No. 92.,

The nature of risks of afflication...
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The nature & uses of affliction.
Job v. 6. "Although affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground."

These words, uttered by one of his friends to Job, show his spirit was excited. He was broken down with sorrow, and he gave a great and important truth. "Therein lies that trouble is not a mere chance or accidental thing that come of goes with out any object, springing out of the dust, like some casual production of the soil, only to be neglected. No; we are here taught that affliction has a purpose: that God has a design to answers it, that there is an end in which he sends it: that it is not a thing disconnected entirely with our lives and characters, with us we have nothing to do, but patiently to endure it. There is something buried in it; it is the mind of God that invites us to contemplate the object as it is designed to answer."

Heb. xiii. 19. "Now no chastening for the present seems to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward, it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness to them who are exercised thereby."

It would be difficult to describe, in so few words, the more faithfully and fully, the nature and uses of this discipline of God's providence, than it does appear in this passage. The author of the Epistle points his readers to the example of Jesus, of him, who endured the cross, despising the shame, who endured the contradiction of sinners against himself, of which he was himself made a creature. So to the time of those early days, who were exposed to trials, ended with their minds almost faint, and..."
broke, he offers the consummating example of their fate. For the study of the admirable, as soon after adds the very expressive record of our text, "now it shall come to pass that because the enemy, but grievous, never the less, afterwards it yield with the peaceable fruits of righteousness to them, who are exercised thereby.

It is a truth written in our consciences, that God is his creatures; yet it is a truth, which we feel as well as believe. There is a voice without us, that proclaims it abroad; there is a voice within, that echoes it back again. The means of making us happy are evidently not accidental, occasional, but the effects of design in the heart of God, who confounds them. There is much in the bosom of man, that God has given us, there is much in the moral feelings of mankind; there is much in the social ties by which we are bound together; there is very much in the light, and in the promises of the lips of men; to show that the will designed us for happiness, because...
dark hand, that secretly ethics in the evil? While it
is laborious, if we may say, in this entire benevolence
to arrange the means of happiness for man, shall we
fear that a mendicant...intercession of beings who
does the fair & beautiful system. No, it is something
of all this...There is nothing in the evils we suffer to
make us suppose, that by has ceased to be good or
be es to be gracious, or that His power to effect the
purposes of infinite benevolence is defective, or is offered.
We should strive to form enlarged & elevated ideas
of the government of God; we should remember that
the happiness he designs for us has respect to the whole
of being of to all time. The benevolence of the Deity as
not like the partial spread, mitigating affection of
man; it does not reach to the view of the reach of man
kind a constant succession of gory & glittering pleasures,
that perish as fast as they appear, each being speck
plagued one but for a moment. The designs of the Heavens
are not...external & temporary; they relate to the
the present day of the present, are found in the broad
basis of a regard to the best good of the whole of exist-
ence. Of course, we are not to judge of persons or traits, as
they stand alone, with any connection with the rest
of our lives; their consequences may be such as to make
them blessings: they may now appear to the eye dark
of grands, but perhaps in future day will reflect
back a light upon them. That shall make them the
brightest of valuable events of life. Let us consider
the nature of the uses of affliction: we shall find that
in all, that are among the means, wilt the benevolence
of God, cease to make us happy, by making us worthy
of it for happiness. This is the true
We may observe the description in the text: "He has chosen
for the present seeming...not gracious." And
this is true, there is always a kind of passion. We cannot
alter the nature of things 1; there is an inherent bitterness
in affliction, & while the heart remains what it is, we
cannot entirely console; though we may often alleviate it.
bear it with religious firmness. It is not in man to be
insensible to suffering: it is not in man to stand by be-" the smallest objects do make affection vanishing, without es-" piring. Does religion forbid it? There is no crime in the indulgence of grief; it does not make it a sin
to shed a tear, nor does it change the eyes of the distin-" guished to the account of a rebellious heart. We do
care to be human beings, because we are fain to be free. The
Son of God himself went to the tomb of a friend—crucify
him not for shame his followers for indulging some-thing to the feelings of nature. For the present, let it be,
first, "no chastening is grievous, but grievous." For not
every state of mind of that frame, who can be en-" tirely accustomed to calamity, sensible to distress, in whose heart there is no check, that thills at the touch
of affliction. There is not so much merit in being un-"
moved at trouble, as there is in improving by its. Certainly
excessive grief, & enervated reason are alike neither
by reason nor by religion. It argues a distinct mind.
"It is not of pure and simple principles to give ourselves up to the
madness of painful emotion. But after all it is the use we make of affliction, the light we shed on it, that is most important. It is only, when we view it in the eyes of a man, when we consider it as a part of the government of God over us, as one of the means of bringing us within the field of the pure & humble, & under the shield of God as our walls, as filled with the
"art to be disciplinary strengthening, to have by preparative
something better of higher, as it is then only that in the
language of the text, it will "still the rebellious
"flame of righteousness to them who are exercised ther-
by." Who has not observed the very different effects of trouble in different persons? Some it renders bidder,
"rocked, desperate; others it softens, ameliorates,peni-
"tries, in some it strengthens, in others it destroys, in
all principle;—it is like the Red Sea to Israel &
"compos, the one passed safely through it, the other
perished in it. The value of affliction depends entirely
on the use of it;—it is a good school, but of when we are
placed in the school, no neglects or surprise to learn the
lessons, that are taught there, one cannot hope to benefit.
It is not merely the restrains, such affliction imposes,
it is the consequences to not its needs, that we should
chiefly regard. It is moral medicine, of its only value,
is in giving us moral health. So far, as it has made
us the gaunters, of humble, so far it has mortified in
us its pride & its high self-will. When it yields the peace-
ably fruits of righteousness, then in truth it becomes not
“gnawing, but growing.”

