

v.11 In fact, all discipline for the moment is not seeming to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it is yielding the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

Proverbs 29:19

A servant cannot be corrected by mere words; though he understands, he will not respond.

GOD'S DISCIPLINE HAS ETERNITY IN VIEW.

All of the discipline from His hand:

"IS NOT SEEMING TO BE JOYFUL, BUT SORROWFUL" while we are going through it.

"YET TO THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN TRAINED BY IT" it is going to eventually be "YIELDING THE PEACEFUL FRUIT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS."

We have a NEGATIVE and a POSITIVE STATEMENT in verse 11:

"ALL DISCIPLINE FOR THE MOMENT IS [NEGATIVELY] NOT SEEMING TO BE JOYFUL, BUT [in contrast, POSITIVELY] SORROWFUL."

"THE PEACEFUL FRUIT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS" is that righteousness which is produced out of the right relationship with our Heavenly Father. It is the fruit that is born in:

1. John 15 through the relationship of the VINE TO THE BRANCH.
2. Galatians 5:22, 23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

Lamentations 3:33

For he does not willingly bring affliction or grief to the children of men.

Psalm 103:13

As a father has compassion on his children,
so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him;

Isaiah 32:17

The fruit of righteousness will be peace; the effect of righteousness will be quietness and confidence forever.

Bruce says:

The person who accepts discipline at the hand of God as something designed by his heavenly Father for his good will cease to feel resentful and rebellious; he has "calmed and quieted" his soul, which thus provides fertile soil for the cultivation of a righteous life, responsive to the will of God.
p. 346

F. B. Meyer asks:

Where, think you, does the Husbandman of souls most often see the fruit He loves so well? Not within the halls of successful ambition or satiated luxury, but in cottages of poverty, and rooms dedicated to ceaseless pain. Genial almost to a miracle is the soil of sorrow. Necessary beyond all count is the pruning knife of pain.

Count if you will the precious kinds of fruit. There is *patience* which endures the Father's will; and *trust* that sees the Father's hand behind the rough disguise; and *peace* that lies still, content with the Father's plan; and *righteousness* that conforms itself to the Father's requirements; and *love* that clings more closely than ever to the Father's heart; and *gentleness* which deals leniently with others, because of what we have learned of ourselves.
pp. 45-46

Pink observes:

It is called the "*peaceable* fruit" because it issues in the taming of our wild spirits, the quieting of our restless hearts, the more firm anchoring of our souls. But this only comes when we truly realize that it is the Father's *love* which has afflicted us. May the Spirit of God grant us all "exercised" hearts, so that we shall daily search ourselves, examine our ways, and be stripped of all that is displeasing to Him.

p. 79

Kistemaker says:

The message of Hebrews is the same. The suffering you encounter is painful, says the writer, but when the period of distress has ended, you will be able to see results: "a harvest of righteousness and peace." Your reward will be a right relationship with God and man in which peace reigns supreme. You are the peacemakers. Says James, "Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness" (3:18).

p. 379

Hession says:

His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour:
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.

p. 196

Thomas says:

This is suggested by the phrase, "they which are exercised," and everything depends on the attitude which we take towards suffering. We are not to forget, not to despise, not to faint (v. 5), but we are to endure (v. 7), and to be in subjection (v. 9). When this attitude is realized, then we understand the direct and blessed connection between "discipleship" and "discipline."

p. 161

DeHaan says:

THE important key word in this verse is *afterward*. It points to the future, after we have finished the race, and looking back, find the answer to all God's mysterious dealings in sending upon us the trials, testings, tribulations and chastenings which today seem so unexplainable and meaningless. Then we shall fully comprehend the wisdom of God in dealing with us so severely, and rejoice in the great fact of Romans 8:28, "that all things work together for good." All our questions will be answered and the reason for all our trials be made plain.

p. 176

Stedman says:

One definition of a Christian is: one who is completely fearless, continually cheerful, and constantly in trouble. This is exactly what this passage describes.

p. 215

Wiersbe in his little book Run With the Winners says:

Athletes must discipline themselves if they ever hope to be winners. They must obey the training rules and submit to the plans of their coaches and trainers. But the results are worth it! "All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness" (Hebrews 12:11).

Afterwards!

That means *faith*-waiting for God to accomplish His purposes!

p. 156

(The Finishing Touch: Becoming God's Masterpiece: A Daily Devotional by Charles R. Swindoll)

“The plowed life is the life that has . . . thrown down the protecting fences and sent the plow of confession into the soul. . . . Such a life has put away defense and has forsaken the safety of death for the peril of life. Discontent, yearning, contrition, courageous obedience to the will of God: these have bruised and broken the soil till it is ready again for the seed. And as always fruit follows the plow.”

