

Trials: A Biblical Perspective (Notes)

“A man is not only unknown to others, but to himself, that hath never met with such difficulties as require faith, and Christian fortitude, and patience to surmount them. How shall a man know whether his meekness and calmness of spirit be real or not, while meets with no provocation, nothing that contradicts or crosses him ... whereas standing water which is clear at top while it is untouched, yet if it have mud at the bottom, stir it a little, and it rises presently” (Leighton, 1 Peter, 42).

Hope is rewarded with a fresh awareness of the incomprehensible love of God. God’s Holy Spirit ... is at work helping us grasp the reality of what it means to be encircled by the love of God [Mounce, Romans, 135]

“Often our trials act as a thorn hedge to keep us in the good pasture, but our prosperity is a gap through which we go astray. If any of us remember a time in which we had no trouble, we also probably recollect that then grace was low, and temptation was strong.

It may be that some believer cries, ‘O that it were with me as int eh one summer days before I was afflicted.’ Such a sigh is most unwise, and arises from a carnal love of ease: the spiritual man who prizes growth in grace will bless God that those dangerous days are over, and that if the weather be more stormy it is also more healthy” (Spurgeon, Treasury, 2:271).

“Though the children of God are truly ... the children of wisdom, yet, being renewed only in part, they are not altogether free from those follies that call for this rod to beat them out, and sometimes have such a bundle of follies as require a bundle for rods to be spent upon it—many and manifold afflictions” (Leighton, 1 Peter, 44).

“He rises above all that is subject to change, casts his anchor within the vail. That in which he rejoiceth is still matter of joy unmovable and unalterable; although this is the same, or rather in the Psalmist’s words, Though the earth were removed, and the greatest mountains cast into the sea, yet will not we fear.

Psalm. xlvii. 2. When we shall receive that rich, and pure, and abiding inheritance, that salvation which shall be revealed in the last time, and when time itself shall cease to be, then there shall be no more reckoning of our joys by days and hours, but they shall run parallel with eternity.

Then all our love, that is now scattered and parceled out upon the vanities amongst which we are here, shall be united and gathered into one, and fixed upon God, and the soul filled with the delight of his presence” (Legihnton, 45).