

Advancing Good Through Adversity – Psalm 119:65-88

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We are continuing to learn how to delight in God's Word as we examine Psalm 119. In this lesson, we will briefly look at the next three stanzas, headed with Hebrew letters *TETH*, *YODH*, and *KAPH*. Each stanza reflects on a different way God advances good through adversity. The Bible promises we will have problems, but God also promises not to leave us without the resource we need to overcome them. In addition, God uses His sovereign hand to advance His good and perfect will through those adversities.

The first way God advances good through adversity is by...

Character in Us (119:65-72)

The psalmist sets the tone for the coming section by writing: *You have dealt well with your servant, O Lord, according to your word* (119:65). None of the psalmist's painful adversity has contradicted God's promises. Quite the opposite, the adversity has advanced his faith and understanding of God's Word.

In verse 66, he goes on to ask God to teach him more and more. Then, he tells us why in verse 67: *Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep your word*. This is a prayer of testimony and confession by the writer. Sometimes God uses affliction to get us back on course when we stray from His Word.

Like the prophet Jonah in the Old Testament, we sometimes get off course and find ourselves in a storm.

If we had simply obeyed God's Word, we would have avoided the problem. When we disobey, God disciplines us because He is our loving Father. What happens to Jonah after his afflictions in the sea (Jonah 3:1a)?

God does not write off His prophet. He uses the affliction to train Jonah's heart for obedience. God is good all the time, even in our adversity. His desire is that none should perish and the saved would walk in obedience.

In verse 69, the psalmist confesses a particularly painful type of affliction: *The insolent smear me with lies, but with my whole heart I keep your precepts*. Few things injure a person more than being falsely accused of doing wrong. An *insolent* person spreading hurtful lies can smear someone's good reputation that has taken years to build. In Proverbs 6:16-19, we find a list of seven things that are an abomination to God. What is the one listed in Proverbs 6:19a?

As painful as the affliction of his life have been, the psalmist concludes in verse 71: *It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn your statutes*.

This same eternal truth is expressed in Romans 5:3-5 by the apostle Paul, who suffered afflictions of many kinds during his ministry. He reasons that we should rejoice in

our sufferings because it sparks a godly process called "sanctification." Read those verses and fill in the blanks below:

Suffering produces _____;

Endurance produces _____;

Character produces _____; and

Hope in God's love will not disappoint!



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