--A. W. Tozer, *Paths to Power*

p. 565

v.12 Therefore, strengthen the hands that are weak and the knees which have become disabled,

In light of the fact that we are called upon to endure by considering the Lord Jesus who endured, and that what we are going through right now is part of the educational process, the disciplining of us as his children.

There are a NUMBER OF THINGS THAT WE NEED TO DO, TWO of which are here in verse 12:

1. "STRENGTHEN THE HANDS THAT ARE WEAK" and
 2. "THE KNEES WHICH HAVE BECOME DISABLED" (or weak).
1. "THE HANDS THAT ARE WEAK" is a picture of the FIGHTER IN THE RING, who in his exhaustion begins to drop his hands and is getting ready to surrender to the opponent.
 2. "THE KNEES WHICH HAVE BECOME DISABLED" is the problem of the RUNNER WHO IS RUNNING IN THE RACE.

It is PETER who says in:

1 Peter 1:6

In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials,

The Bible Knowledge Commentary calls this section:

THE CALL TO RENEWED SPIRITUAL VITALITY (12:12-17)

The author sensed the tendency to spiritual weakness in his readers, and in light of the truths he had expounded he encouraged them to renew their strength. If they would do this and would pursue the **level paths** which real righteousness entails, the weakest among them (**the lame**) would not be further **disabled, but rather healed**. Their own strength would benefit weaker Christians.

p. 810

Pink says:

This, it seems to us, is the figure carried forward in our text; "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are *exercised* thereby. *Wherefore* lift up the hands which hang down." The Christian who gives way before trial, who sinks under affliction, who sulks or repines beneath persecution, will bring forth none of the "peaceable fruit of righteousness." If he "faints" under chastisement, if his hands become idle and his legs no longer capable of supporting him, a profitable use cannot be made of the tribulation through which he is called upon to pass. Then let him pull himself together, gird up the loins of his mind and "*endure* hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ"

(2 Tim. 2:3). Let his attitude be, Now is the time of my training, so I will seek to play the man; I will seek grace from God to muster all my faith and courage and valiantly wrestle with whatever opposes and oppresses me.

p. 83

Bruce says:

Reverting to his athletic figure of speech, our author bids his readers brace their flagging limbs and press on to the goal. Some of their number were feeling especially discouraged and disinclined to make the necessary effort; the others should do everything possible to help them.

p. 347

Lane says:

A transition from the central paragraph (vv 4-11) to the concluding exhortation of the section (vv 12-13) is signaled by the explanatory particle "therefore." The thought of training through disciplinary sufferings in v 11 suggested the metaphor of an athletic contest requiring flexed arms and strong knees.

p. 426

MacArthur says:

The writer of Hebrews got his metaphor from Isaiah. The faithful in Israel had been through a lot. They had many evil kings, some false prophets, generally disobedient and stubborn fellow Israelites, powerful enemies who threatened them, and seemingly no prospect of ever living in their own land in peace. They were discouraged and despondent, ready to give up. So the prophet reminds them of the coming kingdom, when "the wilderness and the desert will be glad" and "they will see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God" (Isa. 35:1-2). Then he counsels them to counsel each other: "Encourage the exhausted, and strengthen the feeble. Say to those with anxious heart, 'Take courage, fear not. Behold, your God will come with vengeance; the recompense of God will come, but He will save you'" (v. 3-4). In other words, "Don't give up now. A better day is coming. Look to that and you will have the encouragement and strength you need. Victory is ahead!"

p. 402

Westcott says:

Wherefore since discipline is necessary, painful, and salutary, provide, as you can, that it may be effectual. Strengthen where it is possible those who are called to endure it; and remove from their way stumbling-blocks which can be removed.

The Apostle urges those who were themselves in danger to help others in like peril. Such efforts are the surest support of the tempted.
p. 404

Wiersbe in Be Confident says:

Verses 12 and 13 sound like a coach's orders to his team! Lift up your hands! Strengthen those knees! (Isa. 35:3) Get those lazy feet on the track! (Prov. 4:26) On your mark, get set, GO!

The example of God's Son, and the assurance of God's love, certainly should encourage us to endure in the difficult Christian race.
p. 141

1 Timothy 4:8

for bodily discipline is only little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.

v.13 and be making straight paths for your feet, in order that [the limb] which is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed.

We have a NEGATIVE and a POSITIVE here.

"BE MAKING STRAIGHT PATHS FOR YOUR FEET."

