

Consider Jesus – as Afflicted

**Thoughts for Daily Duty, Service,
and Suffering**

By Octavius Winslow

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"Consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess." – Hebrews 3:1

"He was afflicted." – Isa. 53:7

For this Jesus was born. His mission to our world involved it. In the righteous arrangement of God, sin and suffering, even as holiness and happiness, are one and inseparable. He came to destroy the works of the devil; and sin, being Satan's master-work, Jesus could only destroy it as He Himself suffered, just as He could only 'abolish death' as He Himself died. He was truly "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." In the gospel according to Isaiah--the fifty-third chapter of which might have been written by a historian recording the event of the Savior's sufferings after it had transpired, rather than by a prophet predicting it seven hundred years before it took place--the circumstances of our Lord's afflictive life are portrayed with a fidelity of narration and vividness of description which can only find their explanation in "the Spirit of Christ, which was in him, testifying beforehand of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow."

"He was afflicted." What touching and expressive words are these! Consider them carefully, my soul. Attempt, if it be possible, an analysis of your Lord's afflictions. And the first feature that presents itself is, that He was afflicted BY GOD. How clearly is this fact put--"We did esteem Him smitten by God and afflicted. It pleased the Lord to bruise Him. He has put Him to grief." Was Jesus, then, afflicted of God? So are we! The God that smote Him, smites us; the paternal hand that mingled His cup, prepares ours. O my soul! refer all your trials to God. Be not tossed about amid the troubled waves of second causes, but trace all your afflictions, however dark, bitter, and painful, directly to the wisdom, righteousness, and love of your Father in heaven. "Himself has done it." Enough, Lord, if I but see Your hand and Your heart guiding, shaping, and controlling the whole.

Jesus was afflicted BY MAN. "He was despised and rejected by men." Beloved, how many of our trials, and how much of our wounding, springs from the same source! This should teach us to cease from man, and to put no confidence in the

arm of flesh, since ofttimes the staff we thought so pleasant, and on which we leaned so confidingly, is the first to pierce the hand that too fondly and too closely pressed it.

Jesus was afflicted IN THE SOUL. "My soul is sorrowful, even unto death." Is not soul-sorrow our greatest, even as the soul is the most spiritual, precious, and immortal part of our nature? Is your soul-sorrowful? Are you conflicting with sin, harassed by doubts, depressed with fears, sorrowful almost unto death?-- consider Jesus as having passed through a like soul-discipline, and uplift your prayer to Him--"My heart is overwhelmed; lead me to the Rock that is higher than I."

Jesus was BODILY afflicted. We do not read of actual disease of body, but we do read of bodily suffering such as infinitely surpasses all to which we can possibly be subjected; and endured, be it remembered, O my soul! for YOU! This may be the Lord's affliction in your case. A diseased body, distressing nervousness, extreme debility your daily cross. Be it so--it is all the fruit of everlasting and eternal love. Receive it believingly, endure it patiently, and be anxious only that the rod thus laid upon you by a Father's hand should bloom and blossom with holy fruit to the glory of God.

Affliction was a SCHOOL for Jesus. "He LEARNED obedience by the things which He suffered." Not less is it ours. We enter it, for the most part, with but a mere notional, theoretical acquaintance with God, and with Christ, and with our own selves; but sorrow's hallowed discipline transforms us into experimental Christians, and, gazing upon the lowly Savior, we exclaim--"I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear; but now my eye sees You. Therefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." O my soul! if this be the result of affliction, let the scythe mow you, the furnace dissolve you, the flail thrash you, the sieve sift you; it will but conform you the more closely to your once afflicted, suffering Lord.

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