

“If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God...” (1 Peter 4:11).

SEVERITY OF GOD DEMONSTRATED

John Edwards

Romans 11:22 says, *“Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God....”* One place to behold the severity of God is in the book of Numbers. These cases demonstrate the fact that God is a God of severity.

WHEN THE FIRE OF THE LORD BURNT AMONG THE PEOPLE (NUM. 11:1-3). God’s severity was demonstrated at Taberah, *A burning*, when the people complained *“and the fire of the Lord burnt among them, and consumed them that were in the uttermost parts of the camp.”*

WHEN THE LORD SMOTE THE PEOPLE WITH A GREAT PLAGUE (NUM. 11:33-34). When the Lord brought quails it is reported, *“And while the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the Lord was kindled against the people, and the Lord smote the people with a very great plague.”*

WHEN MIRIAM BECAME LEPROUS (NUM. 12:9-15). Numbers 12 records where Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses *“and, behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow: and Aaron looked upon Miriam, and, behold, she was leprous.”*

WHEN THE SPIES BROUGHT BACK AN EVIL REPORT (NUM. 14:22-39). The Lord said, *“Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me.”*

WHEN A MAN WAS STONED FOR VIOLATING THE SABBATH (NUM. 15:32-36). *“And all the congregation brought him without the camp, and stoned him with stones, and he died; as the Lord commanded Moses.”*

WHEN KORAH LED A REBELLION AGAINST MOSES AND AARON (NUM. 16:31-35). *“And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods.”*

WHEN 14,700 DIED IN A PLAGUE (NUM. 16:46-50). Korah had his sympathizers. There were those who said, *“Ye have killed the people of the Lord.”* What happened to the rebel sympathizers? *“Now they that died in the plague were fourteen thousand and seven hundred, beside them that died about the matter of Korah.”*

WHEN MOSES AND AARON WERE NOT ALLOWED TO ENTER THE PROMISED

LAND (NUM. 20:12, 24; 27:12-14). *“And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.”*

WHEN THE LORD SENT FIERY SERPENTS AMONG THE PEOPLE (NUM. 21:6). *“And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died.”*

WHEN ISRAEL JOINED UNTO BAAL-PEOR (NUM. 25:1-9). *“And those that died in the plague were twenty and four thousand.”*

No telling how many died in the wilderness, from Sinai to Moab. 1 Corinthians 10:5 says, *“But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness.”* Surely, God is a God of severity. *“It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God”* (Heb. 10:31). This should move and motivate us to *“Fear God, and keep his commandments....For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil”* (Eccl. 12:13-14). The final judgment will demonstrate God’s severity when the wicked are *“cast into the lake of fire”* (Rev. 20:15).

THE DEVASTATING EFFECTS OF NO DISCIPLINE

Nicolas Edwards

We are living in a world that looks down upon discipline. People want no standard of authority, no limitations, no restrictions. They want to do whatever they want and be accepted and tolerated! Thus, any force of authority resisting them is rebelled against. This has influenced the church and when members of the Lord's body get to thinking this way, it will destroy the church! The Lord has all authority (Mt. 28:18). Whether we like it or not, God's word places limitations upon us and governs our lives. We must obey!

PUT AWAY THE EVIL. This phrase recurs throughout the book of Deuteronomy (Dt. 13:5; 17:12; 19:13; 21:9; 22:22, 24). God gave His people commandments (Dt. 6:1). These involved things they must do as well as things they must not do. They were to obey (Dt. 6:2, 17-18). Discipline was practiced when a person "*wrought wickedness in the sight of the Lord thy God, in transgressing*

his covenant" (Dt. 17:2). They were stoned with stones (Dt. 17:5-7). If the law of God commanded such today, would we obey? The purpose of this was to "*Put away the evil.*" All the people would "*hear and fear.*" And they would "*do no more*" (Dt. 17:13). Punishment and discipline for sin caused fear and put an end to the sin! The evil ceased. Suppose discipline was never enforced. Evil never would have been put away, no one would fear the consequences of sin, and the people would **do more!** The sin would continue and increase. Thus, the devastating effects of no discipline! Toleration breeds sin!

THE ROD OF CORRECTION. "*Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him*" (Prov. 22:15). "*The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame*" (Prov. 29:15). This mindset is destroying the home, as children are left to themselves, living foolishly, and causing shame! Discipline is an act of love (Prov. 3:12) as it "*delivers his soul from hell*" (Prov. 23:13-14).

ECCLESIASTES 8:11. The word of God says, "*Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.*" Indeed, putting off the punishment of evil has the opposite effect! It is not very helpful. Poor execution leads to "*the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.*" Sin increases! Toleration produces sin.

GOD DISCIPLINES. If you intend to be a child of God, you will expect correction and chastening! (Job 5:17; Prov. 3:11-12; Heb. 12:5-13; Rev. 3:19). This occurs through the word (2 Tim. 3:16-17). To remove discipline from the word of God is to "*Take away*" (Rev. 22:19). This is taking place among brethren today! As a result, you have people living in sin calling themselves Christians.

We are to "*put away*" and "*Withdraw*" (1 Cor. 5; 2 Th. 3) in the church. If we fail, sin will increase and spread to the destruction of the church!

**EVERY MEMBER
AT
EVERY SERVICE!**

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