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HOW I KNOW I AM GOD'S SON

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF HEBREWS
NUMBER 122
HEBREWS 12:7-9

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Let's first get a corrected translation of verses 5 and 6.

Verse 5

And so, you, yourselves, have forgotten the principles of doctrine which teach you as sons; "My son, do not make light of corrective discipline from the Lord, nor be fainting or become discouraged when you are reprov'd by him."

Verse 6

For you see, whom the Lord loved he disciplines and he punishes every son whom he welcomes home.

Verse 7 "If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?"

We now have emphasis on the recipients of divine discipline. This verse is very poorly translated as we have it here. It is made up of three short sentences.

This first phrase as we have it here, "If ye endure chastening" is incorrect. We have eis plus the accusative of paideia plus the present, active, imperative of hupomeno. Eis with the accusative means "because of." We will translate paideia "corrective discipline." This is our only hope to recover from reversionism. Discipline is the shock treatment God uses on us to correct a difficult situation. It is something we are to endure and this is where we receive blessing from discipline.

You Make The Choice

If a believer is not teachable by doctrine, then God will teach him by discipline. God wants us to learn from doctrine, but if we won't learn that way, then he will resort to something stronger. It is always the sign of stupidity that before we understand something God is trying to teach us, he has to knock us down and hurt us. You have to undergo some kind of a shock, and that is the principle we are studying here. So we have here the statement, "Because of corrective discipline, endure!" This "endure" was used of Christ back in verse 2. Christ used doctrine resident in his soul so he could go through those horrible three hours on the cross when he bore our sins. Endure means not to fall apart, not allow a negative attitude to take over.

"Endure" is the present, active, imperative of hupomeno. This present tense presents a situation that always prevails when the conditions are met. It is always this way when these conditions prevail. It is impossible to endure unless maximum doctrine is resident in the soul. The imperative mood means that this is a command to all believers. Back in verse 1 the believer is commanded to advance on the run with endurance (by the use of doctrine in the soul). There is no other way to accomplish this objective.

Therefore, the first sentence in this verse is this--"BECAUSE OF CORRECTIVE DISCIPLINE, ENDURE, ADVANCE!"

The Second Sentence

This second sentence in this verse begins with God. We have ho Theos and means "The God" and this refers to God the Father. "The God" is the one who has made provision for this time of trial, this time of adversity.

Next we have the word "dealeth" and this is the present, passive, indicative of prospero. (In our day, we have all kinds of deals. We deal for cars, or for most anything we buy, and they deal cards, and we all know the New Deal.) But this word "deal" here in the passive voice means to meet with, to come to us with ample provision. He meets with us as sons. It is always this way. He meets with us, deals with us as sons. (This is a verb that is passive in form but active in meaning.) Back in verse 5 we found that he teaches us as sons, and now here he meets with us and deals with us as sons.

God Deals Both Directly And Indirectly

God deals indirectly with the believer through doctrine which is taught by the pastor-teacher. When he deals with you in this indirect way, you are on the blessing side. But if you will not let him deal with you this way, then he deals directly and this is the way of discipline. God takes over and deals with you in discipline and it hurts. It is much better for you to let God deal with you indirectly through my teaching than to have him haul you up personally and have to deal with you through discipline.

God Is The One Who Disciplines

God hasn't appointed me to discipline you. I am appointed to teach you, but if you won't listen, then God himself steps in and takes over and he personally administers the punishment. The reason I am not to discipline you is this--I don't have all the facts and I wouldn't know what is fair discipline. I am not capable of evaluating all the facts and then I am not able to set up a fair type of discipline and punishment. In fair punishment all prejudice and impartiality must be set aside, and I am incapable of that. But God is able to punish with perfect fairness. God is able to carry out punishment in an impartial way and God is the only one who can do a thing like this.

An Evident Impossibility

Just suppose that there are as many as fifty of you in this room now who are in reversionism. Suppose I hear all the cases and then attempt to measure out the punishment to you. Well, immediately you can see how impossible this would be. Only God can do this and this verse says he will do this very thing. Giving out discipline and punishment is not within my jurisdiction, neither is it in yours. This is the responsibility of God himself.

