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CHAIN SINNING, AN OCCUPATIONAL HAZARD

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF HEBREWS
NUMBER 124
HEBREWS 12:13-14

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Let us first get a correct translation of verses 9-12.

Verse 9

"Another point is this: We used to have our human parents for corrective discipline and we respected them. To a greater degree, you will become subordinated to the Father of our spirits and continue living in this world."

Verse 10

"For they (parents) on the one hand, disciplined us for a short time according to what seemed best to them; But He (God) on the other hand, disciplines us for our profit in order that we might receive a share of his holiness."

Verse 11

"On the one hand, all discipline, while in progress, appears to be an occasion not for happiness but for sorrow. But on the other hand, afterwards it pays back with interest prosperous gain from righteousness from those who are trained by the same discipline."

Verse 12

"Therefore, restore to power the listless hands and the disabled knees."

Verse 13 "And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed." We begin with kai which is a connective "and." Then we have a quotation from Proverbs 4:26. This is a quote from the Septuagint and not from the Hebrew. We have the word "make" and it is the present, active, imperative of poieo and should be translated "be constantly making." It is a tendential present and means it is an action commanded though this action is not actually taking place at the present time in Jerusalem. It was 67 A.D. and presently in Jerusalem the people were in reversionism and were not doing this. Next we have two words orthas and troichia and it means to stay in the straight tracks God has laid down in doctrine. It takes positive volition toward doctrine in order to do this. The tracks are already there, we just have to stay in them. It takes positive volition toward doctrine for us to do this. Next we have the expression "by means of your feet." Now we have hina plus the negative me and it is translated "lest" and it is a negative purpose clause. "That which is lame" is a nominative neuter adjective from cholas and it means "crippled." So we translate this "in order that the crippled ones." These are the reversionists on negative volition toward doctrine. Now we introduce the negative me and translated it "be not turned out of the way" and this means to be out of joint. When you are in the process of recovery, it is so easy to slip back into reversionism. Reversion recovery is so much more difficult than constant daily growth. "Not to be put out of joint" is referring to reversionism. Something that pulled you off the wheel tracks once can easily pull you off again. There are a number of things that can pull you off the tracks. (1) Mental attitude sins can cause a relaps. (2) The lust pattern of the old sin nature can do it. (3) Distractions that come in your social life and pleasure, such as family or relatives.

Next we have the aorist, passive, subjunctive of ek trepo and is translated here "turned out." This gathers all together the distractions that pull you out of fellowship and this anticipates the chain sinning of verse 15. This aorist tense gathers all these distractions into one bundle. The passive voice means that you receive this pulling out from your old sin nature and from circumstances around you. The subjunctive mood is used here with the negative to show this is a prohibition.

SEVEN WAYS TO BECOME INVOLVED IN CHAIN SINNING

1. MENTAL ATTITUDE SINS OF JEALOUSY AND BITTERNESS MOTIVATES REVENGE TACTICS.

Both jealousy and bitterness lead to the place where they can't be contained any longer and they must be expressed. Bitterness and jealousy always must have an object and this always produces other kinds of sins. It will lead to vengeance, all kinds of social sins. This means that you are trying to build your happiness on the unhappiness of someone else. This leads to sins of the tongue and you try to hurt someone else in this way.

2. THE SIN OF GUILT COMPLEX.

This is when you allow every new suffering that comes to you to be associated with some past sin or failure. People are often impressed deeply by their past sins or failures. In fact, they are over impressed. Even though they have confessed these sins and God has forgiven them, when some new problem arises, they always associate their trouble or suffering with that old sin back there. This is the way you so easily set up chain sinning retroactively. Someone commits a sin which to them was terrible and even though God forgives it, they can't get over it. They go way back there and dig it up, and they forget that God keeps short accounts. It may be that a guilt complex is the worst monster that can haunt your life. Once you rebound through confession according to 1 John 1:9, then there is absolutely no reason for a guilt complex caused by that sin you confessed.

3. CHAIN SINNING CAN COME FROM WHAT IS CALLED A VICTORIOUS LIFE EXPERIENCE.

Public confession of some sin can very easily be an off-shoot of a guilt complex. About all people do in a public confession of their sin is to advertise their sin to others. This gets other people upset also. It is not victorious living, in fact it is insanity. You should confess your sins to God. Those Oxford Groups, those Moral Rearmament people, the Prayer Groups where people confess their sins to one another are doing far more to spread sin than they are to curb it. One gets up and confesses his sin and then someone else gets up and tries to top what has been said before. This destroys the privacy of believers. Sharing like this adds sin to sin. This kind of activity perpetuates sinning. It leads to massive group sinning.

