

# **TITLE : IN THE MIDST**

## **Psalm 119: 65- 72**

*65 You have dealt well with Your servant,O Lord, according to Your word.*

*66 Teach me good judgment and knowledge,for I believe Your commandments.*

*67 Before I was afflicted I went astray,But now I keep Your word.*

*68 You are good, and do good;Teach me Your statutes.*

*69 The proud have forged a lie against me,But I will keep Your precepts with my whole heart.*

*70 Their heart is [b]as fat as grease, but I delight in Your law.*

*71 It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I may learn Your statutes.*

*72 The law of Your mouth is better to me than thousands of coins of gold and silver.*

Psalm 119 is the longest chapter in the Bible, and it is an acrostic. In the Hebrew Bible, each of the 8 verses of each section begin with that same Hebrew letter.

Verses 65-72 are the “Teth” section of Psalm 119, so each of the 8 verses in this section begin with the Hebrew letter Teth, (like their letter “T”).

But another significant fact to note, is that almost every verse in this section begins, not only with the same Hebrew letter “Teth,” but also with the same Hebrew WORD: “Tob”, which means “good”:

E.g.

— **v65** in English reads: “You have dealt well with Your servant” — but in Hebrew the verse begins with the word “Good” — (Tob) — “GOOD You have dealt with Your servant ...”

- **v66** “GOOD discernment teach me ...”
- **v68** in Hebrew is literally: “GOOD You (are) and do ...”
- **v71** is literally “GOOD for me that I was afflicted ...”
- **v72** reads: “GOOD to me the Law of Your mouth ...”

Incredible emphasis on the word “GOOD” in these verses:

- GOOD You have dealt with Your servant
- GOOD discernment teach me
- GOOD You are and do
- GOOD for me that I was afflicted
- GOOD to me the Law of Your mouth

This is important for several reasons:

— First of all, in Hebrew they often place a word first in a sentence to emphasize it.

— And secondly, in Hebrew, repetition is also used for emphasis. How strong of a statement is this, then, when FIVE TIMES here in Psalm 119 it opens with those words: GOOD, GOOD, GOOD, GOOD, GOOD!! This is an incredibly strong emphasis on the GOOD that comes in the times of affliction.

1. The Good God

2. Goodness In the Midst of Affliction

3. The Afflicted One in the Midst

## **I. THE GOOD GOD**

*“You are good and do good.”* In Hebrew, that is literally, “GOOD You are and do.” It is saying, God is “GOOD.” It is emphasizing His goodness — even in that difficult time.

**Psalm 100:5** says, *“for the Lord is good.”* This is a basic truth about God which we need to make sure that we don’t take for granted, and that we always remember, especially in our times of trial.

God is not only all-powerful and all-knowing, and all-present, but part of His basic essential nature is that He is also GOOD!

No matter what it may seem like in our trials, we have to hold on to our faith in the goodness of God.

## II. GOODNESS IN THE MIDST OF AFFLICTION

One of the few verses in this section that does NOT begin with the Hebrew word “tob” or “good”, is v. 67. It says: *“Before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now I keep your word.”* He

says, even in this affliction which we are going through, God is doing something good. He has worked some good purposes in your life.

Not only IS He good, but He also DOES good things through our times of affliction.

**Affliction** means, that which causes pain and suffering through physical infirmity and/or mental distress. Individuals and nations can be afflicted, and that affliction is often attributed to the Lord and His punishment.

**Nations can experience affliction for many reasons.**

- God often afflicted whole nations for their disobedience and wickedness. E.g plagues in Egypt.
- God brought affliction upon the nations was to purge the earth of the contamination of their wickedness.

- To teach Israel the grave necessity of following the Lord.

**Individuals can be afflicted for a number of reasons:**

- 1. Affliction can be a direct consequence of sin.** *For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption,* **Gal. 6: 8a**
- 2. Affliction can be a judgment from God.** *According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions I have dealt with them, and hidden My face from them.” ’* **Ezekiel 39: 24**
- 3. Affliction is part of living in a fallen world.** *In the world you will have tribulation;* **John 16: 33**
- 4. Affliction can be the result of a direct attack from Satan.** *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks*

*about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. **1 Peter 5: 8***

**5. Affliction can occur for God's divine purposes.** *So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord, and struck Job with painful boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. **Job 2: 7***

**We have people in the Bible who have been afflicted.**

**- The Woman with an alabaster box.**

***Matthew 26: 6- 13*** *While Jesus was in Bethany in the home of Simon the Leper, a woman came to him with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, which she poured on his head as he was reclining at the table. When the disciples saw this, they were indignant. "Why this waste?" they asked. "This perfume could have been sold at a high price and the money*



*given to the poor." Aware of this, Jesus said to them, "Why are you bothering this woman? She has done a beautiful thing to me. The poor you will always have with you, but you will not always have me.*

The alabaster represents **sin** but the woman received forgiveness. Right at the very moment she was cleansed from the stain of sin and received praise and commendation from Jesus. Jesus said, *"When she poured this perfume on my body, she did it to prepare me for burial. Truly I tell you, wherever this gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her."*

### **- The Widow of Nain**

**Luke 7: 11- 15** *"Soon afterwards Jesus went to a town named Nain, accompanied by His disciples and a large crowd. And when He*

*arrived at the gate of the town, a funeral procession was coming out. A young man had died, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the town was with her. And when the Lord saw her, His heart was filled with pity for her, and He said to her, "Do not weep". Then He walked over and touched the casket, while the pallbearers stood still. Jesus said to the dead man, "Young man, I say to thee, arise!" And he who was dead, sat up and began to talk, and Jesus gave him back to his mother."*

The widow was in the midst of her deepest grief over the loss of her only son. But before the grave could swallow the boy, Jesus was in the midst and He raised the boy to life.

