

Hebrews 12:11-17

New American Standard Bible 1995

1 ¹¹ All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but
2 sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it,
3 afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

4 ¹² Therefore, strengthen the hands that are weak and the
5 knees that are feeble, ¹³ and make straight paths for your
6 feet, so that the limb which is lame may not be put out of
7 joint, but rather be healed.

8 ¹⁴ Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification
9 without which no one will see the Lord. ¹⁵ See to it that no
10 one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of
11 bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be
12 defiled; ¹⁶ that *there be* no immoral or godless person like
13 Esau, who sold his own birthright for a *single* meal. ¹⁷ For
14 you know that even afterwards, when he desired to inherit
15 the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for
16 repentance, though he sought for it with tears.

Read the passage through completely before looking at these questions.

Observation (What does it say?):

Consider the observation questions on the back of this page. What do you notice in this passage?

- Connect repeated words or ideas.
- Underline commands or instructions.
- Bracket phrases that need more explanation.
- Circle words that seem to be symbolic.
- What else do you observe in this passage?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

After observing the passage:

- How are the commands (v.14-16) related? Or are they?
- Why did the writer bring Esau into the discussion? What do you know about Esau?
- What specifically does the writer criticize about Esau? Does v. 17 sound unfair?
- What questions come to mind as you read?

Application (What does it mean for me?):

- What are your weak hands and feeble knees? What kind of training might strengthen you in those areas?
- Which of the commands in v. 14-16 most apply to your life?
- What would be different (attitudes, behavior) if God used this passage to change you?

For additional thought and discussion:

- ²⁹ When Jacob had cooked stew, Esau came in from the field and he was famished; ³⁰ and Esau said to Jacob, "Please let me have a swallow of that red stuff there, for I am famished." Therefore his name was called Edom. ³¹ But Jacob said, "First sell me your birthright." ³² Esau said, "Behold, I am about to die; so of what use then is the birthright to me?" ³³ And Jacob said, "First swear to me"; so he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob. ³⁴ Then Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew; and he ate and drank, and rose and went on his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright. (Genesis 25:29-34)
- ³⁴ When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried out with an exceedingly great and bitter cry, and said to his father, "Bless me, even me also, O my father!" ³⁵ And he said, "Your brother came deceitfully and has taken away your blessing." ³⁶ Then he said, "Is he not rightly named Jacob, for he has supplanted me these two times? He took away my birthright, and behold, now he has taken away my blessing." (Genesis 27:34-36)

For more suggested methods of study: <http://www.goodnotsafe.com/methodical-bible-study/>

For examples of inductive studies: <http://www.goodnotsafe.com/inductive-bible-study-examples-2/>

Inductive Bible Study

(A few general ideas)

Observation (What does it say?)

What facts do you **observe** about the passage that help bring out the writer's thought process?

- Who are the people involved?
- What action takes place?
- What type of literature is it (poetry, history, didactic, etc.)?
- What details are included or left out?
- Are any unusual words used?
- Is there symbolic language?
- What is the grammar of the passage (pronouns, prepositions, verb tenses)?
- Are words or ideas repeated?
- Any comparisons or contrasts?
- Any cause and effect?
- Are there indications of purpose ("in order that...")?
- Are there conclusions ("Therefore...")?
- Are there explanations?
- Does the passage logically break into sections?
- How would you summarize the passage?
- What would be a good "headline" for the passage?

Interpretation (What does it mean?)

What questions come to mind about the facts that would help you **interpret** the meaning?

- How would the original readers have understood the passage?
- What is the main emphasis?
- Why does the writer use repetition, or contrast, or unusual words?
- What does the grammar or structure of the passage reveal about the writer's thought pattern?
- Is there a logical sequence in the passage?
- How are different ideas in the passage connected?
- Are there any new ideas or concepts presented?
- Are there difficulties in the passage?

Application (What does it mean for me?)

What is the impact on your life? What **application** does the Holy Spirit want to show you?

- Is there a command to obey?
- Is there a promise to be thankful for?
- Is there an attribute of God to worship?
- Is there an example to follow?

**Read nothing into the Scriptures,
but draw everything from them,
and suffer nothing to remain
hidden that is really in them.
J.A. Bengel (1687-1752)**

For a much more detailed description of the methodology, see

Robert A. Traina, *Methodical Bible Study*. Wilmore, Kentucky: Asbury Theological Seminary, 1952.

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