

II. THE CHASTENING TO BE ENDURED (Hebrews 12:4-13)

A. The Limitations of Present Troubles (Hebrews 12:4)

1. The extent of limitations—“Ye have not yet resisted unto blood”
2. The opposition identified—“striving against sin”
3. Note: In the context, we are learning about endurance and the difficulties that seek to keep us from enduring. In times like these, we often isolate ourselves and suggest that nobody has had it as bad as we have. In this verse, the Lord reminds us that we have suffered far less than many who have gone before. After all, “Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.”

B. The Pains of Chastening (Hebrews 12:5)

1. Described by horrible words
 - a. Chastening is considered a *rebuke* (Hebrews 12:5).
 - b. Chastening is likened to *scourging* (Hebrews 12:6).
 - c. Chastening is to be *endured* (Hebrews 12:7).
 - d. Chastening is *grievous* (Hebrews 12:11).
2. Brings with it great temptations
 - a. Despising the chastening of the Lord
 - b. Fainting when rebuked
 - c. In fact, one of the great temptations is that chastening is often attempted to be avoided.
 - (1) We face the chastening of the Lord.
 - (2) We get overwhelmed at the chastening.
 - (3) We grow cold and indifferent toward His correction.
 - (4) We seek to avoid any correction from the Lord.

C. The Love of Chastening (Hebrews 12:6-8)

1. The message of chastening (Hebrews 12:6)
 - a. Whom the Lord loveth
 - b. He chasteneth
2. The relationship of chastening (Hebrews 12:7-8)
 - a. The exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto **children** (Hebrews 12:5).
 - b. My **son**, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord (Hebrews 12:5).
 - c. The Lord scourgeth every **son** whom He receiveth (Hebrews 12:6).
 - d. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with **sons** (Hebrews 12:7).
 - e. For what **son** is he whom the father chasteneth not (Hebrews 12:7)?
 - f. If ye be without chastisement then are ye bastards, and not **sons** (Hebrews 12:8).
 - g. In the end, chastening should be considered a proof of salvation and ought to offer its partaker assurance.

D. The Need for Chastening (Hebrews 12:9-13)

1. Learning subjection (Hebrews 12:9)
 - a. The earthly example
 - (1) We have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us.
 - (2) They chastened us after their own pleasure (Hebrews 12:10).
 - b. The heavenly truth
 - (1) Shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?
 - (2) He chastens for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness (Hebrews 12:10).
2. Healing that which is lame (Hebrews 12:12-13)
 - a. Hands hang down (Hebrews 12:12).
 - b. Knees are feeble (Hebrews 12:12).
 - c. Paths are crooked (Hebrews 12:13).
 - d. Lame things are turned out of the way (Hebrews 12:13).

E. The Goal of Chastening (Hebrews 12:10-13)

1. Our profit (Hebrews 12:10)
 - a. Our fathers chastened us for their pleasure.
 - b. Our Father chastens us for our profit.
 - c. This tells us that God never corrects us without our best interest in His mind.
2. Our righteousness (Hebrews 12:11)
 - a. Chastening is a process by which the believer is purged from unrighteous deeds and thoughts.
 - b. Chastening is a process that yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness.
 - c. God chastens us so that we might be partakers of His holiness (Hebrews 12:10).
3. Our strengthening (Hebrews 12:12-13)
 - a. Lifting up the hands which hang down (Hebrews 12:12)
 - b. Strengthening the feeble knees (Hebrews 12:12)
 - c. Making straight paths (Hebrews 12:13)
 - d. Healing that which is lame (Hebrews 12:13)

F. Grace in Judgment (Hebrews 12:5-13)

1. Accept God's right to deal with you—"despise not" (Hebrews 12:5).
2. Determine that quitting is not an option—"nor faint" (Hebrews 12:5).
3. Recognize love in chastening—"whom the Lord loveth" (Hebrews 12:6).
4. Submit to God's working—"be in subjection" (Hebrews 12:9).
5. Take advantage of the profit—"for our profit" (Hebrews 12:10).
6. Look beyond the chastening—"afterward it yieldeth" (Hebrews 12:11).
7. Rise from dejection—"lift up the hands" (Hebrews 12:12-13).
8. Allow God's healing—"let it rather be healed" (Hebrews 12:13).