ROMANS 12:19 "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord."

Therefore let us step out of the way and let God meet out the punishment. Life is much more relaxing if we will do this. We can't regulate the lives of others and neither should we try to do so. God deals directly with the reversionist and he hits the target every time. So the second sentence of this verse is this--"THE GOD DEALS WITH YOU AS SONS."

The Third Sentence

We begin with tis gar plus the nominative singular of huios and it should be translated "For what one is a son." We have the present, active, indicative of eimi. Next we have hos pater meaning "Who, the

Father." There is no definite article here in the greek and this makes it even more emphatic and that is why we translate it "The Father." Next we have the present, active, indicative of paideuo plus the negative ouk. So this sentence says, "FOR WHAT ONE IS A SON WHOM THE FATHER DOES NOT DISCIPLINE?"

This is the way God deals with us when we are disobedient. He spans us. If we are positive, willing to listen, then he leaves off the punishment and he begins to deal with us again through doctrine.

Look At These Three Sentences And Their Connection

1. This is a command--"Because of corrective discipline, endure!"
2. This is an explanation--"For God deals with you as sons."
3. This is a question--"For what one is a son whom the Father does not discipline?" This is the principle upon which God always operates.

Therefore, you get to know your heavenly father either through doctrine or discipline. As we hear on TV, "You can pay me now or pay me later." We can learn the easy way by taking in doctrine, or we can learn the hard way by going the path of punishment and discipline. Remember this, you are always his son, and you can always address him in one of two ways--Under the doctrine route you say, "Thank you, Father" and under the discipline route you say, "Ouch, Father." But it is always Father so it is, "Thanks, Father" or "It hurts, Father." But we are always his sons, once we have believed.

HEBREWS 12:8 "But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." Now we come to a contrast introduced to us by the little word de. Next we have a first class condition of supposition. We have ei plus the present, active, indicative of eimi. The next words are choris paideia and these words mean "corrective discipline." So this says, "But if ye be without corrective discipline." You won't be, but this is just a condition of supposition in order to teach a point. Next we have the genitive singular of hes plus pas and the perfect, active, indicative of ginomai which means "to become something you were not before." (This is a consummative perfect which emphasizes the process by which the thing was accomplished.) The active voice means that all members of the Royal Family of God are disciplined either for carnality or reversionism. The indicative mood means the reality of this truth. Next we have the word metochos and it means partakers, or participators.

No Discipline, No Father

Please notice a very important point here. If you are not a believer, then God does not trouble to discipline or punish you. If you are without discipline, then you do not have any Heavenly Father. He is not your Heavenly Father just because he created you. He becomes your Heavenly Father when you put your trust in Jesus Christ.

GALATIANS 3 26 "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." So this phrase says, "Whereof all have become participators."

Bastards

No one likes to be called a bastard. This statement says that if you are not a son through faith in Christ that "Then are ye bastards." The word for "Are" is the present, active, indicative of eimi and it means this condition always prevails as long as you are in unbelief.

When he spansks you, then you can say, "That's my Father, for he is the only one who has the right to do that." So, we can all say that we are glad we have a father to spank us for that proves that we are not bastards.

This word "bastard" comes from the nominative plural of nothos (we get the word "nothing" from it) and it means illegitimate, or spurious. So, the very next time you get disciplined from God, you stop and thank him for it and thank him that you are not a bastard. You see, all spiritual bastards are going to hell. If you are not in the family of God when you die, you will go to hell, and be there forever and forever. No one has ever had anything good to say about the Lake of Fire, including the Devil himself. No one needs go there, and if they do go there, it will be their own fault. There are no spiritual bastards in the family of God. When you become a believer, you can count on discipline and this proves you are not a spiritual bastard. If anyone ever calls you a bastard, you just remind them that this is impossible, that you are saved and you will have a perfect Father forever. Every spiritual birth is legitimate and there are no spiritual bastards in the Kingdom of God.

Then it says, "and not sons" which comes from kai ouk huioi. So, this verse says literally, "But if you are without discipline of which all believers have become participators, then you are bastards and not sons."

