flavor of discipline or even chastening, and is so translated in other versions.

When God allows painful trials to come upon you, it isn’t necessarily because you did something wrong. Adversity always gives you an opportunity for self-examination to recognize sin and repent of it. But it simply may be that, as with Job, God is refining you to make you even better. Hebrews 12:6 reassures us that “whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives.”

Fortunately, affliction isn’t the only way the Lord teaches us; He also uses His word (Psalm 94:12b). For the psalmist, that was the Law of Moses. We certainly learn from the Law, but also from the New Covenant under which we live.

Then, when He sees best, the Lord gives “rest from the days of adversity” (v. 13a). We appreciate those days more after enduring fiery trials. We may not understand fully why God allows adversity, but we can know assuredly that His purpose is to improve our relationship with Him.

Song: “In The Hour Of Trial”

Prayer: Merciful Father, we thank You for loving us enough to chasten us. Strengthen us to endure, and mold us into the people You want us to be. Help us to be submissive and not lose heart as we wait for the rest You have promised. In Jesus’ name, Amen.