

Since we've been away from the life of David for some weeks, let me provide a short review. If you remember, chapter 11 records David's transgression (his adultery with Bathsheba and murder of Uriah), and chapter 12 records David's restoration (as God sent Nathan the prophet to confront David and recover him from his sin).

And yet, as we shall see this morning, the fact that God forgave and restored David, in no way denied the need for chastisement. David was severely chastised or disciplined by God as a forgiven object of His love.

In fact, there is a sense in which, chapters 13-21, record the consequences that resulted from this chastisement. Thus, it isn't my purpose to expound these chapters individually, but to merely consider them generally, as the essence of them is summarized in 12:10-11.

This brings us to our theme this morning: David's chastisement, and we shall consider it under three headings: Its nature, Its purpose, and Its lessons.

- I. Its nature
- II. Its purpose
- III. Its lessons

I. Its nature

1. The nature of David's chastisement is found in vv10-11—it's stated generically in v10, and more specifically in v11.
2. V10—"Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me."
3. By "sword" is largely meant "division" and "conflict"—there would be opposition within David's house.
4. V11—"Thus says the LORD: 'Behold, I will raise up adversity against you from your own house; and I will take your wives before you eyes and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun.'"
5. Beginning with the very next chapter (13), we find all manner of sin and deceit, within David's household.
6. But as we read through chapters 13-18, it becomes very evident that v11, primarily has Absalom in view.
7. In chapter 13, Absalom killed his brother Amnon, and fled to Geshur for three years—he was eventually brought back by Joab.
8. In chapters 15-18 Absalom rebels against David, steals the kingdom, and chases David out of Jerusalem.
9. He then sends troops after David to kill him, in the meanwhile, he lies with David's wives back in Jerusalem.
10. Absalom eventually dies in chapter 18, but not before he created great opposition against David for many years.
11. Thus, when God says in 12:10—"the sword shall never depart from your house" he fundamentally means two things.
12. (1) Betrayal—here I largely refer to Absalom's betrayal in stealing the kingdom and seeking to kill David.

13. Betrayal is a very difficult thing to endure—if marital betrayal, vocational betrayal, or ecclesiastical betrayal.
14. In fact, I suggest, fewer things are more hurtful than betrayal—someone you trust or love turns on you.
15. What David felt during this time of betrayal is reveal to us in various Psalms, the most likely 41 and 55.
16. Ps.41:7-9—"All who hate me whisper together against me; against me they devise my hurt. Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted up his heel against me."
17. By a "familiar friend" David is likely referring to Ahithophel, a former counselor who sided with Absalom.
18. 2Sam.15:12—"Then Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor, while he offered sacrifices. And the conspiracy grew strong, for the people with Absalom continually increased in number."
19. Here we find that Ahithophel, David's close friend and counselor, betrayed him and aligned himself with Absalom.
20. This dealt a heavy blow to David—"Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted up his heel against me."
21. But surely, brethren, that fact that his own son betrayed him and sought to kill him, was the greatest blow.
22. (2) Bereavement—by "bereavement" is meant sorrow and grief that results from the death of a loved one.
23. David's child with Bathsheba died—Amnon his first-born son died—and then Absalom himself died.
24. All of these, obviously brought great pain and sorrow to David's heart, the death of three of his children.
25. Thus, I want to suggest that divine chastisement or discipline can be relational, physical, and/or spiritual.
26. (a) Relational—that is, the Lord may discipline His people through difficult and trying relationships.
27. In David's case, his children killed other, and his first born (Absalom), betrayed him and sought to kill him.
28. Thus, divine chastisement may come in the form of difficult and trying relationships among family and friends.
29. (b) Physical—that is, the Lord may discipline His people through physical affliction, sickness, and hardship.
30. (c) Spiritual—that is, the Lord may discipline His people through a guilty conscience or a lack of comfort.
31. Thus, regardless if the chastisement is relational, physical, or spiritual, the point is, all discipline is painful.
32. Heb.12:11—"Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been rained by it."
33. Notice two things in this verse about chastisement—first, it's painful, and secondly, it's remedial (corrective).