III. THE ANTITHESIS OF ENDURANCE (Hebrews 12:14-17)

A. The Call to Endurance (Hebrews 12:14-15)

1. The call to follow (Hebrews 12:14)
 - a. Peace with all men
 - b. Holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord
2. The call to look (Hebrews 12:15)
 - a. The place to look; The wording of the passage suggests that the individual is to look at himself.
 - b. The concern of the look
 - (1) Lest any man fail of the grace of God
 - (2) Lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you; Note:
Bitterness grows from within man much like the root of a plant. If left alone to fester, bitterness will eventually spring up; and when it does, it will “trouble you.” Unfortunately, bitterness is not frequently identified during its infancy. It hides inside the individual with little evidence of its existence. As time passes, our enemies (the world, the flesh, and the devil) feed that bitterness and it begins to spring forth. As it does, it may begin to alarm or even shock us. For instance, we may yell at someone for no apparent reason. Something insignificant can even ruin our entire day. If we are not careful, we can grow increasingly comfortable with our newfound trouble and attitude. As alluded to in the scripture, the solution for bitterness can be likened to the removal of a plant by its roots. Bitterness continues to grow unless removed at its source – from the roots.
- c. The avoidance of the look—“thereby many be defiled”
3. An example of bitterness—Jonah (Jonah 4:1-11); There is no doubt in my mind that Jonah was, at one time, a faithful servant of God. Otherwise, it seems quite unlikely the Lord would have reached out to him in the first place. Somewhere along the way, things went wrong in Jonah’s heart.
 - a. The dawn of being disgruntled (Jonah 1:1-3)
 - (1) The enlightenment of God’s will (Jonah 1:1-2)
 - (2) The departure from God’s will (Jonah 1:3)
 - (3) The preference to God’s will (Jonah 4:1-2)
 - b. The destruction of being disgruntled (Jonah 1:4-17; Jonah 2:1-10; Jonah 3:1-10)
 - (1) The troubles brought upon others (Jonah 1:4-17)
 - a) The damage to the ship (Jonah 1:4)
 - b) The personal crisis for the mariners (Jonah 1:5-10)
 - c) The crisis of decision for the mariners (Jonah 1:11-17)
 - (2) The chastening brought upon oneself (Jonah 1:15-17; Jonah 2:1-10)
 - (3) The neglect of the needs of others (Jonah 3:1-10)

- c. The depravity resulting from being disgruntled (Jonah 4:1-11)
 - (1) Jonah's inability to rejoice (Jonah 4:1-4)
 - a) He was angry when he should have been rejoicing (Jonah 4:1).
 - b) He tried to justify his anger (Jonah 4:2).
 - c) He would rather die than live (Jonah 4:3).
 - d) He refuses to answer the Lord's dealings (Jonah 4:4).
 - (2) Jonah's exaggeration of his troubles (Jonah 4:5-9)
 - (3) Jonah's misplaced frustration (Jonah 4:10-11)
 - a) He had pity on the gourd (Jonah 4:10).
 - b) He thought God should smite the Ninevites (Jonah 4:11).
- d. Note: Jonah's story ended with Jonah disgruntled. If nothing else, this demonstrates the difficulty of a believer returning from a disgruntled heart. It starts with a departure from the known will of God and ends with ungodly and inhumane frustrations.

B. The Example of Failure (Hebrews 12:16-17)

- 1. Esau's boastful bond—"any fornicator" (Hebrews 12:16a)
 - a. He took wives to himself (Genesis 26:34).
 - b. He married women of the Canaanites (Genesis 26:34; James 4:4).
 - c. He grieved those who bore him (Genesis 26:35; Genesis 28:8).
- 2. Esau's bartered birthright (Hebrews 12:16b)
 - a. The benefits of the birthright
 - (1) A double inheritance (Deuteronomy 21:17)
 - (2) A promised blessing (Genesis 17:6-8)
 - (3) A place in the line of Christ (Matthew 1:1)
 - (4) Could be forfeited by sin (1 Chronicles 5:1-2)
 - b. The bartering of his birthright
 - (1) He came in faint from the field (Genesis 25:29-30).
 - (2) He counted his birthright as nothing (Genesis 25:31-32).
 - (3) He sold his birthright for his belly (Genesis 25:33-34).
- 3. Esau's broken blessing (Hebrews 12:17)
 - a. He was favoured for his venison (Genesis 25:28).
 - b. He was rejected in the blessing (Genesis 27:33, 37).
 - c. He was bitter at his loss (Genesis 27:34) but not repentant for his sin (Hebrews 12:17).
 - d. He was therefore limited to earthly blessings (Genesis 27:39).
 - e. He refused the path of submission (Genesis 27:40).

