

Daily Bible Readings

Our Read-Ahead for: 18 September 2022

Faith Is Endurance

Monday: The Discipline of the Lord (**Job 5:8–18**)

Tuesday: The Death of Sin (**Romans 6:1–11**)

Wednesday: The Race for the Prize (**1 Corinthians 9:24–27**)

Thursday: The Training for Godliness (**1 Timothy 4:6–10**)

Friday: The Endurance of the Faithful (**James 5:7–11**)

Saturday: The Example of Faithfulness (**1 Peter 2:18–25**)

Sunday: The Pioneer of Faith (**Hebrews 12:1–11**)

Faith Is Endurance¹

ackground • **Hebrews 12:1–11**
Devotional Reading • **JAMES 5:7–11**

Keep in Mind: *“Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and sin which beset us so easily, let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” (Hebrews 12:-2, KJV)*

Focal Verses

Hebrews 12:1–11

1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

4 Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.

5 And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:

6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?

¹ Urban Ministries Inc, *Directions* Adult edition, June-August 2022; *Faith Calls for Perseverance*, 04 Septmeber 2022

8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

9 Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?

10 For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.

11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

Aim for Change

By the end of the lesson, we will: DESCRIBE how to have enduring faith; BECOME CONVINCED that we can endure in faith; and DEVELOP a plan to utilize our faith to determine and reach spiritual goals.

In Focus

In today's lesson, we see that Jesus set the perfect example as the leader who was tempted but did not give in. He endured the pain and shame of the Cross to achieve the joy and victory of eternal life with God..

I. The People, Places and Times

Rome: As the capital city of Italy, it was the center of commerce, culture, and religion. Although there were times when Jews and Christians were expelled from Rome, there were other times when they could worship freely.

Believers in Rome: Scholars are very unsure of the intended audience, but in Hebrews 13:24, the writer sends greetings from those of Italy. They were a subgroup of the main Christian congregation that had been formed there years earlier. Living in a climate of other religions and cults, their faith was tested constantly. When times were hard politically, culturally, socially, and economically; the chance was greater that they would be tempted to return to Judaism. It was not easy nor politically correct to be a Christian at this time. Christians in Rome had to deal with the threat of persecution by the Roman authorities; although, none of them had become martyrs like Stephen and others. This happened later under Nero, the emperor. Because they were still alive, the writer encouraged them to continue to run their race and not give up. He reminded them that Jesus never gave up and that they shouldn't either.

II. Background

Some Bible commentators believe Hebrews was written to a Jewish-Christian congregation in Rome around A.D. 67–70. Others believe it was written to Jews living in Egypt or Palestine. Traditionally, authorship was attributed to the apostle Paul, but modern scholars are unsure of the identity of the author of this epistle. Some believe Barnabas wrote it, and still others suggest Apollos, a Jew born in Alexandria, Egypt.

The writer suggests that all Christians emulate Jesus' suffering and patience in anticipation of an eternal reward. We cannot help but notice the metaphors of Greek athletic terms such as "run with perseverance the race" and "a great cloud of witnesses [spectators]" (Hebrews 12:1, NIV). These Christians were to think of themselves as athletes who possessed endurance in order to ensure victory over the forces of evil. The writer also made it clear that the Christians' secret weapon, needed for victory in spite of trials and tribulations, was unwavering faith.

III. In Depth

1. Believers Must Run the Race (Hebrews 12:1–2)
2. Believers Must Develop Endurance (Hebrews 12:3–6)
3. Believers Must Learn to Accept the Discipline of the Lord (Hebrews 7–11)

IV. Take Aways

V. Announcements

VI. Closing Prayer