

Has God dealt well with you?

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GLADEWATER, Texas—When we see any one of our brothers or sisters going through a trial, we want to help.

We go to God to ask that the person be healed, or be blessed, or be able to make good decisions, or that the burden be removed. This is well and good because we are to engage in intercessory prayer for others.

Some may feel that God is unfair in His dealings with this "good" person. The goodness of the person has nothing to do with the trial. It is the end result of God's dealing with His children that is important.

In Psalm 119:65 we read how King David felt about God's dealing with him: "You have dealt well with Your servant, O LORD, according to Your word."

The expression *according to Your word* is so often repeated in this psalm that we are apt to overlook it or to give it only the general meaning of "because of Your promises" or "because of Your blessings."

According to man or God?

But in reality it implies much more. Had God dealt "well" with David according to man's idea? If so, what is the meaning of many expressions in Psalm 119?

- "O forsake me not utterly" (verse 8).
- "I am a stranger in the earth" (verse 19).
- "My soul cleaves unto the dust" (verse 25).
- "My soul melts for heaviness" (verse 28).
- "Turn away my reproach which I fear" (verse 39).
- "The proud have had me greatly in derision" (verse 51).
- "Horror has taken hold on me" (verse 53).

In view of the thoughts expressed in passages as these, can it be said that God "dealt well" with David according to man's idea? David's experience was one of very great and very varied trial. There is not a phase of our feelings in sorrow that does not find ample expression in his psalms.

Yet David says, "You have dealt well with Your servant, according to Your word." How can this be?

And are we to interpret the expression, so often repeated here, in view of the facts of David's spiritual life?

The best sense of God's Word

God dealt well with David "according to His word" in the truest and best sense, even when He did not deliver him from all trials. God sent him the trials that were best for David's spiritual growth. David realized God had dealt well with him when he could say:

"Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept Your word" (Psalm 119:67) and "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn Your statutes" (verse 71).

Such dealing can be hard for flesh and blood to bear, but it was indeed "well" for David in that it accomplished the best results for David. The lesson for us: Don't doubt God. He has our best interests at heart.

God deals with us as He dealt with David. His standards are unchanging. He will take care of us "according to His word." God is not a respecter of persons; that is, He shows no partiality.

God's dealings with David were "according to His word" were consistent with the way He reveals with all His people—whom He chastens for their benefit and blessing.

All things work together

While going through a trial it is difficult for us to follow Peter's admonition in 1 Peter 4:12-13: "Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you, but *rejoice* to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy."

Again, God "dealt well" with David according to His word or covenant. His dealing with us (even if it can seem bitter to us) serves as a token of His final perfecting of His work, bringing glory to Himself in the entire fulfillment of His Word and the completed salvation of His servants.

Paul speaks of trials in Romans 8:28: "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose."

As I quoted earlier: "According to Your word, O Lord, You have dealt well with Your servant."

Conforming to God's way

Psalm 119:105 teaches us that "Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path." It is the light and lamp that show us things in their true perspective and help us know all things work together for the good for God's people. God does all things well.

"Open mine eyes, O LORD, that I may see wonderful things out of Your law" (verse 18). What can be more wonderful to our eyes than seeing God's wonderful things?

Paul told the brethren in Corinth: "But as it is written: 'Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him'" (1 Corinthians 2:9). God has in mind the big picture for our existence.

David prays according to "Your word," not only because of a specific promise. He understands the "manner and measure" of God's Word. Our ways need to conform to God's ways.

What God has promised

Do you see how such an understanding of the expression expands the idea inherent in the prayer "Be merciful to me according to Your word" (Psalm 119:58)? The sweet promises and declarations of God's infinite mercy rise before us and transform into a vast request. Again, "Quicken me," or "Revive me," and "Strengthen me according to Your word"—up to the full measure of what God has promised and provided for His people.

■ "My soul clings to the dust; *Revive me* according to Your word" (Psalm 119:25).

■ "I am afflicted very much; *revive me*, O LORD, according to Your word" (verse 107).

■ "Plead my cause and redeem me; *revive me* according to Your word" (verse 154).

Can we see the completeness in this view of Psalm 119:76? "Let, I pray, Your merciful kindness be for my comfort, according to Your word to Your servant."

Again we see that we need God's understanding and God's deliverance (verse 169): "Give me *understanding* according to Your word."

And verse 170: "*Deliver me* according to Your word."

In each of these sayings we are led to know that the request includes all that God's Word teaches. David understood the power of the words "*according to Your word.*" Do we?

Let our prayer be for mercy and strength and comfort and understanding and deliverance. Let us ever pray for the full measure in which God reveals and promises in His Word.