II. Its purpose

1. Here I want to answer the question, why did God bring a sword to the house of David His beloved child?

2. Why did God intentionally bring David, through all the betrayal and bereavement in chapters 13-21?
3. (1) To defend His name—by this I mean, God publicly disciplined David because his sins were public.
4. God knew that David's behavior, would directly reflect upon Himself—there was a direct connection between God and David.
5. V14—"However, because by this deed you have given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also who is born to you shall surely die."
6. David's behavior encouraged God's enemies to mock and dishonor God—to speak things against God.
7. Thus, God's discipline of David was in the first place, a way for God to defend or vindicate His name.
8. Brethren, surely we understand this—our actions directly reflect upon God—they are necessarily tied together.
9. For example, last week someone broke into my car—thankfully I had nothing in the car of any real value (the only thing they took was a few dollars in change).
10. Now, let me be very clear—I have no solid evidence as to who was the villain who committed this crime.
11. But there are some younger people who live on the other street, who have a reputation for such things.
12. And, for the sake of illustration, let's say, I caught one of them attempting to break into our other vehicle.
13. What would I do? Well, I would take the child to his parents and explain to them what they have done!
14. And, I would expect the parent to discipline their child. Why? Because the child's behavior reflects on the parent!
15. Now, I don't know their parents—but, I assure you this, if I was caught stealing as a child, and brought to my father—he would not be happy.
16. And the reason is obvious—what I've done, brought shame and dishonor upon him as my parent (father).
17. Now again, let's just say the parent looks at me like—"What's the big deal? This is what children do!"
18. Well, like it or not, this reflects poorly on the parent—I am going to be tempted to think or speak negatively of this person.
19. When I see a young child acting up in Walmart, I don't think badly of the child as much as the parent.
20. Thus, God's holy and loving discipline removes any grounds for any person to justly speak evil of Him.
21. (2) To correct His child—by this I mean, God chastened or disciplined David as a means to correct him.
22. In other words, God brought pain upon David, so that David would not repeat the behavior that caused it.
23. This is an obvious and primary purpose behind discipline—so that people associate pain with bad behavior.
24. For example, when your 5-year-old child sins, you apply the rod which inflicts pain upon backside of the child.
25. Why? So that the child associates pain with that behavior, which serves as a deterrent to repeat the behavior.

26. Thus, it's important to remember that divine chastisement is remedial or corrective—it's brings us good.
27. Heb.12:10—"For human fathers chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness."
28. In other words, God disciplines His children for their good—so that they will forsake sin and run to Him.
29. It's for this reason, personally I don't favor referring to God's discipline as punishment but correction.
30. Punishment isn't intended to correct but to merely inflict pain, while discipline inflicts pain to correct.
31. (3) To warn His people—by this I mean, when Scripture records the sins of God's people it also records God's discipline.
32. While Scripture everywhere describes the sins of God's people, it also and equally describes God's chastisement.
33. What if Scripture only recorded the sins of saints but never the discipline of God? That would tempt us to sin.
34. It's for this reason, Scripture records both, so that we know Christians sin, but we also know the consequences.
35. Thus, at this point, I want to briefly suggest three things about God's chastisement—it's mysterious, necessary, and loving,
36. (a) God's chastisement is mysterious—and here, I have to give a very important caution about chastisement.
37. David knew that the child's death and Absalom's betrayal were the direct consequences of his own sins.
38. He knew these through a direct revelation from God—God, through the prophet Nathan, told him these things.
39. But we have to be very careful in judging calamity and affliction in our lives and the lives of those around us (none of us have direct revelation as David did).
40. For example, if there's a sudden death in our family, this doesn't necessarily mean we've committed some great sin.
41. If we have a child that has turned into a rebel, this does not necessarily mean we've committed some great sin.
42. It would be terribly wrong for us, in light of David's example, to pretend to know the secret purposes of God.
43. Brethren, it would be nothing short of foolishness, to presume to know the secret (mysterious) purposes of God!
44. This was fundamentally the fault of Job's three friends, who believed, because Job suffered, he must have been a secret sinner.
45. But God often brings hardship and affliction upon His beloved people for a variety of reasons or purposes.
46. Thus, when we encounter specific hardships and afflictions, we do need to examine ourselves for sin (don't get me wrong).
47. But it does not necessarily mean, that we are harboring any secret or unknown sin in our heart or life.
48. Can you imagine what it would be like, if every time someone encountered an affliction, everyone thought they were a secret sinner!
49. We need to honestly ask ourselves—are we doing anything in rebellion to God, or, are we failing to do what God commands.

