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EXPLANATIONS

1. Explain why Hezekiah was so distraught when he learned he would die (Isa. 38:1-22).
2. Explain why it was proper for Hezekiah to ask for a sign of his healing, when the N.T. denounces the Pharisees for continually seeking a sign from Jesus (Isa. 38:7-8).
3. Explain why Hezekiah could say the prediction of the Lord of the Babylonian captivity for Judah was "good" (Isa. 39:5-8).

APPLICATION

(In its context every scripture has one meaning—the author's intended meaning. How may the following be applied in the believer's life?)

1. What is the difference between the Old Testament concept of life after death and that of the New Testament and what difference should this make in our relationship to God?
2. What did Hezekiah do wrong in showing the Babylonians his treasury and what application could be made in the church's (the New Kingdom of God) relationship to the world?
3. What overall application could be made for the Church and the World in this whole section, chapters 24-39?

SPECIAL STUDY

THE THREE DIMENSIONS OF DISCIPLINE

Hebrews 12:1-11

by Paul T. Butler

INTRODUCTION

I. WHAT HAS GIVEN BIRTH TO THIS MESSAGE?

- A. The general tenor of thought and action today

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1. Freedom means license.
2. Lawlessness is sin.

Note: Billy Graham, *Eternity*, November, 1965, says, "What we need in the Church today is a new holy discipline—and a disciplined life."

- II. DISCIPLINE DEFINED (Baker's *Dictionary of Theology*)
"Discipline implies instruction and correction, the training which improves, molds, strengthens, and perfects character. It is the moral education obtained by the enforcement of obedience through supervision and control."

The concept of discipline is usually, in Scriptural terms, called *chastening, chastisement, instruction*.

The concept is usually illustrated in the Scriptures by the correction of human fathers toward their sons.

- III. THE THREE DIMENSIONS OF DISCIPLINE (may be taken from this text)

- A. Demands (There are some who think man must be free of any authority or discipline to attain his greatest good.)
- B. Designs (Discipline is not an end in itself, but the means to an end . . . the means must be endured to reach the purposed end.)
- C. Derivatives (If we are to endure it and it is to reach the right end, discipline must have the right motivation or derivative.)

I. DISCIPLINE DEMANDED

- A. The nature of our being demands it.
 1. Man is an organism—without discipline he loses balance; without authority he disintegrates; an organism is an integrated structure and it must have discipline and authority to remain integrated.
 2. Without discipline man's life is chaotic—insecure—

purposeless—Psychologically we must have discipline to feel needed and cared for—look at Hebrews 12:8, “If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.” Illustration: A preacher took a 17 year old delinquent boy into his home. When the boy broke the rules that had been laid down, the preacher punished him bodily. Sobbing, the boy exclaimed that it was the first time anyone had shown true concern for him!

This is the heart rending cry of many despairing souls today . . . “We live in an indifferent universe . . .”

Reader's Digest, November, 1965: “There seems to be no doubt whatsoever that parents who have the least trouble with their children take the task of discipline seriously. Psychologists, once so permissive, now point out that the worst thing we can do for our children is to be too kind, for children whose parents love them too much to punish them are like pedestrians wandering in traffic where there are no stop signs. Frightened, children may provoke their parents with worse and worse behavior. It is as though they were saying, “If we get snarled up *enough*, somebody will *have* to take over.”

It's sobering to find that children themselves frequently testify they'd like their parents to be stricter. In a survey taken a few years ago, one high-school child in five thought the discipline in his life inadequate; 13% even felt that a good whack was a fine idea!

“Maybe I'm old-fashioned,” a young mother told me after she had dispatched a whining, showing-off five year old to her room, “but I can't believe that being allowed to make everybody else miserable now is going to make her more lovable twenty years

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from now.”

Perhaps parents would not be so afraid of discipline if they could think of it as something more than punishment and reward. In fact, it is a question of putting our children so in control of themselves that they can use their best qualities. It is a question of giving them the ability to make decisions and to accept the consequences of their choice.