Let us then, in this place consider some of the uses of
affliction.

1. One important use of affliction is, that it may serve
to bring us acquainted with ourselves, to make us think
seriously on what we are, to what we are destined. The
hour of trial is one, in which we are in some measure
compelled to see things as they are, & to form a true estimate of the objects of our pursuits, & we have been accustomed
to deem important. There is nothing like adversity
to unmask all false appearances, & to detect the cheats
of life. It is good to be awared sometimes out of these
dreams, & to reflect upon that success so often from the
minds, it is good to escape from its spells & allurements
& come into a purer calm region. But it is not easy to
do this without the help of affliction. In the gay land
of prosperity it is hard for a man to descend into himself
& set down with a sober & unexalted mind to the task
of reflection. Unbroken prosperity, though not necessarily
yet very often, produces a moral & mental obtuseness
as it were, & hinders us almost beyond our power to think
clearly & justly. And if good thoughts & sentiments do ap-
pear to hover around the mind, & to settle there, how soon
are they frighted away by the confounding voice of the glu-
tering thought, or the dream of our ambition, by which they are overwhelmed.

While the voice of the flatterer is ringing in our ears, &
the enchanting visions are floating before our eyes, what
is a quick succession of bright images & fair prospects, sir,
tells us that tomorrow shall bring as many gay & charming
as to-day has brought, in the midst of such feelings, to
all, be or forgets what we are, or what is our happiness.
come, how easily do we mistake appearances for realities. If we allow ourselves up to the gay deceives of every little change, it is no wonder that there is any nobility, or permanence, or value. We must look to another time to teach us what we are and what we should become, even to the time of trial. When the scene changes, and what has been the light of joy darkly shone, is the deep source of sorrow revealed to the gay source of happiness, then in that affliction, books at our doors gather their place at our fire-sides, then it is that we pause thoughtfully, we stand as if amazed from a dream. We have shaken off the mere circumstances of things to things themselves. The splendid images have vanished; the confusing glare is gone, and objects have dropped their deceptive coverings; it is the time for us to ask ourselves: Can it be that these things of earth, sickness, poverty, or death can define us, are the chief good to which we should adhere? Can it be that these fleeting visions are to constitute our time occupied? Or existence to be spent in vain, things, and men are here, but when the whole of time has passed, are they gone? No prosperity in the end of an enchantress, there is decay in all. And nature, the face of God, are the only things permanent and good? There may be enjoyed in sickness, in health, in sickness, in health, in life and death. Such is the affliction as we are; the friends may change, but there will not. The unsubstantial pageantry of the earth remain; but these cannot; — there is no cloud dark enough to dim their brightness, or the world is not shaken by a storm in which they will not stand erect. Such is the lesson the affliction teaches us with regard to ourselves and our greatest good.