The PURPOSE is:

"IN ORDER THAT [THE LIMB] WHICH IS LAME MAY
[NEGATIVELY] NOT BE DISLOCATED,
BUT [POSITIVELY] RATHER BE HEALED."

Psalm 37:23, 24

If the Lord delights in a man's way,
he makes his steps firm;
though he stumble, he will not fall,
for the Lord upholds him with his hand.

The SECRET TO THE FULFILLMENT OF THIS COMMAND is:

Proverbs 3:5, 6

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and shun evil.

When you and I rebel we are like sheep that go astray, and through the afflicting and disciplining process, we are brought back to that path. Now to avoid further acts of discipline, he is saying:

"BE MAKING STRAIGHT PATHS FOR YOUR FEET."

The PURPOSE being:

"IN ORDER THAT [THE LIMB] WHICH IS LAME MAY NOT BE DISLOCATED, BUT RATHER BE HEALED."

THE LORD IS NOT EASY TO DEAL WITH WHEN WE RESIST HIM.

It is far better to:

RESPOND BY OBEDIENCE than

PERSIST IN THE PATH OF DISOBEDIENCE.

Responding properly to discipline and returning to the straight and narrow path of the will of the Heavenly Father will allow that which has been lamed through the affliction to be healed.

Galatians 2:11-13

But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. For prior to the coming of certain men from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he began to withdraw and hold himself aloof, fearing the party of the circumcision. And the rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy.

Owen says:

To make straight paths is to walk uprightly in the paths of obedience; and so to walk in them that others may see and know that our paths are straight, for this is necessary unto the end proposed, namely, the preservation of others from being turned out of the way, or their recovery from their wandering. The duties especially enjoined in this precept are courage, resolution, constancy in profession, with a diligent watch against all crooked compliances or fearful relinquishment of duties.

p. 252

Lane says:

Instead, the imagery of v 12 is enriched from another passage from Proverbs which the writer evidently recalled:

My child . . . let your eyes look straight ahead;
 fix your gaze directly before you.
 make level paths for your feet
 and take only ways that are firm.
 Do not swerve to the right or to the left;
 keep your feet from evil. (Prov 4:25-27)

The instruction is appropriate for a person who is to compete in a race that will be long and arduous. He must move straight toward the goal, not swerving from the track that will lead him to his determined destination. Normally, those whose limbs are lame cannot compete in the race. Christians who are prepared to heed the writer's pastoral instruction, however, have the prospect that even the lame will not be disabled but will experience the healing that God provides to those whose purpose is narrowly determined by Christ.

p. 427

Lange quotes Rieger who says:

--Those are sure steps which are made in accordance with the course and conflict which God has ordained, with our eye on the goal of joy and glory that is set before us, and in confidence in the grace of God, accompanying us at every step.

p. 203

Bruce says:

Sprains and similar injuries must be bound up, so that the whole community may complete the course without loss.

p. 348

After losing their husband and daddy, Mike, at age 37, Jay and Julie Alexander composed this poem in his memory:

These three little sheep have a Shepherd who cares
 As we give Him our pain, our sorrow He bears.
 The Lord is our Shepherd, He will lead us each day
 Our job is to follow Him and listen to Him say--
 "Be still my little sheep and know that I am God
 I alone can bring you comfort--take my staff and my rod.
 This road of much sorrow I've walked in it too
 It led Me to Calvary where I suffered for you.
 I know that your pain on this earth is intense
 But look to the future--heaven's glory is immense!
 So trust Me each moment--one day at a time
 My grace is sufficient for each sheep of mine."
 Jay soon will be ten, his interests are many
 It seems that Mom's taxi is running a'plenty!
 There's sports and piano and scouts and school
 And time at the computer is another new tool.
 Now Julie is five, but approaching fifteen
 Her vigor is constant--always full steam!
 But her child-like faith has been such a guide
 To learn how our Shepherd wants us to abide.
 Her memories of Mike have brought joy each day
 As she fondly reminds us "what Daddy would say"
 It's a matter of fact and so full of love
 We can't help but smile and look up above.
 Then back to our Shepherd we come for that hope
 We give Him the glory as we're learning to cope.
 "Be still my little sheep and know that I am God
 I am with you each moment, each step that you trod.
 Stand firm in the fact that I don't make mistakes
 Your days have been numbered--it wasn't left to fate.
 Just look to eternity as you shine forth My light
 And soon that strong faith will become full sight."
 These three little sheep are "going for the gold"
 (1 Peter 1:6,7)
 As to our dear Shepherd we tightly hold.
 We're thankful for family and friends each day
 Who've been faithful to remember us and continue to pray.

(From Parson's Bible Illustrator 1.0)