3. A libertine existence, a life without the restraints of Godly discipline, leads inevitably to pessimism, cynicism and despair . . . sometimes to suicide. I could tell you of people I have known who, suddenly made bereft of the security of authority and discipline they had rested in, took their own lives.
 - a. Nietzsche went insane when he cast off all discipline of the mind and will.
 - b. Comte suffered a mental breakdown and attempted suicide as a result of his undisciplined philosophic ramblings.
 - c. King Saul, Herod the Great—both suffered similarly.
4. Yes, even man's thinking and learning processes are dependent upon discipline; authority; order. Without discipline, there is no learning. Illustration: Gary Boyd tells of the little boy attending a school of progressive education where the student was told that $2 + 2$ equals whatever he discovered he wants it to equal. His father showed him an old fashioned school book where students were taught the discipline of the multiplication tables on authority . . . HE WAS ALMOST OVERCOME WITH JOY.
5. Man's moral balance is dependent upon discipline. Man must obey and submit to what is right and orderly or else he comes to guilt, anarchy, disorientation.

B. The nature of our association demands it.

Illustration: Chas. E. Whittaker, former Supreme Court Justice, in December *Reader's Digest*, says, "Can a disorderly society survive? In all recorded history none ever has."

1. Every society must have order, and discipline is necessary to order.
2. The church is a kingdom; a kingdom without authority and discipline results in anarchy.
3. The church is a family; a home without discipline results in misery and heartache.
4. The church is a body; an organism without discipline results in frustration.
5. The church is a flock; a flock without discipline and submission to the leadership of its shepherds is destined for disaster through the straying of its lambs.
6. The church is an army; an army without discipline, order and submission to its commanders is headed for certain defeat!
7. The Christian life is like an athletic contest; an athlete without discipline will lose!

C. The word of God and God's very nature demands it.

1. God ordered the church into existence.

By His Word He has given her a constitution; there is a sense of being under law to Christ, I Cor. 9:21.

By His Word He has appointed shepherds for His flock. When the church of the Lord, following the guidance of the word of the Lord, appoints elders and leaders—they have been appointed by the Lord.

2. Hebrews 13:17 - Obey your leaders and submit to them; for they are keeping watch over your souls, as men who will have to give account. Let them do this joyfully, and not sadly, for that would be of no advantage to you.
3. Paul wrote to the young preacher, Timothy, listing certain disciplines for him to follow and said, "I hope

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to come to you soon, but I am writing these instructions to you so that, if I am delayed, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, the pillar and bulwark of the truth." I Tim. 3:14-15

4. There are many references to the Divine wisdom in God's demands for discipline.

"The rod of reproof gives wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother." Prov. 29:15

"Discipline your son, and he will give you rest; he will give delight to your heart." Prov. 29:17

5. One very pertinent example: The chosen people of the O.T. intended to be a disciplined people . . . God said through Jeremiah, "Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk there in, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein. Also I set watchmen over you, saying, Hearken to the sound of the trumpet. But they said, We will not hearken." Jer. 6:16-17

So they were disciplined by judgment and captivity.

6. The Word of God demands that Christians live in harmony with the discipline of their employers, their homes, their governments. **THE WORD OF GOD DECLARES BOTH BY PRECEPT AND EXAMPLE THAT THE BODILY LIFE IS A CONTINUAL LIFE OF DISCIPLINE.**

THE VERY CALL OF CHRIST IS THE CALL TO BECOME A "DISCIPLE."

SO, EACH ONE OF US IS OBLIGATED TO CONFORM TO DISCIPLINE; OUR NATURE DEMANDS IT, OUR ASSOCIATION DEMANDS IT, OUR LORD DEMANDS IT!