C. The Latter Victory of Esau?

- 1. Esau's early life (Genesis 25:19-28)
 - a. His birth (Genesis 25:19-26)
 - (1) His mother's barrenness (Genesis 25:19-21)
 - (2) His struggle to be born (Genesis 25:22-26)
 - a) The struggle in the womb (Genesis 25:22-23)
 - b) The struggle in delivery (Genesis 25:24-26)

- i) Esau came out first (Genesis 25:24-25)
 - ii) Jacob grabbed hold of Esau's heel (Genesis 25:26)
- b. His life (Genesis 25:27-28)
 - (1) His likes (Genesis 25:27)
 - a) He was a cunning hunter
 - b) A man of the field
 - (2) His love (Genesis 25:28)
- 2. Esau's troubles (Genesis 25:29-Genesis 28:9)
 - a. The selling of his birthright (Genesis 25:29-34)
 - b. The choice of a wife (Genesis 26:34-35)
 - (1) He married a Hittite (Genesis 26:34).
 - (2) His marriage was a grief of mind to his parents (Genesis 26:35).
 - c. The loss of his blessing (Genesis 27:1-40)
 - d. The presence of anger (Genesis 27:41-46)
 - (1) He desired to kill his brother (Genesis 27:41).
 - (2) His brother was removed, but no doubt the desire remained (Genesis 27:42-46).
 - e. The choice of another wife (Genesis 28:6-9)
 - (1) Knowing what would displease his parents (Genesis 28:6, 8)
 - (2) In response to his brother's obedience (Genesis 28:7)
 - (3) He chose a daughter of Ishmael (Genesis 28:9).
- 3. Esau's chance at vengeance (Genesis 32:1-23)
 - a. Jacob's apprehension to return (Genesis 32:1-8)
 - (1) Jacob sent messengers with gifts (Genesis 32:1-5).
 - (2) The messengers returned with news of Esau's coming (Genesis 32:6).
 - (3) Jacob derived a plan of survival (Genesis 32:7-8).
 - b. Jacob's plea for God's help (Genesis 32:9-12)
 - c. Jacob's last attempt to buy Esau's forgiveness (Genesis 32:13-20)
 - (1) Jacob's idea for a present (Genesis 32:13-15)
 - (2) Jacob's division of his possessions (Genesis 32:16)
 - (3) Jacob's instructions for each group (Genesis 32:17-20)
- 4. Esau's choice to forgive (Genesis 33:1-15)
 - a. Jacob's sight of Esau (Genesis 33:1-3)
 - b. Esau's response (Genesis 33:4-15)
 - (1) He ran to meet Jacob and embraced him (Genesis 33:4).
 - (2) He asked of Jacob's companions in travel (Genesis 33:5-7).
 - (3) He asked of the gifts (Genesis 33:8-9).
 - (4) He offered to go before Jacob and leave others with him in the journey (Genesis 33:10-15).
- 5. Concluding thoughts: When Jacob left home, he did so because his life was in danger. Esau had every intention of destroying Jacob for destroying him. One would think the years would only serve to make Esau increasingly bitter. Jacob certainly expected it. Yet, somewhere along the way Esau resolved the issue in his own heart and instead joyously welcomed his brother with love and forgiveness. All without a single "I'm sorry" from Jacob.

IV. THE MOUNT TO BE APPROACHED (Hebrews 12:18-29)**A. The Things of the Law (Hebrews 12:18-21)**

1. An earthly mount (Hebrews 12:18)
 - a. A mount that might be touched.
 - (1) This means that it was:
 - a) Literal
 - b) Physical
 - c) Visible
 - (2) The truth is, the mount could be touched, but would have been done to the detriment of the one touching the mount (Exodus 19:12-13).
 - b. A mount that burned with fire. Note: According to the original account, the LORD descended upon the mount in fire (Exodus 19:18).
 2. A darkness (Hebrews 12:18; see Exodus 19:16-18)
 - a. Blackness
 - b. Darkness
 - c. Tempest
 - d. Note: According to the original account:
 - (1) There was a thick cloud upon the mount (Exodus 19:16).
 - (2) Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke (Exodus 19:18).
 - (3) The smoke ascended as the smoke of a furnace (Exodus 19:18).
 3. An audible sound (Hebrews 12:19)
 - a. The sound of a trumpet
 - b. The voice of words
 - c. Note: This voice caused so much fear that the people “intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more.”
 4. A fearful appearance (Hebrews 12:20-21)
 - a. The fear of the people (Hebrews 12:20)
 - (1) They could not endure that which was commanded (see Deuteronomy 5:23-31).
 - a) The fearful sight moved the heads of tribes and elders among the people to approach Moses with a request that Moses act as a mediator between the people and God (Deuteronomy 5:23-27).
 - b) God heard the suggestion of the people and agreed that Moses could act as the mediator (Deuteronomy 5:28-31).
 - (2) If so much as a beast touch the mountain:
 - a) It shall be stoned
 - b) Or thrust through with a dart
 - b. The fear of Moses (Hebrews 12:21)
 - (1) The vision of Moses—“so terrible was the sight”
 - (2) The words of Moses—“I exceedingly fear and quake”; Note: How did the writer of Hebrews know that Moses said these words? After all, these words are not recorded.