

THE REASON FOR CHASTISEMENT

By John MacDuff

"For whom the Lord loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives." (Heb. 12:6)

What! God loves me when He is discharging His quiver upon me! emptying me from vessel to vessel! causing the sun of my earthly joys to set in clouds? Yes! O afflicted, tossed with tempest; He chastens you because He loves you! This trial comes from His own tender, loving hand; His own tender, unchanging heart!

Are you laid on a sickbed; are sorrowful months and wearisome nights appointed unto you? Let this be the pillow on which your aching head reclines. It is because He loves me!

Is it bereavement that has swept your heart and desolated your dwelling? He appointed that chamber of death, because He loves you! As it is the suffering child of the family which claims a mother's deepest affections and most tender solicitude, so have you at this moment embarked on your side the most tender love and solicitude of a heavenly Father. He loved you into this sorrow, and will love you through it. There is nothing capricious in His dealings. LOVE is the reason of all He does. There is no drop of wrath in that cup you are called to drink. "I do believe," says one, "He has purchased these afflictions for us, as well as everything else. Blessed be His name, it is part of His covenant to visit us with the rod." What says our adorable Lord himself? The words were spoken, not when He was on earth, a sojourner in a sorrowing world, but when enthroned amid the glories of heaven. "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten." (Revelation 3:19)

Believer! rejoice in the thought that the rod, the chastening rod, is in the hands of the living, loving Savior, who died for you! Tribulation is the King's Highway and yet that highway is paved with love. As some flowers before shedding their fragrance require to be crushed, so does your God think it suitable to bruise you. As some birds are said to sing their sweetest notes when the thorn pierces their bosom, so does He appoint affliction to lacerate, that you may be driven to the wing, singing, in your upward soaring, "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed!"

Be it ours to say, "Lord, I will love You not only despite Your rod, but because of your rod." I will rush into the very arms that are chastening me!

(Taken from "The Rainbow in the Clouds" by John MacDuff)

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