

# My Good Affliction

*It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes. Psalms 119:71*

I complain without a cause, seeing it is good for me to be afflicted. Whatever be food to the soul, surely affliction is a good medicine. There is a necessity for affliction, to preserve the health of the soul. Can a much esteemed flower think that it is unkindly dealt with, because the weeds that twisted with its roots are plucked away with force, such force that the flower seems to be pulled along? Just so am I displeased at severe afflictions, sent to root out some rampant lusts, or deep rooted earthly affections, when afflictions less severe would prove ineffectual for such a noble end. Corruption is never totally removed – it is only subdued in part. The more I am afflicted – the more it is subdued.

While here below; the 'intoxicating juice of carnal pleasure' breeds diseases; so that the 'bitter medicine of affliction' is absolutely necessary to dispel those infections which threaten damage to the soul. Since it is not my happiness to be free from sin below; it is my happiness that I am not without afflictions – which are a noble antidote against sin. I have reason to bewail, bitterly to bewail, the corruption of my nature; but not the correction of my corruption. Were I punished as I deserve; instead of being washed with the soap of affliction; I would be swept away with the broom of destruction. What condemned criminal would rage at the loss of a finger, who deserved to have lost his head? So; why should I repine at a little ill; who deserves a great deal worse?

Indeed, at all times, and in every case, I should not look to the hand of God – but into his heart; not barely look upon the providence with fear; but into the promise with faith; where, be the providence adverse or prosperous, to my comfort I am told that all things work together for good to God's called and chosen ones. If my fluctuating bosom is composed amidst all my sorrows, by a firm belief in the promise – that happy moment I find the promise performed to me; and aver, with the royal sufferer, "It has been good for me that I have been afflicted."

-James Meikle