50. If there is an area of rebellion, then we must repent from our sin, find forgiveness, and return to God.
51. If the affliction continues, then we trust God has good and wise purposes behind it, and we leave it with Him.
52. (b) God's chastisement is necessary—while every calamity does not argue some secret sin, every calamity is a chastisement of sorts.
53. Because we always sin (though not to the same degree David sinned), we are always in need of discipline.
54. Brethren, I don't think all of us fully understand how often we sin—we sin far more than you or I think.
55. Now again, I am not here talking about open or gross sin—I am not saying Christians habitually commit actual adultery and murder.
56. But what I am saying is this—the seeds of such sins are always present within our hearts and all they need is the right climate.
57. Furthermore, Christians always sin in other ways—remember, "sin is any lack of conformity unto, or transgression of the law of God."
58. In other words, we can by doing what the law forbids, and we can sin by not doing what the commands.
59. The law not forbids adultery and murder but it commands us to love God with all of our heart, mind, soul, and strength.
60. Now, let me ask you—how often do you or I love God with all of our heart, mind, soul, and strength?
61. Well, to the degree we do not, we sin! Put another way, brethren, we sin far more than you or I think!
62. Thus, we must view the discipline of God in two ways—first, when we sin God disciplines us for that sin.
63. Secondly, He is always disciplining us, in the broader sense, because we always have need for it (as we are always sinning).
64. And so, there is a sense in which, every affliction that comes our way, in the broad sense, is a chastisement from God.
65. When our children were younger, there was a time when each of the four girls would be disciplined several times a day.
66. There was a season in our home that lasted 4-5 years, when it felt like all I did all day was apply the rod.
67. And to be honest, I oftentimes felt guilty for applying the rod to my children, every time that they sinned.
68. And here is why—because I knew that I too sinned so often, and yet felt the rod of God so infrequently.
69. But here's the truth—there is a sense in which God is always disciplining in subtle ways for all my sin.
70. (c) God's chastisement is loving—this I trust goes without saying—God chastises His people out of love.
71. Prov.3:11-12—"My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, nor detest His correction; for whom the LORD loves He corrects, just as a father the son in whom he delights."

III. Its lessons

1. In closing, I want to merely suggest three of the many lessons that flow from the theme of David's chastisement.

2. (1) Chastisement is a lawful motive for obedience—in other words, fear of the rod is a legitimate reason to obey God.
3. For example, think again of my young daughters—was it right for them to obey because they feared a spanking?
4. Of course! It's not wrong for a person to obey God because they do not want to be chastened by God.
5. If my daughters failed to fear being spanked, there would have been something seriously wrong with them.
6. Again, this is in part the purpose behind discipline—to attach pain to the behavior so that the behavior isn't repeated.
7. Now, let me clarify! It's best to obey God simply because you love Him, and as a result you love His law.
8. But obeying God because you fear His rod isn't wrong, it's just a lower motive that Christians often need.
9. The Lord knows we are but dust, and He knows that we need a variety of motives to help us obey Him.
10. Furthermore, if you think about this—obeying God for fear of chastisement and out of love go together.
11. Why don't I want to sin? Because I love God and His law, because it dishonors God, and it necessitates His rod.
12. Thus, it's not wrong to obey out of fear of discipline, as we know God does not discipline us joyfully.
13. When our girls were young, I never looked forward to spanking them—in fact, I cried the first few times.
14. Friends, I never looked forward to spanking my children—I never took delight in afflicting pain on them.
15. Lam3:33—"For He does not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men"—He does not apply the rod willingly.
16. The Hebrew word rendered "willingly" literally means "from the heart"—it simply means He doesn't delight in it.
17. Prov.3:11-12—"My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, nor detest His correction; for whom the LORD loves He corrects, just as a father the son in whom he delights (God delights in His people not in chastening them)."
18. (2) Chastisement is a common privilege of adoption—by this I mean, God chastises every single child.
19. I can put this another way—the only people who receive correction, are those who have found forgiveness.
20. Our sins deserve far more than mere correction—we deserve far more than our Father's lovingly applied rod.
21. Remember the distinction I made earlier between punishment and correction—we first deserve punishment before we receive correction.
22. Isa.53:5—"But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed."
23. (3) Chastisement is a limited necessity for this lifetime—that is, Christian chastisement is for this world.
24. Here and now we need chastisement—we need correction—but there is coming a time when we shall need neither.
25. Heaven is a place where all of God's children perfectly obey Him without the need of His chastening rod.