

## I. Review

- A. The author has placed before the reader the faithful great cloud of witnesses: those who endured all the various pulls of this age and pressed in faith to set their eyes and hearts on the promised age-to-come, which the faithful will inherit. They declare and seek a homeland; they desire better. All of these have obtained good testimony through faith, but did not receive the promise. Their faith was perfected through the temporary blessings and trials that God brought upon them in this age. (Heb. 11:16, 39-40)
- B. Context - The Hebrews, to which this letter of exhortation is directed, are currently facing great trouble for their faith in Jesus as the Messiah who has saved them and will bring about the restoration of all things. After a long season of peace, they are now facing loss of business, rejection of family, threats of prison, torture, and martyrdom. All they have to do to avoid these painful circumstances is publicly declare themselves not Christians, but rather, faithful to Judaism.
- C. The author is now going to talk to them specifically about the endurance and understanding needed to overcome the negative circumstances they are facing. If responded to rightly, these trials and tribulations will result in the maturity of their faith and love rather than diminish it.

## II. Verse-by-Verse

- A. You have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as sons - It is of note how much their theology has changed over the years. Previously, the author speaks of how they endured the same exact persecution and suffering with joy and flourished in their faith. Now, about twenty years later, they face almost the same exact circumstances and are in the process of falling away. They have forgotten something they once knew and held dear. They forgot how the Lord uses suffering and trial to bring them into their full inheritance as children. (Rom. 8:28-30; Eph. 1:3-6)
- B. Proverbs 3:11-12 - The context of Proverbs 3 is the happiness and blessedness of the individual who keeps the ways of God and lives their life by allowing God to direct their path. They are known for following the ways of divine wisdom. In this context, a wise individual desires the chastening of the Lord and understands that they are being chastened because of the Lord's delight in them. (Deut. 8:5)

- C. If you endure chastening, God deals with you as sons - The Greek word translated “endure” is often translated “patient”. The idea is that the chastening or correction of God happens more like a season of life rather than a moment of life. Take heart that if you have had seasons of suffering, or are currently in one, even if it's a result of your sin, God is dealing tenderly with you because of His delight in you as His child. He is using this season to produce the righteous lasting fruit of love in you. (2 Sam 7:12-16; 2 Cor. 6:18)

*Jesus uses the least severe means, to reach the greatest number of people, at the deepest level of love, without violating our free will. - Mike Bickle*

- D. If you are without chastening you are not sons - Those who are truly his children will endure chastening; those who are not will reject his chastening. The author uses reality to set apart the legitimate from the illegitimate.
- E. We were corrected by earthly fathers and respected them, how much more shall we subject ourselves to the Father of spirits and live - The respect given to our earthly fathers is the knowledge that they meant the chastening they gave us for our good. The point the author is making is that our earthly fathers were not fully confident that the chastening they gave us was truly going to bear fruit. In contrast, our heavenly Father is perfect and perfectly chastens us to produce the greatest amount of fruit possible. (Rom. 8:13-39)
1. Father of spirits - God designed our spirits (mind, will, emotions) and knows perfectly how our spirits work and exactly what our spirit needs to come to the fullness of love, which is the fullness of life. (Is. 42:5, 57:16; Zec. 12:1)
  2. Romans tells us that it does not matter what the source of our suffering is but rather, our response and confidence in God's ability to conform us into the image of His Son. (Rom. 8:35-39)
- F. Earthly fathers chastened us according to what they thought best, but He for our profit - Though our earthly fathers are doing the best they can, they don't know for sure if their chastening will work how they want. Our Father in heaven brings every correction with perfection in confidence knowing it will produce what He desires it to. We can be totally confident that it will produce for our profit everything that He desires to produce. (Lk. 22:24)

- G. No chastening seems joyful but painful - We must settle it in our hearts that our trial and suffering will produce good if we respond to it with patience, allowing God to produce righteousness and love in us. Then it will produce fruit. Romans tells us that it does not matter the source of our suffering but rather our response and confidence in God's ability to conform us through it. (Rom. 8:35-39)
  
- H. To those who have been trained by it - The language here suggests that there is a growing or training period of learning as to how to respond to trials and suffering with patience, allowing Him to form love in us through it. Once mastered, it produces the fruit of righteousness. Unfortunately, this also means that there are many who are suffering through trials and it is not producing the fruit that God intended simply because the vessel it is happening to has the wrong heart posture.
  
- I. Therefore strengthen yourself - The context is to strengthen yourself to endure the trial that you're currently struggling in, setting yourself to endure it with patience, and let it do its work in you, and set your heart to face all the trials in the same way in the future. (Col. 1:24; 2 Cor. 4:8-11)
  - 1. The defeated vessel - The exhortation that the writer gives is to a lame and nearly defeated individual who's response to the trials they are facing will lead them to having a disabled faith. Rather than allowing this trial to strengthen their faith, it is destroying it.
    - a. Lift your hands - The hands are hanging down and the writer encourages them to lift them. I strongly believe the writer is asking the individual to start with praise and worship to get back on track.
    - b. Strengthen your feeble knees - After responding to the suffering through praise and worship, the writer exhorts the person to stand, and to stand with strength and purpose to endure the trail.
    - c. Make straight paths for your feet - Now the individual must set their path of how to walk through this suffering through faith in the goodness and promise of God concerning salvation in its fullness.
    - d. That what is lame may be healed and not dislocated - Their faith is currently lame and heading towards dislocation, but there is a way for healing to come. In this case, the healing is a true posture of

endurance for victorious suffering in their pursuit of the fullness of God for their lives.