One never outgrows in this life the obligation to follow discipline—the child must follow it; the teenager must follow it; the college student must follow it; the college teacher must follow it, **THE PREACHER, THE PREACHER'S WIFE MUST FOLLOW IT!**

II. THE DESIGN OF DISCIPLINE (Its Purpose)

- A. To build character - "the purpose of discipline is the correction, the improvement, the obedience, the faith, and the faithfulness of God's child. The outcome is a happiness (Job 5:17) a blessedness; and assurance (Rev. 3:15).
1. Moses learned discipline and grew in character from his 40 years of schooling in the deserts of Midian.
 2. David learned discipline and grew in character from his schooling in the caves and wilderness of Judea fleeing from Saul.
 3. Even the Lord Jesus Christ, accepting the limitations of flesh, returned to Nazareth as a boy and was obedient to Mary and Joseph and "increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and man." Lk. 2:51-52 Yes, even Jesus experienced obedience through the things He suffered and has become the author of eternal salvation to all them who obey Him. Hebrews 5:9

YOU ARE BUILDING YOUR CHARACTER EACH MOMENT OF EACH DAY ACCORDING TO YOUR RESPONSE TO THE DEMANDS FOR DISCIPLINE. . . .EVEN IN SMALL MATTERS.

- a. When committing yourself to serve in a certain capacity . . . SEE IT THROUGH EVEN THOUGH IT INTERFERES WITH YOUR SOCIAL LIFE!
- B. To fit one as a vessel for use by Christ
- "In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver but also of wood and earthenware, and some for noble use, some for ignoble. If any one purifies himself from what is ignoble then he will be a vessel for noble use, consecrated and useful to the master of the house, ready for any good work." II Tim. 2:20-21 So SHUN YOUTHFUL PASSIONS.
1. The discipline of the Lord is to make us more Christ-like; self-surrendering; self-giving.

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“When He had washed their feet, and taken his garments, and resumed his place, he said to them, Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example that you also should do as I have done to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master. . . . If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.” John 13:12-17

YES, THERE ARE CERTAIN DISCIPLINES NECESSARY TO HUMBLE US THAT WE MAY BECOME PROPER VESSELS.

I REFER YOU TO JOHN 13 . . . the servant is not greater than his Master!

Have this mind in you, which you have in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men, and being found in human form He humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross . . .” Phil. 2:5-8

“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God? You are not your own; you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.” I Cor. 6:19

Even our text says we are disciplined to share His holiness, 12:10.

- C. The discipline of the Lord is to cause you to bear fruit. “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch of mine that bears no fruit, he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes (disciplines) that it may bear more fruit . . .” Jn. 15:1-2
1. One of the clearest statements as to the purpose of discipline and chastening is found in II Cor. 1:3-11. Paul says there he was afflicted in order that he might

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learn to strengthen others who were afflicted . . . to bear fruit.

OUR TEXT IN Heb. 12 says "For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant; later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it." v. 11

2. Another important discussion of the discipline of the Holy Spirit within a man which bears fruit is Paul's discussion of Christian liberty and expediency in I Cor. 8 and 9. "All things are lawful but all things are not expedient."

"If eating meat causes my brother to stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I cause my brother to fall."

". . . we endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ."

THIS IS THE DISCIPLINE WE ALL SHOULD SEEK. . .

III. THE DERIVATIVES OF DISCIPLINE

C. S. Lewis, in his book, *The Problem of Pain*, outlines the reasons for chastening of God as God's Omnipotence, God's Goodness.

- A. The Fear of God should motivate us to lead lives of holy discipline.

1. As Mr. Lewis says, "It is hardly complimentary to God that we should choose Him as an alternative to Hell; yet even this He accepts. The creature's illusion of self sufficiency must, for the creature's sake, be shattered; and by trouble or fear of trouble on earth, by fear of the eternal flames, God shatters it . . ."

Paul wrote, "Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men . . ." He wrote, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

He wrote, "For if we sin wilfully after we receive the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a fearful prospect of judgment,

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and fury of fire which will consume the adversaries.”

REBELLION WAS NOT TREATED LIGHTLY IN THE OLD TESTAMENT; NEITHER WILL IT BE FOR THOSE UNDER THE NEW.

IF YOU'RE IN REBELLION AGAINST DISCIPLINE, YOU HAD BETTER STUDY AGAIN WHAT THE N.T. HAS TO SAY ABOUT OBEDIENCE TO APPOINTED LEADERS!