4. CHAIN SINNING CAN BE PERPETUATED BY SUPER IMPOSING HUMAN VOLITION OVER THE DIVINE PEROGATIVE OF JUDGMENT AND CONDEMNATION.

Chain sinning comes from judging other believers. Often jealousy, hatred, envy, implacability can cause this kind of chain sinning. Quite often self-righteousness motivates this kind of

sinning. Judgment belongs to the Lord and we ought to let him function in this realm for he can always handle it perfectly. Even if we had all the facts we shouldn't judge but we never do have all the facts. (This is why it is so good to have Bible teaching like this. You can say inwardly, "I know he is saying that just for me," but you can keep a straight face and keep your privacy and no one will know I am talking just to you.) You can evaluate people when you have to give a recommendation, but this is entirely different from judging others. We have people who run around and spread all kinds of gossip and then piously will say to you, "I am only telling you this so you can pray for them." People who run off at the mouth in spreading gossip can be the source of all kinds of chain sinning.

5. CHAIN SINNING FROM OPERATION PATSY.

This is the person who avoids taking the responsibility for his own sins and always tries to find someone else to blame it on. We call this a patsy. This is finding a victim upon whom you can blame your failure. We begin quite early in life with this kind of thing. When quite young, we make a mistake and then say, "John Jones made me do it." People quite often make a patsy out of someone they do not like. Or they will blame the preacher. It is so easy for the wife or husband to blame their partner for their own failures. Then parents, who have children who do not turn out right, often blame the failure of their children on the church or on the school. People come in and kick the dog and blame him for their failure. One of the ways to prove your maturity is to take responsibility for your own actions. If we are to take praise for our good accomplishments, then we must be willing to take the criticism for our failures.

6. CHAIN SINNING COMES FROM MANUFACTURING A GREAT CONTROVERSY BY FAILING TO SET RIGHT YOUR DIFFERENCES WITH OTHER BELIEVERS, RELATIVES OR FRIENDS.

Often people will try to gain sympathy by running down their mate to someone else. A noble person is one who never complains to outsiders. You can isolate a controversy by never complaining to others. (Even when I was more inexperienced than I am now, there is one thing I refused to do--I never would take controversial things to the pulpit. The pulpit is no place for airing the dirty linen of a church.)

7. CHAIN SINNING CAUSED BY HYPOCRISY AND PSEUDO LOVE.

Live and let live is necessary for happiness. When we try to cover up our own mistakes with hypocrisy and pseudo love we always create an environment in which misunderstanding can easily grow. Some people are real gifted in doing this. Everywhere they move they cause suspicion. Many innocent bystanders can get hurt in this way.

Now we have the expression, "But let it rather be healed." This is the contrast to the relapse into reversionism as we advance to the high ground. The word for "but" is de and the word for "rather" is mallon and when they are used together, it is an idiom to show a complete contrast. "Let it be healed" is the aorist, passive, subjunctive of

iaomai and it means to recover from some illness, to be restored. The passive voice means that you will receive this healing. The subjunctive mood is potential, and it means this recovery will come if you are willing to take in doctrine and let it come.

This verse correctly translated says, "Be making straight tracks by means of your feet in order that the crippled one not be again put out of joint, but rather let it be healed."

HEBREWS 12:14 "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:" This is a description of the royal road. The road to glory sets up normal objectives for living the Christian life. We are alive in the Devil's world and we are here because of who and what God is and because of the principle of living grace. We have been given saving grace, then every day we get living grace, and as we learn doctrine, we move into super grace, and then when we come to die, we are given dying grace. We then walk across the golden drawbridge and we move into surpassing grace. As a believer walks this road, God is glorified. God is glorified when he can shower maximum blessings upon us.

"Follow peace" is not exactly the meaning of this phrase. This does not mean you are to let people walk over you in order for you to have peace and it doesn't mean peace at any price. This is a present, active, imperative of dioko and it really means to keep moving forward to your objective. This is to be the pattern of our lives all the time.

Next we have the accusative singular of the noun eirene. This is a catch all word and means peace, health, welfare, harmony. Here it means prosperity in the spiritual realm. Just like the word shaloam. It means temporal blessings, promotion, success, wealth, leadership dynamics. So we will translate this, "Keep pressing toward the objective."

All Believers Included

We have the words meta and pas and it means with all those who seek to advance by taking in doctrine. We are all members of the royal family of God so we might translate meta pas "with all the royal family." So thus far we have this--"Keep pressing forward toward the objective of maturity with all the royal family."