In the next verse we are going to study the idea of divine establishment. God has set up certain laws that provide for the orderly function and the survival of the human race during human history. Were it not for these laws, man would not survive during this period called the Angelic Conflict.

Law No. 1 - VOLITION

Under this law, we have human freedom. This guarantees us privacy and freedom. This gives us the right to make decisions. The right of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. We are free to move and live and perform provided our actions do not violate common or criminal law. We are free to believe in or to reject Jesus Christ. All true evangelism is built on this freedom. Volition is a vital part of the soul and every time you sin, your volition is involved.

Law No. 2 - MARRIAGE

This forms the basis for the survival and stability of society. One man and one woman and this is God's plan.

Law No. 3 - THE FAMILY

The family is for the stability of the human race. The volition of the father and the mother is the authority. In marriage the man is the authority.

Law No. 4 - THE NATION

Here is discipline also and the authority is vested in elected leadership. This leadership is under the authority of the laws of the nation.

In this next verse we will have an illustration of this establishment. Arrogance is the rejection of every authority but your own. Humility is respect for authority. When you learn to respect authority, then you can be said to be on the road to maturity.

HEBREWS 12:9 "Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?" This word "furthermore" is a word used here for a transition. The word is eita and probably a better translation is "Another point." The words "we have had" come from the imperfect, active, indicative of echo. It is an imperfect we call the customary imperfect and should be translated "Another point, we used to have parents." The word for father is in the plural and it means parents. Both father and mother included in the plural of pater. The words sarxz plus ego translated here "of our flesh" simply mean "our human parents." So, look what we have thus far in this sentence--"Another point is this, we used to have our human parents." The emphasis here is upon their authority as parents. (When a child respects his parents, he is showing the character that one day will make him a great man, mature and stable.) If you ever hear a child degrade his parents, take him aside and explain to him that they are his earthly authority just like God is his heavenly authority. In this translation, we have the words "which corrected" and that sounds like a verb, but the word here is a noun from paideutes and it means "for discipline." So this says, "Another point is this, we used to have our human parents for discipline."

"And we gave them reverence" and the verb is the imperfect, middle, indicative of entrepo and it means to turn toward someone with respect. Principle--The principle being brought out here is this--Respect for authority is the basis for learning from discipline. Discipline develops respect for authority. You can get it direct (discipline from God) or indirect (from the pastor-teacher teaching doctrine). So we say, "Heads you win (learn doctrine) or tails you lose (discipline from God)." The next words polu mallon are translated "much rather" but this is an idiom and it is better translated "to a greater degree." So we have thus far, "How much to a greater degree." So in the divine realm God does what the parents do in the human realm. Next we have the future, passive, indicative of hupotasso. This is a very rare idiom using a future tense as an imperative. Whether you know it or not and whether you like it or not, you are under God's authority. You can be indirectly under it through the teaching of doctrine, or you can be directly under it through the punishment and discipline from God. So this says, "And to a greater degree you will become subordinate to the Father."

Then we have the word pneuma. Why is he here called "The Father of our spirits?" The reason is this. He controls us through the doctrine we have stored in our spirits. "The Father of our spirits" is referring to the place where doctrine is stored by which we live. Next we have the future, active, indicative of zao and it refers to what will happen in the future as we continue to live and learn doctrine.

So this ninth verse says,

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

1. The reversionist subordinates himself to God the Father by reversion recovery. But if he doesn't recover from reversionism, then he will live in misery as long as he fails to recover. (That was a terrible year for David before he recovered from his great sin.) God will discipline his disobedient child in many ways. God says, "I'm on the throne, whack, whack."

2. Reversion recovery requires not just rebound, but once you have recovered, you must begin to take in doctrine, plus avoiding the distractions that keep you from taking in doctrine. This is the only way to ever reach the high ground of super grace.
3. Reversion recovery means you have avoided the sin unto death, or dying discipline. It means continuing until you have reached the high ground of super grace living.
4. This means you have reached and held the high ground and that means crossing over the high golden drawbridge of God's grace provision called dying grace.