

Salvation—Sanctification (11th)

(Today we continue studying the *experimental* aspect of sanctification in the life of the believer as he lives on earth. Today's podcast involves studying chastisement unto sanctification.)

As we continue studying the *experimental* aspect of sanctification I would like to direct your attention to the twelfth chapter of Hebrews and particularly to verses five through fourteen. As we will see, this passage is concerned with the subject of chastisement which relates directly to sanctification. In order to have a fuller understanding of the impact of this section of the Scriptures, it is important that it be set within the context of the book of Hebrews as a whole. While it is generally assumed that the author of this epistle was the Apostle Paul, some believe it to be Apollos, Barnabas, Luke, or even Clement of Rome, but regardless of the author, the essential thing to be remembered is that it is the inspired Word of God. Personally, I often grow weary of writers and preachers as they set forth scriptural truths as if they were developed by the authors. Too often it is presented with such language as “Paul developed,” “John enlarged,” “Peter presented,” or “James set forth” as if the various ideas and opinions existing in the Scriptures were derived by the writers. The truth is these men were instruments of God whereby His divine revelation was given to man by the inspired writers. Therefore, in the final analysis it is not important who wrote the epistle to the Hebrews; the important thing is that it is the inspired Holy Scriptures. Concerning this epistle, James M. Grey said, “While Jewish Christians are in mind, yet there is no positive knowledge as to where they were located, whether at Jerusalem, Alexandria, or Rome. . . . No one can read it carefully without perceiving a twofold object, viz: to comfort the Christians under persecution, and to restrain them from apostasy on account of it. The persecution must have been severe, judging by the nature of the temptation to which it gave rise.” (Computer Bible program *Sword Searcher*.) To encourage the Hebrew Christians from returning to Judaism and to cheer them on in spite of being persecuted for their faith, the writer confirmed to them the superiority of Christian worship to that of Old Testament Judaism. Different writers demonstrated this by various means, but allow me to present this by the following: (1) Christ is superior to the prophets; (2) Christ is superior to angels; (3) Christ is superior to Moses and the law; (4) Christ is superior to the Aaronic or Levitical priesthood; (5) Christ is superior to Joshua; (6) Christ is superior to Melchisedec; and, (7) Christ (the new covenant) is superior to the old covenant. Our text (Hebrews 12:5-14) reminds the suffering Hebrew saints that their persecution was not a product of useless suffering, but in the providence of God it was ordained by God so that they would “be partakers of his holiness,” Hebrews 12:10, 14. With this, it is essential that we have a proper understanding of chastisement so that we may better understand the overall providential workings of God in the lives of His people for their sanctification.

Too often when the subject of chastisement is considered it is thought of as a form of punishment for wrong-doing or sin. However, this is not always the case. In fact, the essential point of biblical chastisement is education. The Greek verb is παιδεύω (paideúō, *pahee-dyoo'-o*) and has the basic meaning “to train up a child, i.e. educate, or discipline,” and the Greek noun is παιδεία (paideía, *pahee-di'-ah*) and means “tutorage, i.e. education or training; by implication, disciplinary correction.” Notice how the verb is used in other places of the Scriptures. “And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds,” Acts 7:22 (learned). “I [Paul—JKB] am verily a man *which am* a Jew, born in Tarsus, *a city* in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, *and* taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day,” Acts 22:3 (taught). “Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme,” I Timothy 1:20 (learn). “In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth,” II Timothy 2:25 (instructing). “Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live

soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world,” Titus 2:12 (teaching). The following are examples of the noun. “And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord,” Ephesians 6:4 (nurture). “All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,” II Timothy 3:16 (instruction). Therefore, these verses clearly show that the idea of chastisement is more than punishment for wrong-doing; it is for the purpose of education and correction so that we are on the right path. This is exactly what the writer of Hebrews had in mind when he writes that their suffering for their faith was also used by the Lord for their sanctification so that they were “partakers of his holiness,” (Hebrews 12:10). In other words, in the providence of the Lord their being persecuted for their faith was chastisement “unto children” of God. In fact, Proverbs 3:11-12 was quoted: “My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.” Furthermore, we are told that the Lord chastens those that He loves, that every son of God is chasten, and if one does not receive chastisement he is a bastard and not a son of God. Then we are instructed that in the providence of God each child of grace is chastened so that we are “partakers” of the “holiness” of God, or for our sanctification. In fact, we are additionally told that without holiness (sanctification) we shall not see the Lord, Hebrews 12:14. Sanctification is not an option; sanctification is inclusive of the providential workings of God in the live of each child of grace. Note the words of John Gill as he summarized this.

All men are not the objects of God’s love, only a special people, whom he has chosen in Christ; for whom he has given his Son, when they were sinners and enemies; whom he quickens and calls by his grace, justifies, pardons, and accepts in Christ; and whom he causes to love him; these he loves with an everlasting and unchangeable love, and in a free and sovereign way, without any regard to any motive or condition in them. Now these are chastened by him, and loved while they are chastened; their chastening is in love, as appears from the nature of God’s love to them, which changes not; from the nature of chastening itself; which is that of a father; from the divine supports granted under it; from the ends of it, which are, among others, that they might be more and more partakers of holiness, and not be condemned with the world; and from the issue of it, which is a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

Again, I remind you that the Hebrew saints were not practicing sin whereby the Lord chastened them. No. It was not for wrong-doing whereby they were being chastened. They believed the Christian faith and turned from the Old Testament Judaic worship. They were being persecuted for their faith. In this, the Lord directs their attention to the providential dealings in their lives showing how it is “that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose,” Romans 8:28. Yes, beloved; often things come our way and it appears to be of no purpose to us, but thank the Lord that the trial of our faith is “much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ,” I Peter 1:7. Yes, we are elected “according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ,” I Peter 1:2. Our sanctification is not something left up to us alone, but is part of our salvation that begins experimentally at our new birth and continues throughout our lives as we live on this earth.

When we say that sanctification is not something left up to us alone, we do not mean that we are inactive and that we are to wait until the Lord zaps us with a sudden impulse to do as He commands. No, we are to live in obedience to the gospel after our regeneration. Colossians 1:13 speaks of our regeneration whereby God “delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son.” As stated in previous podcasts, it is only by the power of God that we are delivered out of “the power of darkness” and translated “into the kingdom of his dear Son.” Afterwards,

the gospel is to open our eyes, *and* to turn us “from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me,” Acts 26:18. Note God delivers us “out of the power of darkness” and translates “into the kingdom of his dear Son.” The gospel is “to turn” us “from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God.” The one is “*out of*” and “*into*”; the other is “*from*” darkness and Satan “*unto*” God. It is by the gospel that we receive experimentally the “forgiveness of sins, and” the “inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith.” Again as stated in a previous podcast, our Lord prayed for this in John 17:17: “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.”

The Lord willing we will look into this further in future studies, but our time is up for today. Farewell.