And Holiness

This comes from kai plus the accusative singular of hagiosmos. We are to press toward sanctification. Holiness doesn't mean making a fool of yourself. It doesn't mean being superficial. It doesn't mean speaking in tongues. It doesn't mean to live in excitement and always have a rosy glow. (Speaking in tongues is a distortion of holiness. People need to understand Isaiah 28:11 and how Pentecost fulfilled this prophetic statement of how the gospel would be given in Gentile languages.) There is nothing holy about speaking in tongues. It is the worst arrogance in all the world. The speaking in tongues crowd, the holiness crowd, the four-square groups, the Pentecostals, all of these are not a fair representation of holiness. Neither is a person holy because he lives a good moral life. (The Rich Young Ruler is an illustration of what holiness is not.)

WHAT IS HOLINESS?

(Sanctification and holiness is one and the same.)

1. SANCTIFICATION AND HOLINESS MEANS TO BE SET APART.
 It means belonging to God. It means to be related to God in the way he has outlined in his Word. It means to be under contract to God forever. The actual death of Christ set aside the old shadows. Sanctification and holiness defines the believer in the Church Age who is living under a new contract from God. It is a forever contract. It is founded on the adequate and efficacious work of Christ on the cross. In fact, we sign the contract the moment we believe in Christ. Therefore, every believer is said to be holy or sanctified.

2. THE ETMOLOGY OF THE WORD HOLINESS IN THE BIBLE.
 The words hagi or hogo all connote separation.
HAGIOS. It is translated saint or holy. It refers to the one who is under the new contract. You believe in Christ and are said to be a saint. You are set apart unto God forever. (Put saint in front of your name and see how it sounds to you.)
HAGIOTES. It means holiness, or the state of being under contract to God. It is called the new covenant.
HAGIOSUNE. It means the state of being holy.
HAGIOSMOS. This means sanctification or holiness.
HAGIAZO. This is the verb and it means to be set apart. All of these words apply only to those who have been saved.

3. SANCTIFICATION IN THIS LIFE.
 This sets us aside from Old Testament saints. They were born again just as we are and they are family of God. But the difference is this--we are Royal Family. Adam and Eve eventually accepted Christ and entered into the family of God, as did Abel and Seth, and Abraham and Moses and Isaiah, but they were not saints in the same way we are. In the Church Age we too are born again and we too are family of God. But we are Royal Family and the difference is the ministry of God the Holy Spirit in us. To us something happens that never happened before. WE CALL IT THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. We are entered into union with Christ forever. We are in a higher rank than the Old Testament believers. The Holy Spirit indwells us and seals us. This was not true in Old Testament times. Since this is true, in the Church Age each believer is given a special gift from God.

4. WE HAVE A LIVING SANCTIFICATION IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.
 Thus we are to seize and hold the high ground. This is spiritual maturity, and we call it super grace. Seize and hold, and this can be done only when we are filled with the Holy Spirit and when we take in doctrine on a daily basis.

5. THERE IS ALSO AN ULTIMATE SANCTIFICATION.
 This will not come until we have a resurrection body, minus the old sin nature, minus all human good, minus the lake of fire.

6. NOTICE THE AGENT IN SANCTIFICATION.
 - a. Jesus Christ, the Son of God. (Hebrews 10:10 and 14)
 - b. The Holy Spirit. (Romans 15:16, 2 Thess. 2:13)
 - c. The Word of God. (John 17:17 and Ephesians 5:26)

7. SANCTIFICATION AND THE ANGELIC CONFLICT.
 - a. At the moment of salvation, the believer is positionally higher than angels.
 - b. As the believer lives out his life, he takes in doctrine and matures and this can only happen as the work of The Holy Spirit in his life.
 - c. The Royal Family will at once be superior to angels when they receive resurrection bodies.

8. SANCTIFICATION IS THE UNIQUENESS OF THE BELIEVER IN THE CHURCH AGE.

It is based on the triumph of Christ on the cross, his resurrection from the grave, his ascension into heaven and his session at the right hand of God.

9. THE PURPOSE OF SANCTIFICATION IS TO LEAD US TO SPIRITUAL MATURITY.

Holiness is the super grace life, the road to glory. "Likewise aspire to holiness."

This verse continues with the words "without which" from kai hos choris. This refers to saving grace. "No one shall see" is the future, active, indicative of horao. This is a dogmatic future.

So this verse correctly translated says, "With all the royal family, keep moving toward the objective, namely, maturity (This is for the believers). Likewise, you unbelievers, aspire to saving sanctification without which no one will see the Lord."