

Psalm 119:67

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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

Analysis

"Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word." This verse traces spiritual biography—pre-affliction wandering, post-affliction faithfulness. Terem e'eneh ani shogeig (before I was afflicted I was erring/straying). Shagah means to go astray, err, sin through ignorance or inadvertence—not deliberate rebellion but careless wandering. Affliction (anah—to be humbled, oppressed, afflicted) functioned as divine correction. "But now have I kept thy word"—ve'atah imratekha shamarti (and now your word I have kept/guarded). Suffering produced obedience. This illustrates Hebrews 12:11 ("no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness"). God uses affliction redemptively to redirect wandering saints.

Historical Context

Israel's covenant included blessings for obedience, curses for disobedience (Deuteronomy 28). The exile functioned as divine discipline, not abandonment—intended to restore covenant faithfulness (Jeremiah 30:11). Judges shows repeated cycle: Israel sins, God sends oppression, Israel cries out, God raises deliverer. Each cycle aimed at producing lasting repentance, though Israel repeatedly reverted to idolatry. Individual believers experience similar patterns—prosperity leading to spiritual complacency, affliction producing renewed devotion.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. Looking back, how has God used affliction to correct spiritual drift in your life?
2. What is the difference between divine discipline (corrective) and divine punishment (retributive)?
3. How can believers remain faithful during prosperity, avoiding the need for corrective affliction?

Interlinear Text

אָמְרָתֶךָ ! עָתָה שָׁגַג אָנִי אָנָתָה בְּרָם
H2962 Before I was afflicted H589 I went astray H6258 thy word
H6031 H7683 H565

שָׁמְרָתִי :

but now have I kept

H8104

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 119:71 (Parallel theme): It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.

Psalms 119:75 (Parallel theme): I know, O LORD, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.

Psalms 119:176 (Word): I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments.

Revelation 3:10 (Word): Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

Proverbs 1:32 (Parallel theme): For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.

Jeremiah 22:21 (Parallel theme): I spake unto thee in thy prosperity; but thou saidst, I will not hear. This hath been thy manner from thy youth, that thou obeyedst not my voice.

Deuteronomy 32:15 (Parallel theme): But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked: thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness; then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation.

2 Samuel 10:19 (Parallel theme): And when all the kings that were servants to Hadarezer saw that they were smitten before Israel, they made peace with Israel, and served them. So the Syrians feared to help the children of Ammon any more.