2. Another use of affliction is to help us to learn the art of self-government, the art of moderating our passions, of regulating desires. A disposition of mind, enrolling, kind, gently satisfied, should become the happy fruits of the hour of trial. Perhaps, perhaps
does not bring in its train of consequences a more desolating attendant, than that sprung from receiving things inanimate and inanimate, in the midst of plenty, is ever ready to encourage, or else, to make men too to set the limits of their desires, or to prompt them to act as if they were the most important objects in creation. Uncontrolled desires have in too many instances produced a cold, selfish, selfishness; sometimes as they but the matter, that is, that from the dark cloud of vice, can often this close brought by, so that it may be improved. The man, who has always upon the scene too his passions, has been accustomed to see every thing born before him, must learn from the rough adventures of affliction to bear himself, while the backcloth of affliction is upon him, pain has time to work itself. There is something in the influence of adversity, which makes the heart to a childlike of broken, to be the accordance of fierce desires of energies.

noble propensities, and while it feels its weakness, it becomes its fellow. Another unhappy effect of propensities, that it makes too many things necessary to felicity, we have been indulged so long, that we must not in luxury, or we cannot be happy. But affliction calls us from this corrupt, enlightened state of mind. The deeds in which we have learned, as down, of the object, to which our own affecting feeling are torn away, we learn that there is fewer things, and we can do without, that was at first imposed. My necessity becomes a virtue, from principle. We grow less dependent on external things, we can endure, by enjoy quiet; we can live of, profit, by retirement.

8. Affliction is the school of the middle ages. Virtues, of these, virtues, and springle from the intercourse of life. I find these exercise our mutual grants, weaknesses, persons. There is ingrat that suffering from, shall quiet, me, of all the more, and continued feelings. I smooth away the adversities, by which were so often made, for each other unhappily. Nothing has a manifest answer,
to make us forget our differences, and to blend us together in the ties of humanity, than that sympathy which is called into action in the heart of man. Often in a time, when we are compelled to feel bow much we have made as for each other. As man and we seek to support each other, it is in a time when the voice of mourning falls on our ears, as the dark of mischief descends on heavy sleep, the only peace to which is filled up with a better portion. "Bear up one another, says Sir Paul," for you fulfill the law of X." This is a duty, as we are able to forget the full tide of prosperity. While every thing goes on well, your adverse events oppose victories and meet, as they strike off into different paths, you come along by the sentiment of repeated success, the habit of regarding only our own wants and our own aims makes us indolent and heartless, the interests of others, some fail on account of the multitudes where happiness is as clear to them as is to us. But when the heavy hand of affliction does so upon us, we are compelled to hearken the lesson of compassionate. Many an one has been called to the suffering of others, till he has been called to enjoy them. But as the soul passes in sympathy, it leaves itself upon the offices of kindness. They who have been tried in the school of affliction, have been tried in the offices of kindness. (They who have been tried in the school of affliction, have been tried in the offices of kindness.) Be not only kind to them with the afflicted. But it is not only those who are called to endure the trials of life, it is also to those that have influence is exerted. To love others around it is a gift of pure affection, that has a happy effect on all within its reach. It brings close together the ties of all we are bound together, it does not sunder us, nor make so far apart. While the storm is abroad nowhere to each of those who suffer. When we see one eager on the fires, and weep with compassion, "the humble pleasures of humble triumphs, small joys, when we are linked with the dark shade of afflictions" these are the marks of the certain it cannot but be enlivening of kind eyes, and the calm of the soul. In the midst the afflicton shews its most potent and proudest days as in God's prodition. When it comes to us, we are to use it for the best, and not to meddle with it. None of those of these we are led to heavenly things, we should not.
complain of it as rough in mind. It is only other men
make a religious use of affliction, that they can be
pained to wear it.

