

The Honey and the Sting!

by Thomas Brooks

God's heart is not in affliction, but His hand may be involved in it, and He takes great delight in showing mercy and kindness to His people.

Scripture: Isaiah 28:21, Jeremiah 31:18-20, Lamentations 3:33, Hosea 11:8, Micah 7:18

Topics: "God's Mercy", "Understanding Affliction"

Description

Thomas Brooks emphasizes that God's heart is not inclined to afflict His children, as seen in Lamentations 3:33. He explains that while God may allow hardships, it is not His desire to cause grief, likening His mercy to honey and His punishment to a bee's sting, which only occurs when provoked. Brooks reassures believers that God's heart yearns for them even during times of affliction, as illustrated in Jeremiah 31:18-20. He highlights that God's actions do not always reflect His heart, urging Christians to trust in His loving nature despite their circumstances.

Transcript

"For He does not willingly (or as the Hebrew has it, 'from His heart') bring affliction or grief to the children of men." Lamentations 3:33

Christians conclude that God's heart was not in their afflictions, though His hand was. He takes no delight to afflict His children; it goes against His heart. It is . . .

a grief to Him to be grievous to them,
a pain to Him to be punishing of them,
a sorrow to Him to be striking them.

He has no will, no desire, no inclination, no disposition, to that work of afflicting of His people. And therefore

He calls it 'His strange work.' Isaiah 28:21.

Mercy and punishment--they flow from God, as the honey and the sting from the bee. The bee yields honey of her own nature--but she does not sting but when she is provoked.

God takes delight in showing of mercy. Micah 7:18.

He takes no pleasure in giving His people up to adversity. Hosea 11:8.

Mercy and kindness flows from Him freely, naturally.

He is never severe, never harsh. He never stings, He never terrifies us--but when He is sadly provoked by us.

God's hand sometimes may lie very hard upon His people, when His heart, His affections, at those very times may be yearning towards them. Jeremiah 31:18-20.

No man can tell the heart of God--by His hand.

God's hand of mercy may be open to those against whom His heart is set--as you see in the rich poor fool, and Dives, in the Gospel. And His hand of severity may lie hard upon those on whom He has set His heart--as you may see in Job and Lazarus.

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