

I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus; Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke: turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the LORD my God. [19] Surely after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth. [20] Is Ephraim my dear son? is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still: therefore my bowels are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the LORD. Jeremiah 31:18-20.

This chapter speaks of Ephraim who was chastised. The Lord chastises those whom He loves. Chastisement typically comes when one turns aside. Ephraim however, receives the rebuke and bemoans himself. He turns towards God when he is turned and moves towards true repentance. Often people who are rebuked turn away from God instead in grief, this is false repentance and is devilish. However, once one turns to the Lord, there is forgiveness. Though the righteous falls seven times, he will rise again. Godly repentance however inspires a seven-fold response as shown in *2 Corinthians 7:9-11*, although in no particular order. First it produces carefulness and diligence in the things of God. Next there is Vindication. For the Lord to chastise, then He has pardoned. This vindication is a freedom from condemnation. Next is indignation against the sin. The individual loves righteousness and has a hatred for sin. Next there is an instilling of the fear of the Lord that keeps the person from returning to the sin. There is also a vehement desire for all that is godly and righteousness and their zeal for the things of God increases. The Lord chastises us that we may partake of His righteousness. Even in this, His heart yearns for His Children.

2 Peter 1:5-7 KJV

*And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;
[6] And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience
godliness; [7] And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.*

Block 3: Temperance

Temperance is born in the consideration of God's light. It is self control. This is not just about being self disciplined or having self inflicted piety. It is temperance according to God's standards. The people of the world practice delayed gratification in order to achieve their goals. In the game of soccer, top athletes do not eat or drink certain things because they know their body needs to be always in shape. In these leagues, there are elite clubs that compete for first place. There are also those who compete for top 10 and those who compete simply to remain in the league. The goal a person has will determine the level of temperance a person exhibits. Top athletes may put themselves in baths of ice to ease their muscles and reduce injuries, knowing that an injury can ruin their career. Every man who strives for the top is temperate in all things. These do this for a corruptible crown. However, ours is an eternal crown. The greater the crown, the greater the requirement.

This temperance often involves a separation to that which is Holy. It takes away excesses but leaves the person. Temperance teaches a person to be balanced and walk with decorum in every area of their lives. The price we have before us is too great to throw away for a mussel of bread. *Jeremiah 35* speaks of the

Rechabites. Jeremiah, as a prophet, went to them at the command of the Lord and instructed them to drink wine. However, due to an instruction from their father who was now dead, they refused. Even the besieging of Jerusalem did not stop them. God honoured them for their commitment and said that they shall not lack a man to stand before the Lord in every generation. Temperance was one of the things Paul spoke to Felix in *Acts 24:24-25* that made him tremble. *Jeremiah 33:14-18* shows that the righteousness of God has been given to us. This helps us understand the need for temperance. The righteousness of God is the right to rule. However, it is also a call to grooming. Temperance is also a requirement for someone who would be a bishop, or a deacon as seen in *Titus 1:5-11*. We put on temperance in view of God's holiness and in account of the call of God upon our lives.

Block 4: Patience.

Revelation 1:9 shows that we are in the patience of Jesus Christ. Luke 21:19 also says that in our patience, we possess our souls. There are three streams of patience:

1. Endurance: Which has two parts: tribulation and doctrine.
2. Steadfastness
3. Constancy or continuance.

ENDURANCE:

Endurance is holding unwaveringly to God despite opposition and the ability to last in spite of any apparent pleasures, trials or pain. It is a demand that the sons of God to endure tribulation and sound doctrine.

- a) Tribulation: *2 Thessalonians 1:5* shows that the presence of tribulation is a presence of God's just determination that we partake of the His Kingdom. This means tribulation is something God has allowed so we can be counted worthy to partake of His kingdom. Tribulation and persecution in life is bound to happen and we need to brace up for it by putting our hope in God. It is a test that everyone who is called a son must pass through. The road will not be easy, but this is where the enemy gets many. We are called to be soldiers. Soldiers prepare for the worst. Every tribulation will come to pass away, but it is necessary. Jesus said in *John 16:33* that we will have tribulation in this world, but He assures us that we will overcome. Endurance must be built in every son who will rule with the Father. The Lord sometimes takes away comfort and a stay of bread as we see in order that we may learn to live by the Word of God. As Soldiers of God, *2 Timothy 2:1-12* encourages us to endure hardness. The point of tribulation is that everything in our lives that is built on a faulty foundation will be removed. This tribulation, however, is not the result of wrong doing. *1 Peter 2:19-21* says that if we suffer wrongfully then there is no glory in it. We do not go about searching for tribulation, God has already prepared the tribulation that each of His children will go through.
- b) Doctrine: *2 Timothy 4:1-5* speaks of a time where men will be unable to endure sound doctrine. This would be a time where people will have itchy ears, looking for teachings that fan their lust. These will be carried away by every wind of doctrine.

STEADFASTNESS:

This is faithfulness in the Word that has been committed unto us. It is required of a steward of the gift of God that he must be found faithful. There is a tendency to lose ground in steadfastness. This happens

when things in life begin to make more sense than the things of God. We have an adversary who goes about roaring like a lion and we are to resist him, being steadfast in the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. *1 Peter 5:8-11* admonishes us to be sober and vigilant. There is a coming judgement coming to try all that dwell on the earth. However, *Acts 7:55* shows that if we are full of the Holy ghost, we can zone out of the heat of adversity around us and remain 'on fire' in cold circumstances.

CONSTANCY OR CONTINUANCE:

Patient continuance involves constancy in doing a good work. Galatians 6:9 says we are to continue in good works and not faint. It says that as long as we persist, we will be rewarded. *Hebrews 13:15* speaks of a call to offer sacrifices of praise. The idea of a sacrifice implies that these offering of praise costs something. *Romans 2:5-7* speaks of men who through patience continuance in good works seek glory, honour, and immortality. *Romans 12:11* also encourages us to be faithful in any act of service. Even in the little things, God looks for faithfulness. We need to do everything as unto God. This will help us be constant in and out of season. If your gaze is on man, you will be discouraged in your service. However, with our gaze on the Lord, we are strengthened.

There is an upcoming judgement on the earth and this judgement begins with the Church. We need to be established in all the three streams of patience. By patience, we possess our souls. We can hold on with confidence to the promise of the Kingdom, because it is our Fathers good pleasure to give us His Kingdom.

That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

Hebrews 6:12 KJV

The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your Spirit. Amen