YOU HAD BETTER CULTIVATE AGAIN AN AWESOME RESPECT AND HEALTHY FEAR OF GOD. . . . THE FEAR OF THE LORD IS THE BEGINNING OF WISDOM.

B. Another derivative is the power of the Holy Spirit.

1. By His leading we may put to death the deeds of the body.
2. By the weapons He affords us we may bring every thought into captivity to Christ.
3. By His supernatural word is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction for training in righteousness that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.
4. Being born again by the word of the Spirit planted in our hearts, having been raised with Christ we may “set our minds on things that are above, where Christ is seated. . . .”
5. We may purify our souls by obeying the truth.
6. By the exceeding precious promises we become partakers of the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world.

C. The ultimate derivative is the love of Christ.

1. Paul wrote, “The love of Christ constrains us . . .”
II Cor. 5:14 NOTHING WILL BRING US TO FOLLOW THE LEADING OF DISCIPLINE LIKE LOVE. . . .

Illustration: *Time*, Birds, Beetles and Butterflies.
“Timbertop, patterned largely after Gordonstoun, is a branch of Australia’s Geelong Grammar School, an exclusive institution operated by the Church of England. It is designed to toughen up 130 young aristocrats every year. The boys do all their own housekeeping except cook.

They make overnight hikes across 1,300 acres of rugged Crown land, watch birds, hunt beetles, collect butterflies.

Young Charles will live in a rustic wooden dormitory, get up at 7 a.m., dress in jeans, an open shirt, sweater and desert boots. He will take his turn at serving a breakfast of cooked meal, tea, toast and milk from a nearby dairy barn, attend compulsory chapel, then turn to rigorous academic work until 3 p.m. After that come the chores, which range from polishing the chapel's huge picture window to varnishing floors, feeding the pigs, washing the dishes, cutting and carting a portion of the 500 tons of wood that the school consumes each year. In the evening he will study under a master's eye. Lights go out at 9:15."

Spurgeon, that great preacher, once said, "Christ is our great example in discipline, cross-bearing. He had not where to lay his head in life, nor a rag to cover him in death, nor anything but a borrowed grave in burial. What manner of persons ought we to be in all unselfishness when we have such a Lord! He has not said to us in matters of self-denial, "Take up thy cross and go!" but "Come, take up thy cross and follow me." Well may the soldiers endure hardness when the King himself roughs it among us; and suffers more than the lowest private in our ranks. My soul, I charge thee, bear thy cross, and look not for ease where Jesus found his death."

"For even hereunto were ye called; because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow in His steps"; I Pet. 2:21.

JERUSALEM IN
DAVID'S TIME



TYROPOEON VALLEY

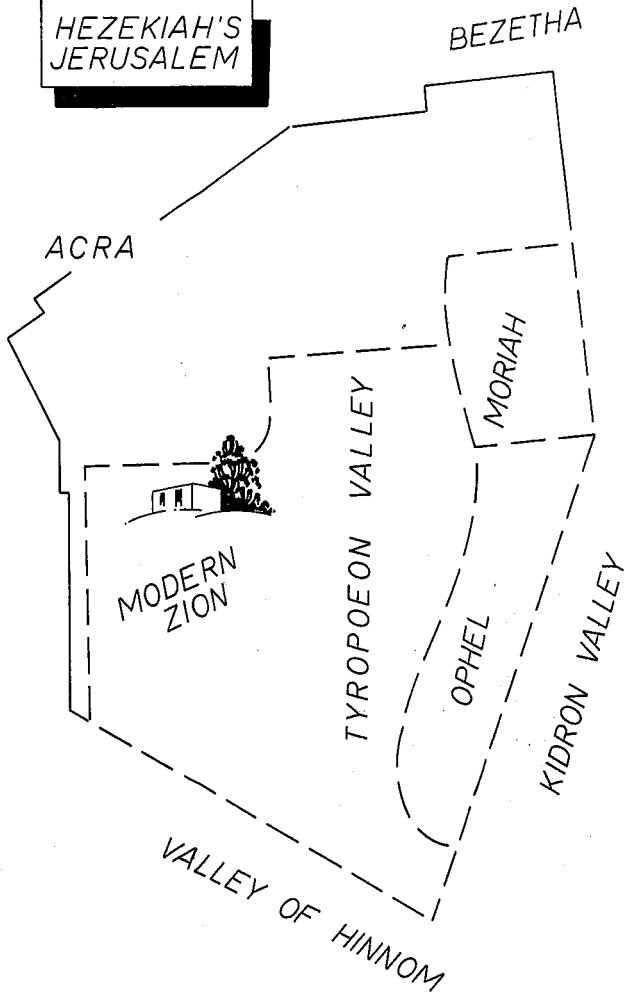
MORIAH
(Temple Area)