"Amen, angel was mourning,
This blessed man, whose name is George,
Doubtless many, who never thought of the providence
of God before, have thought of it with deep devotion
in the hour of sorrow. There is something in the
loveliness of the direction of grief, when human help seems
not to fill up the void in the heart, that conduces
minds to Him, who careth for us, and who will outstrip
upon us more, than the will give us strength to bear
something that compels us to say with the psalmist
forsake me, and I will not be turned to me. O God, be merciful unto me, for my soul trusteth in thee; yea, in the
shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, till
calamities be past. I will commit my soul unto thee, as to a faithfule servant." The earthly
spirit turns to the Heavens, for its support; at the
natural fountain, it seeks refreshing from the internal
relation between the creature of the Creator, she derives
strength. He who has wounded can heal, on his arm
of compassion, the soul leans to lean. The beam of
light, that carries us to Jesus, his Gospel, give them keen
something of the nature of that blessed hope, as he
has revealed. Thy hand raised thine eye, that was dim
with the tears, I decry it to thee, multitudes in the while
shores of joy, that place, where "he dwell, who is in
the midst of the throne shall feed them, and heal them
to bringing fountains of water, and shall make away
all tears from their eyes." Or who can estimate the immense
importance of the doctrine of immortality to those, who
are called to resign their claims, here, to their fondest
objects, affection; to the children of God, it is as
the anchor of the soul, more of stead fast; of they look
upon it through their troubles, these are such feelings
of relief, joy, as those of the weary, spent, grief
full hour. As from a pool he descends the glittering
spires, the green fields of this nature land. This then is a
most valuable use of affliction; it makes us press to our
borders more closely, the truths of the hopes of our holy religion.
it makes us love "try," as from its only deuce, less the "sweet heart of afflictions," if sanctified by a proper improvement, shall without fet us a far more exceeding, even an charmel weight of glory.

I have described the year, my s, a few of the cases of affection, enough to show that there are more we meet with that contain all important of God, that they are valuable parts of his moral government, & answer important purposes. It is well remarked by Dr. Pusey, that "God is in mercy of another person our model, would more have suffered many kindnesses, have sent them, especially to the most wealthy, as the worst men, but that the interests they should be the sanctuary of comfort, the nursey of virtue, the exercise of wisdom, the trial of patience, the reveuening of sinners, of the gate of glory. 00 sinners are at it, in the providence of God, dispersed in very different degrees to different persons. Some pass through the apparent almost free from distress, sincerely ador’d appears in the bright day of their happiness; others life seems to be in long grief, of peace, do they proceed from one pressure of affliction, before another comes to bow them down to the dust. But, my s, when we have foreseen many trials, let us learn to improve by them; this is all, is the great point, if at the time we are called to walk on them. Our task is to meet our Lord, & feel ourselves walking in the same, like him, but as far as to save us as one parish. The language of recognition is, "it is the Lord, let him be what he be, do what he does, remember that he who is our example of guide, in the agony of the soul, lift up his eyes to Heaven, & say, "If this cup may not pass from me except I drink, they will be done."

This thought should never long be absent from our minds, that we must die, are hundreds death, that we must be disappointed, or we know not love. The young should hear this in mind in the midst of their young age, hope not to die, their pleasures are full of their hearts, with gloom has to lead them to serious reflection. They should remember that to die in their..."
needful in virtue... that the view to the life of this story is to begin now in the bright days of youth to give this bent to good things, & to prize the treasures of wisdom, virtue & religion above all treasures. And then all who have them will have the joy of seeing them ripening for that world, where the sun shall no more go down, nor the moon withdraw her shining, fully shall be the everlasting light; & the days of mourning shall be ended.

O then, who hast placed us here in a state of discipline & exercise, we look to thee & thy mercy. We gratefully acknowledge, that all we enjoy & enjoy all we are & do, all that happens to us, are so many means designed by thee in mercy to turn us up to virtue & glory. If I may be made but the means by thine. Then shall man find, in his present state, light & darkness, joy & sorrow, prosperity & adversity, sometimes leading us on a plain, seven way, often by the rough ways of affliction. May we, if we ourselves, as obedient children, be led & guided by thee as thou dost. Thy counsel is ever wise & good; if conducted by thee we can not go astray. Though we be tasting of the present season with griefs but gracious, yet, if we are exercised thereby, may we so improve that it may yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness & may the light afflict & cleanse.

Then, O God, do open our in many of thy grace in thy providence and in our conscience. Amen.
At home, Jan. 28th, 1821, forenoon.
At Kingham (Mr. Broke's) Nov. 10th, 1822, forenoon.
At Mr. Walker's, Charlestown, Dec. 8th, 1822, forenoon.
At Duxbury, March 14th, 1824, forenoon (after first family).
At home, Feb. 6th, 1825, forenoon.