

Title: *Weak Hands and Knees*
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Text: Hebrews 12:12-13

Turn to Hebrews chapter 12. Hebrews chapter 12. There are notes in your bulletin and I encourage you to use them, and to file them in a loose leaf notebook. We will consider the subject: *Weak Hands and Knees* ~~The Root of Bitterness~~, that was found in Esau's life. Hebrews chapter 12 beginning at Vs 12 and reading through Vs 13

Read 12:12-13

Would you join me in a moment of prayer

We have been studying the matter of discipline and suffering and testing in Hebrews chapters ~~11 and~~ 12. We have looked at several things. We have looked at the example of Christ ~~in~~ ^{the} first 4 verse of chapter 12. It might be good for you to recall those verse again. We are to look unto Christ who is our example. Who endured the cross, ~~despising~~ despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. We should consider him, says Vs 3. We should never forget what he endured for us.

We were challenged in Vs 1 to run with patience the race that is set before us. We learned that the very meaning of the ~~word~~ word "race" is the word "agony". The struggle of it all. We learned that a lot of it deals with our sins and getting victory ^{over} of them.

We learned from Vs 5 on, that the Lord Loves us when he disciplines us. The Bible tells us to judge ourselves so that we would not have to be judged. ^{and} When we don't ~~more~~ ^{let are} judged by the Lord. God's way of stopping us from ruining our lives when we are going down a road we shouldn't be is to bring discipline. All kinds of methods of testings. In fact, if we don't have this testing as we learned from Vs 7-8, we are like illegitimate children. It is proving we don't even belong to God. Testing is a ~~part~~ part of God's plan for every single one of us.

In Vs 9 thru 11 we learned something of the purpose of testing and trails that come into our life. Certainly none of them seem to be very joyful at the moment. They are sorrowful and cause a lot of pain to us. But, yet, God is doing it for our benefit. That we might share in His holiness.

Now, in Vs 10, when it mentions His Holiness "...Holiness is the word "sanctification." It means "to set us apart." God is continually wanting to set us apart from sin, number one. And to set us apart for his use and his purposes, number two.

Keep that in your mind for that is the heart of what he is going to unfold in the EXPLANATION OF HOW WE SHOULD RESPOND which is discussed here in Vs 12-17. I would like you to notice several things about this explanation of how you and I should respond to the discipline and the testing that God will bring into our lives. *Part tonight, Part next wk*

(1D) **The first deals with our need for strength to endure.**

I don't know about you but when I am going through it, I really need strength. Often times I want to ask God: "Lord, take these things away from me. It is too much. I can't take it all."

And yet, really, I should say: "Lord, give me the kind of shoulders I ought to have to carry the kind of burdens you know I ought to bear.

We do need strength. This is seen, I believe, in a couple of ways in ~~this passage~~. Verses 12 and 13.

~~The need for strength to endure in the midst of trials and testings.~~

(1E) **It is seen first of all in our weakness** which is described in Vs 12. It says "Therefore, strengthen the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble."

Now, I wish we had an overhead this evening for I would like to draw a cartoon to express that idea. If you can imagine in your mind what this means, it is kind of funny if you think about it because the hands are hanging down and the knees are paralysed. They are feeble, meaning

they can't do anything. This person is described in two ways
(1F) One, he has hands that are literally weak. The root word ^{Thinks it's weak} means "remaining along side of him."

The point is, that they never do anything. A lot of believers are in this category. Testing and pressure comes into our life and we just wind up doing nothing. Unless things ~~that~~ are really going our way and we feel super strong, we never do anything. We never are motivated to serve God in the way that he wants, Unless things are going our way. And the Bible warns us about this. Because the Devils method to get us to stop doing the spiritual priorities of our life, whether it is studying the Word or teaching what we know to someone else, or sharing the Good News of the Gospel with an unbeliever, or whatever it is, Satan's main goal is to get us to stop. The Bible says in Galation 6:9: "Be not weary in well doing for in due season we shall reap if we don't quite."

It is so easy to give up, isn't it? Just to quite in the struggle of it all. It is so easy to forget our spiritual priorities and to begin to concentrate on some temporary thing...Something that may be good for us, Something we like to do. But, is it really the spiritual priority of our life? Is it really the reason God left us here?

It is easy to get side tracked..And so the hands are pictured as just right down at the side of the body doing nothing..Not even moving. It is a quotation from Israish 35:3 where it says "Encourage the exhausted, and strengthen the feeble." ^{Hard,} Weak hands. Not doing anything for God. And the challenge here is to strength those hands....

