THE DIVINE COVENANT’S DISCIPLINARY PROTOCOL

A major component of the divine covenant is often misunderstood—the covenant blessings for faithfulness to the covenant (Lev. 26:1–13) and the curses for unfaithfulness (Lev. 26:14–45; see also Deut. 28:1–68). The curses for unfaithfulness to the covenant were not the threats of a power-hungry, angry God, but rather the warnings of a loving Parent provided to children prone to self-destructive ways. They describe the natural consequences of life without divine protection that unfaithfulness forfeits, and the promise of a carefully managed disciplinary protocol of divine interventions to save them from utter self-destruction (cf. Deut. 8:5).

The first New Testament occurrence of paideia, “discipline,” implies that if fathers “discipline” as God does, it will not “provoke . . . children to anger” (Eph. 6:4, NASB). The second and only other New Testament use of paideia outside of Hebrews 12:5–11 is 2 Tim. 3:16. In this text, the divine, covenantal disciplinary protocol is outlined: (1) it starts with “teaching” concerning the right way; (2) if this teaching is ignored, “reproof” becomes necessary to gently but firmly guide back to safe paths; (3) if the reproof is disregarded, then “correction,” often painful and initially unwelcome, is provided as a more intense warning of even more severe trouble ahead if the present course of disobedience is pursued; and finally, (4) assuming the previous combination of steps in the disciplinary protocol were successful, the recipient has been or can now be “trained” (paideia), fully disciplined, to become “thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Tim. 3:17).
Write out Hebrews 12:1–17 from the translation of your choice. If you’re pressed for time, write out Hebrews 12:5–11. You may also rewrite the passage in your own words, or outline or mind-map the chapter.
Go back to your scribed text and study the passage.

**Circle** repeated words/ phrases/ideas

**Underline** words/phrases that are important and have meaning to you

Draw **Arrows** to connect words/ phrases to other associated or related words/phrases

What special insights do your marks seem overall to point to?


If your child was about to make a terrible life choice, how far would you go to encourage him/her to reconsider? Would it be “loving” to ignore it because addressing it might cause tension?

Read more at www.inversebible.org/cov12-3
After looking at your scribed and annotated text, what special insights do your marks seem to point to overall?

What questions emerge after studying this passage? What parts are difficult?

What other principles and conclusions do you find?

How does it feel to know that God is using you to bless others while He is also disciplining/training/equipping you for even more?

Read more at www.inversebible.org/cov12-4
What relationship do the following verses have with the primary passage?

- Leviticus 26:1–46
- 2 Timothy 3:16, 17
- Isaiah 28:23–29
- Romans 8:28
- Colossians 3:22, 23
- 2 Corinthians 1:3, 4
- Revelation 3:21

What other verses/promises come to mind in connection with Hebrews 10:19–13:21?

Even though you go through a lot of stuff in life, how does it feel to know that Jesus is your personal Protector and personal Trainer?

How do you see Jesus differently or see Him again?

Prayer: How do you respond to seeing Jesus in this way?

Meditate on Hebrews 10:19–13:21 again and look for where Jesus is.

Read more at www.inversebible.org/cov12-6
Review the memory verse. How does it apply to your life this week?

After this week’s study of the chapter, how has God disciplined you personally?

What are practical applications you adapt this discipline to areas around you?

Read more inSight from the Spirit of Prophecy at www.inversebible.org/cov12-7
Share insights from this week’s memory verse and Bible study as well as any discoveries, observations, and questions with your Sabbath School class (or Bible study group). Consider these discussion questions with the rest of the group.

Why does God discipline at all?

How are curses actually blessings?

When did a hardship you experienced turn out later to be a blessing in disguise?

How has God disciplined you through the covenant blessings and curses?

How has Jesus personally trained and disciplined you?

How have all things worked together for you?

How have you experienced the benefit package of being a divine covenant member? If you have not, why not yet?

How do we explain these experiences to someone who might not know Jesus?