OPHEL (ZION)

KIDRON VALLEY

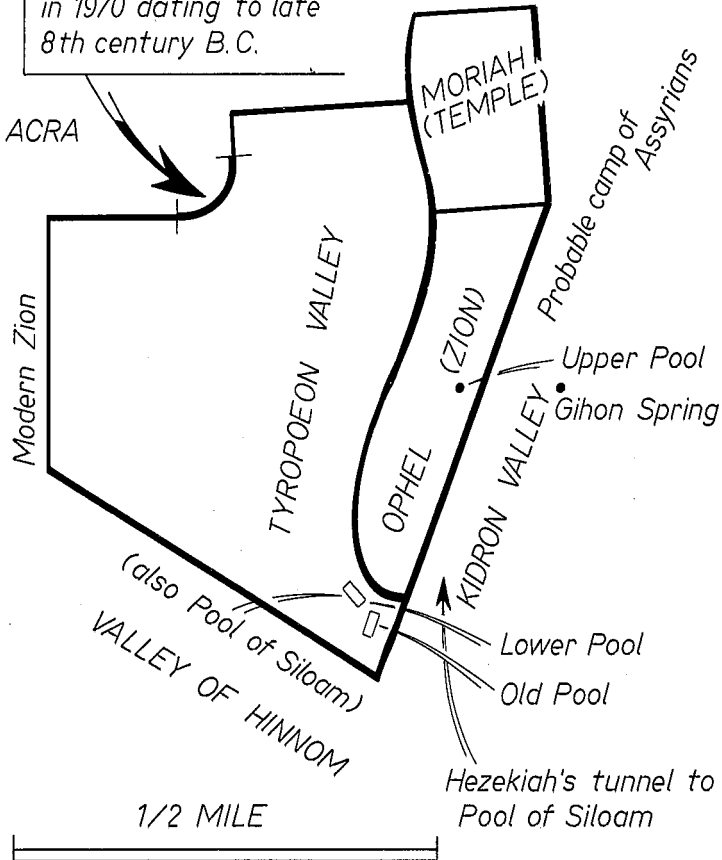
VALLEY OF HINNOM

HEZEKIAH'S
JERUSALEM



JERUSALEM IN HEZEKIAH'S TIME

Portion of wall discovered in 1970 dating to late 8th century B.C.



Original Jerusalem is indicated by areas labeled Moriah and Ophel.
The other area is inclosed by Hezekiah's outer wall.



“And when he (Sennacherib) heard say of Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, Behold, he is come out to fight against thee; he sent messengers again unto Hezekiah, saying . . . Let not thy God in whom thou trustest deceive thee . . .”

(II Kings 19:9, 10).

“And they brought archers, chariots and horses of the king of Ethiopia, soldiers without number . . .”

With these words taken from the annals of his campaign, Sennacherib corroborated the statement in the Bible.

This is a bronze statuette of Pharaoh Taharka, called Tirhakah in the Bible. The short curly hair, high cheek bones, thick lips, round chin and short neck mark him out clearly as an Ethiopian. On the top of his close-fitting cap sat the double crown of Egypt with two heraldic vipers. When Taharka set out in 701 B. C. to assist Hezekiah he was in fact only commander-in-chief of the Egyptian army.

His intervention was unsuccessful as his army was defeated by Sennacherib's forces and he had to return to Egypt. In 689 B. C. Taharka became King of Egypt.

FROM: THE BIBLE AS HISTORY IN PICTURES
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