

**148:5 (“The Purpose of Affliction”)**

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**Source for 148:5**

- (1) Orville J. Nave, A.M., D.D., LL.D., *Nave’s Topical Bible: A Digest of the Holy Scriptures* (New York: Topical Bible Publishing Company, from press of Eaton & Mains, 1896, 1897)

*Note:* This source is coded **Nave’s TB.**

**Key**

- (a) **Green** indicates where a source author first appears, or where he/she reappears.
- (b) **Yellow** highlights most parallelisms.
- (c) **Tan** highlights parallelisms not occurring on the same row.
- (d) An underlined word or words indicates where the source and the UB writer pointedly differ from each other.
- (e) **Blue** indicates original (or “revealed”) information, or UB-specific terminology and concepts. (What to highlight in this regard is debatable; the highlights are tentative.)

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## PAPER 148—TRAINING EVANGELISTS AT BETHSAIDA

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### 5. THE PURPOSE OF AFFLICTION

148:5.1 At another of these private interviews in the garden Nathaniel asked Jesus: “Master, though I am beginning to understand why you refuse to practice healing indiscriminately, I am still at a loss to understand why the loving Father in heaven permits so many of his children on earth to suffer so many afflictions.” The Master answered Nathaniel, saying:

148:5.2 “Nathaniel, you and many others are thus perplexed because you do not comprehend how the natural order of this world has been so many times upset by the sinful adventures of certain rebellious traitors to the Father’s will. And I have come to make a beginning of setting these things in order. But many ages will be required to restore this part of the universe to former paths and thus release the children of men from the extra burdens of sin and rebellion. The presence of evil alone is sufficient test for the ascension of man—sin is not essential to survival.

148:5.3 “But, my son, you should know that the Father does not purposely afflict his children. Man brings down upon himself unnecessary affliction as a result of his persistent refusal to walk in the better ways of the divine will. Affliction is potential in evil, but much of it has been produced by sin and iniquity.

Many unusual events have transpired on this world, and it is not strange that all thinking men should be perplexed by the scenes of suffering and affliction which they witness. But of one thing you may be sure: The Father does not send affliction as an arbitrary punishment for wrongdoing. The imperfections and handicaps of evil are inherent; the penalties of sin are inevitable; the destroying consequences of iniquity are inexorable. Man should not blame God for those afflictions which are the natural result of the life which he chooses to live; neither should man complain of those experiences which are a part of life as it is lived on this world. It is the Father's will that mortal man should work persistently and consistently toward the betterment of his estate on earth. Intelligent application would enable man to overcome much of his earthly misery.

148:5.4 "Nathaniel, it is our mission to help men solve their spiritual problems and in this way to quicken their minds so that they may be the better prepared and inspired to go about solving their manifold material problems. I know of your confusion as you have read the Scriptures. All too often there has prevailed a tendency to ascribe to God the responsibility for everything which ignorant man fails to understand. The Father is not personally responsible for all you may fail to comprehend. Do not doubt the love of the Father just because some just and wise law of his ordaining chances to afflict you because you have innocently or deliberately transgressed such a divine ordinance.

148:5.5 “But, Nathaniel, there is much in the Scriptures which would have instructed you if you had only read with discernment. Do you not remember that it is written:

**AFFLICTIONS AND ADVERSITIES.**

(*Nave's TB* 20)

**BENEFITS OF:** (*Nave's TB* 26)

Prov. 3:11. My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction:

12. For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son *in whom* he delighteth.

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

**BENEFITS OF, ILLUSTRATED:** (*Nave's TB* 27)

Psa. 119:67. Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word.

71. It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes.

**CONSOLATION IN:** (*Nave's TB* 28)

Ex. 3:7. 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; for I know their sorrows;

Deut. 3:27. The eternal God is *thy* refuge, and underneath *are* the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy *them*.

‘My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord; neither be weary of his correction,

for whom the Lord loves he corrects, even as the father corrects the son in whom he takes delight.’

‘The Lord does not afflict willingly.’

‘Before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now do I keep the law.

Affliction was good for me that I might thereby learn the divine statutes.’

‘I know your sorrows.

The eternal God is your refuge, while underneath are the everlasting arms.’

Psa. 9:9: The LORD also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble.

‘The Lord also is a refuge for the oppressed, a haven of rest in times of trouble.’

Psa. 41:3. The LORD will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness.

‘The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of affliction;

the Lord will not forget the sick.’

Psa. 103:13. Like as a father pitieth *his* children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him.

‘As a father shows compassion for his children, so is the Lord compassionate to those who fear him.

14. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we *are* dust.

He knows your body; he remembers that you are dust.’

Psa. 147:3. He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.

‘He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.’

Isa. 25:4. For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress,

‘He is the hope of the poor, the strength of the needy in his distress,

a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones *is* as a storm *against* the wall.

a refuge from the storm, and a shadow from the devastating heat.’

Isa. 40:29. He giveth power to the faint; and to *them that have* no might he increaseth strength.

‘He gives power to the faint, and to them who have no might he increases strength.’

Isa. 42:3. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth.

‘A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax he will not quench.’

Isa 43:2. When thou passest through the waters, I *will be* with thee;

‘When you pass through the waters of affliction, I will be with you,

and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.

and when the rivers of adversity overflow you,

I will not forsake you.’

SOURCE OR PARALLEL

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Isa. 61:1. The Spirit of the Lord GOD *is* upon me: because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to captives, and the opening of the prison to *them that are* bound;

2. To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;

[*out of order*] Job 5:6. Although affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground;

‘He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives,

and to comfort all who mourn.’

‘There is correction in suffering;

affliction does not spring forth from the dust.’”