(2F) The second thing is feeble knees.

I don't know if you have ever had feeble knees. Sometimes when we are freeing something we get feeble knees. They start to shake..

A little Jr boy ask me after a service one Sunday Morning: "Do your knee shake when you preach?" I said, Yay, they do, but I hide behind the pulpit and no one see them." Feeble knees..



Well, these knees are literally paralyzed. That is the meaning of the word. Paralyzed so they are unable to go anywhere.

In other words, what is being pictured here is the danger of **SPIRITUALLY CORERS COLLAPSE**. Spiritual Collapse...Apathy, complaciente, not concerned about the spiritual goals that God has laid out in his Word. Just do nothing but to sit and sock and sometime sour. The Bible warns us about this. Testings come not to make us discouraged and cause us to be wiped out and do nothing. They come that we might learn and become mature and strong through it all... ^{Like Ameer that isn't used}

It is interesting that Vs 12 begins with the little word "wherefore" or "therefore". In the Greek it means "on account of this thing." Now, what thing? The thing that is under discussion. **NAMELY, DISCIPLINE**. On account of discipline, left up your hands which hang down. Or on account of discipline strengthen the hands that asre weak.

We need to be strengthened. And our hands are hanging down when they should be active. Our knees are paralyzed when we should be going. The Bible says "how beautiful ^{are} ~~on~~ the feet of them that take the good tidings of peace."

We need to share the good tidings. How...can they hear without a preacher says the Bible. How can they preach except they be sent. All of us are to share the good ;news.

Discipline comes into our lives and we withdraw into our selves. And we deside that the priority, now, in my life is for me to be happy. For me to adjust to my situation and to be able to take what God is giving me, now in testing.

Instead of realizing that God doesn't want you to withdrawal and to sit and look at all of this and do nothing. He wants us to get moving. And He is telling us that we are always going to face testing. It is never going to be apart from our lives. We are always going to have it. It is what God wants.

And he is refining us and making us ~~what~~^{to perfection} the kind of diamond ~~that~~ that is rough and needs to be chiseled. He is making us the kind of diamond that he really wants. That can really be used. So start doing what God really wants you to do.

(2E) I see this not only in our weakness which needs strength to endure, but also in our WALK. This is described in Vs 13.

Vs 13 says: "and make straight paths for your feet, so that the limb which is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be healed."

"Make straight paths for your feet". The point is that if your feet are lame you are going to have to take special care as to where you walk. And the idea of "straight" is in contrast to that which is ~~walk~~ crooked.

And most writers believe in commenting of this passage that he is dealing with SIN. That the whole issue, "is Let's go straight" rather than getting ~~off~~ into sin, again.

~~walk~~ The idea is a road that has obstructions on it and the person with a lame foot is going to have a rough time. And the Bible is warning, Let's strengthen up our lives. It is the same challenge as we found in Vs 1. The sin that so easily besets us. So let's make straight our lives. Is there something wrong? Is there some sin in our life that we are not willing to give up? And ~~you~~ you are not willing to change? The challenge here is to change it fast. Lest that which is lame be turned out of the way.

The little phrase "turned out of the way (KJV) or "put out of joint" (NAS) what does that mean? It is a medical term. And it means "aggravating a lame condition, like a sprain, to the point of dislocating a limb.. So, that you are not effective at all. As a matter of fact, you are dislocated. (And sometimes we have sprains in our joints and we keep ~~going~~^{walking} on them when we should put them ~~up~~ and rest on them awhile. And instead of taking care of that problem we just keep aggravating the problem. And Paul is using this as a illustration and applies it to

our spiritual life by saying: "listen, all of us are weak. All of us ~~are~~ are lame. And we ought to be careful where we are walking. Because God has a way of healing us when we go straight. God has a way of using us in a tremendous way when we are determined that we are not going to continue in sin.

So our need is tremendous. There is going to be testing. There is going to be temptations. There is going to be pressures. And we need strength to endure.

And that is seen in our weakness as well as in our walk. We have to watch where we are walking. Lest that which is lame be aggravated to the point of dislocation.

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How shall we respond? By recognizing our need for strength to endure. That our strength in testings and trials and problems comes from the Lord....And these testing ~~are~~^{are} there for a purpose. And God is refining us and forming us into a beautiful diamond. That is, if we are available. If we are willing to see the truth of God's Word, and surround our will to God's perfect control *and starting doing what he wants us to do*

Are you willing?.....I trust you are.....

Shall we pray