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## Affliction Pt 1 God afflicts the sinner & the righteous

This is our first study on the word “afflict” or “affliction” in the scriptures. There are 172 occurrences of the word. And in this study we establish (1) the Lord chose Israel in the furnace of affliction, (2) the Lord afflicted Israel because of their sin, and (3) many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all.

Our three points established from the scriptures –

### 1. The Lord chose Israel in the furnace of affliction.

“Hear ye this, O house of Jacob, which are called by the name of Israel, and are come forth out of the waters of Judah...Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction” (Isa.48: 1 & 10).

The Lord saw the affliction of his people Israel when they were in Egypt  
“And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters...” (Ex.3: 7).

### 2. The Lord afflicted Israel because of their sin

“When the heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; yet if they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, when thou dost afflict them” (2 Chr.6: 26).

### 3. Many are the afflictions of the righteous but the Lord sees and delivers him out of them all.

“Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all” (Ps.34:19).

#### Illustration

I have had a lost man accuse me of becoming a Christian only because I came to a point in my life where I could not carry on by myself – I needed God. Whereas if my life was “normal” I would not need God. And that has been the case of those in Israel who only seek the Lord in times of trouble, then when they have plenty they turn away. And certainly for Israel – God chose them in the furnace of affliction– they knew that the Lord, He was God!

Question to think about.

What is the purpose of affliction?

Answer from the scriptures

Affliction –

i) is part of God’s chastisement when we sin, the more grievous the iniquity, the more grievous His affliction. For Manasseh – “Wherefore the Lord brought upon them the captains of the host of the king of Assyria, which took Manasseh among the thorns, and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon. And when he was in affliction“ he humbled himself and “Then Manasseh knew that the Lord he was God” (2 Chr.33:11)

ii) teaches us – we learn His statutes – Ps.119:71 “It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes”.

iii) we are brought low through oppression, affliction and sorrow”–Ps.107:39

iii) we trust in the Lord – Zeph.3:12 “I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord”.

Let us be as David and make His “law...my delights...in mine affliction” (Ps.119: 92).

## Meaning of affliction according the scriptures -

Affliction is when the sword, judgment, pestilence or famine comes  
"If, when evil cometh upon us, [as] the sword, judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we stand before this house, and in thy presence, (for thy name [is] in this house,) and cry unto thee in our affliction, then thou wilt hear and help" (2 Chr.20: 9).

Afflictions are a great trial

"How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality" (2 Cor.8: 2).

When we make an oath we afflict our soul – because we bind our soul

"Every vow, and every binding oath to afflict the soul, her husband may establish it, or her husband may make it void" (Num.30: 13).

In affliction there is sorrow.

"Why criest thou for thine affliction? thy sorrow is incurable for the multitude of thine iniquity: because thy sins were increased, I have done these things unto thee" (Jer. 30: 15).

When we are afflicted there is a burden that needs to be carried – as a mother and father does their child

"And Moses said unto the Lord, Wherefore hast thou afflicted thy servant? and wherefore have I not found favour in thy sight, that thou layest the burden of all this people upon me? Have I conceived all this people? have I begotten them, that thou shouldest say unto me, Carry them in thy bosom, as a nursing father beareth the sucking child, unto the land which thou swarest unto their fathers?" (Num.11: 11 & 12).

The afflicted are overwhelmed – they pour out their complaint to the Lord

"A Prayer of the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his complaint before the Lord. Hear my prayer, O Lord, and let my cry come unto thee" (Ps.102: 1).

Associated with the word affliction is

\* reproach

"And they said unto me, The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire" (Neh.1: 3).

\* desolation

"Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me; for I am desolate and afflicted" (Ps.25: 16).

\* pain

"Look upon mine affliction and my pain; and forgive all my sins" (Ps.25: 18).

\* oppression

"Wherefore hidest thou thy face, [and] forgettest our affliction and our oppression?" (Ps.44:24).

\* terrors

"I am afflicted and ready to die from my youth up: while I suffer thy terrors I am distracted" ( Ps.88: 15).

\* being bound

"Such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron" (Ps.107: 10).

\* vexation

“Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict her by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations” (Is.9: 1).

\* adversity

“And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers” (Is.30: 20).

\* persecution

“And have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended” ( Mk 4:17).

\* grieve

“For he doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men“ (Lam.3: 33).

\* calamity

“The calamity of Moab is near to come, and his affliction hasteth fast” (Jer.48: 16).

\*servitude

“Judah is gone into captivity because of affliction, and because of great servitude: she dwelleth among the heathen, she findeth no rest: all her persecutors overtook her between the straits” (Lam.1: 3).

\* bitterness

“The ways of Zion do mourn, because none come to the solemn feasts: all her gates are desolate: her priests sigh, her virgins are afflicted, and she is in bitterness” (Lam 1:4).