**- The Woman with an issue of blood**

**Matthew 5: 25- 29***“And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse. When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, because she thought, “If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed.” Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering.”*

Because of the continual bleeding, the woman would have been continually regarded in Jewish law as a ‘niddah’ or menstruating woman, and so ceremonially unclean. In order to be regarded as clean, the flow of blood would need to stop for at least 7 days. Because of the constant bleeding, this woman lived in a continual state of uncleanness which would

have brought upon her **social and religious isolation**.

All these women were in the midst of their affliction and God came in their midst. We may be in the midst of our deepest sorrow and pain but when God is in the midst we will experience forgiveness, cleansing, praise, life and healing.

All affliction is ultimately traceable to our tragic fall in Adam and has become part of living in this world. And we know the grievousness of it. We will suffer heartaches, injuries, disappointments, lack, rejection, sicknesses and death of our dear ones. We must remember Paul's encouragement in **2 Corinthians 4: 16- 17** – *“Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles*

*are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.”*

How is not losing heart possible in the midst of affliction?

### **III. THE AFFLICTED ONE IN THE MIDST**

**Consider the afflictions of Jesus.**

**Isaiah 53: 4- 5** *“Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.”*

Think much on these things: If Jesus suffered so much on behalf of His people, shouldn't we be able to endure in His strength the daily afflictions we must bear? What are our

afflictions compared to His? Besides, was He not the Sufferer par excellence while wholly innocent, and are we not, at best, a sufferer in His footsteps while wholly guilty?

Moreover, is there one affliction that we must endure that He has not already endured? Is He not the Breaker to go before His flock both in opening all our paths (**Micah 2:13**) and in being tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin (**Heb. 4:15**)? All paths, all points. Jesus not only knows our affliction, He has identified himself with it. He has borne it. And He will sanctify it. *"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it"*(**1 Cor. 10:13**).

**Consider the power of Christ.**

Being infinite God-man, Jesus received power on earth to bear infinite sufferings on your behalf. And through the merit of these sufferings, He now receives royal power in heaven from His Father to rule and strengthen you in your sufferings **(Matt. 28:18)**. Translated practically relative to affliction, His heaven-earth power reads like this: If He desires to weigh you down with affliction--yes, heavy, seemingly staggering affliction--do not be alarmed, but look to Him for strength.

### **Consider the presence of Christ.**

He is at no time absent from you, even when your faith lacks active exercise to grasp Him. Even in your thickest hours of Egyptian darkness, He is close beside you.

In all your dark afflictions, your High Priest retains you in His high-priestly eye, preserves

you in His high-priestly heart, bears you on His high-priestly shoulders, removes you not from the engravings on His high-priestly hands, and never ceases to remember you in His high-priestly intercessions. *"He ever liveth to make intercession for them"*

**(Heb. 7:25).**

What tender love! You are never forgotten by Jesus Christ, despite your negligence toward Him. He ever remains a friend that sticks *"closer than a brother"* **(Prov. 18:24)**, even when you cannot see or feel it. Even then He is whispering to you in midnight seasons, *"What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this."*

**(John 13:7).**

Take heart. Jesus who never failed you in yesterday's afflictions is still present to give



you today's strength **(Matt. 6:34)**. Just as waves are cut down to melodious whimpers at shore's reality, so He will break down your waves of tomorrow's impossibilities as they break in on the beachheads of your life. Wait on your ever-present Savior. He will not let you down. *He is the same yesterday, today, and forever* **(Heb. 13:8)**.

### **Consider the end of Christ.**

Highly exalted, there is no name like His. At His name, every knee shall bow **(Phil. 2:10)**. The end of all His affliction was eternal glory.

Eternal glory--not only for Himself, but also for you. He returned to His Father differently than He came. He returned with His blood-bought bride. His church, figuratively speaking, ascended into glory with Him, accepted by the Father in the Beloved **(Eph. 1:6)**.

Your trials in this life are but for "ten days." Your life-to-come glory is forever. The "ten days" here are preparation time for glory to come. Affliction elevates your soul to heaven **(Heb. 11:10)**; it paves your way for glory: *"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory"* **(2 Cor. 4:17)**.

## CONCLUSION:

In the face of trials and affliction, His face is not turned away **(Psalm 121:4)** *"indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep."*; when gripped with fear, you are still in the palm of His hands **(John 10:28)** *"I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand."*; when experiencing loss, you have all things in Him **(Romans 11:36)** *"For from him and through him and for him are all things. To him be the glory*

*forever! Amen..*” When you are in the midst of trial and doubt creeps in and joy is fleeting, which we all experience at times, look back at God's faithfulness through the years and even generations. Looking back at His faithfulness grants peace in the present and fixes hope for the future. It is firm ground on which to stand with joy even when the waters are raging around.

And as we look back, we need look no further than the cross of our Savior. The cross clearly shows us that God is for us and can turn the worst of afflictions for good. Then our mind's eye must run to the resurrection for it boldly proclaims that in the end He has all victory and everything will be set right. Therefore, we can rejoice in this present and momentary slight affliction.