

**The Duties of Faith**  
(Chapters 12 & 13)

**Contest (1-3)**

-In view of what all those before us have done by their faith (Ch 11; 6:12)

-**Cloud:** Metaphor for a large group of people.

-**Weight / Sin:** What are the things that will keep us from finishing the race?

**Chastening (4-11)**

**Reassurance (4)**

The readers are informed they have not suffered as Christ suffered.

**Reminder (5-6)**

-Proverbs 3:11-12

**Reaction (5,7)**

Negative (5)

"regard lightly"

"be weary"

Positive (7)

"God is treating you as sons"

**Reasons (6)**

To prove His love

To prove we are His children

**Rewards (11)**

Righteousness & peace

**Challenges (12-17)**

**Exhortations (12-15)**

**Lift**

-Isa 35:3-8

**Make Straight**

-Prov 3:6; 4:26

Isa 26:7; Jer 31:9;

2Pet 2:15

**Strive**

-Mt 5:9; Mk 9:50;

Rom 12:18

**See To it**

-Gal 5:1-6;

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**The Greater Response (Chapters 11 to 13)**

**Therefore** since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, <sup>2</sup>looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. <sup>3</sup>Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.

Consider Rom 8:28 & James 1:2-12

<sup>4</sup>In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. <sup>5</sup>And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. <sup>6</sup>For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives." <- Prov 3:11-12

<sup>7</sup>It is for discipline that you have to endure. **God is treating you as sons**. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? <sup>8</sup>If you are left without discipline, in which **all have participated**, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. <sup>9</sup>Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to **the Father** of spirits and live? <sup>10</sup>For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but **he disciplines us for our good**, that we may share his holiness. <sup>11</sup>For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the **peaceful fruit of righteousness** to those who have been trained by it.

<sup>12</sup>**Therefore** lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, <sup>13</sup>and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed.

<sup>14</sup>**Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness** without which no one will see the Lord. <sup>15</sup>**See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no "root of bitterness" springs up** and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled; <sup>16</sup>that no one is **sexually immoral or unholy** like Esau, who sold his birthright for a single meal. <sup>17</sup>For you know that afterward, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no chance to repent, though he sought it with tears.

**Race (1)**

Run the spiritual race God has marked out for each us...with endurance

-Heb 10:32-36

-1Co 9:24-25

-Phil 2:14-18, 3:12-14

-2Tim 4:7

Cast off every weight and sin

-Mt 5:27-30

-Mk 9:42-48

-Eph 4:17-24

-Col 3:9-10

**Role Model (2-3)**

**-Jesus**

**Who He Is:** Our target / the founder and perfecter of our faith

**What He Did:** He endured the cross and opposition from sinners.

**Why He Did It:**

Because of the joy set before Him.

**Where He Is Now:** At God's right hand.

-Psa 110:1

-Mark 16:19

-Luke 22:69

-Acts 2:33; 5:31

-Rom 8:34

-Eph 1:20

-Col 3:1

-Heb 1:3; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2

-1Pe 3:22

**Relationship (7-10)**

Disciplinarian

(9-10) "the Father"

Disciplined (7-8)

"all have participated"

**Example (16-17)**

**-Esau**

Gen 25:24-34, 26:34-35, 27:46

**Immoral**

**Unholy**

## Hebrews Chapter 12 - Questions for Discussion

What is the “great cloud of witnesses?” (v. 1)

How can we “lay aside every weight?” How are we to run our race? (v. 1-2)

What motivated Christ to “endure the cross?” (v. 2)

What did Christ endure at the hands of sinners? How does the author use this as motivation? (v. 3-4)

Who will God chasten? How will He chasten them? Why? (vv. 5-11; Prov 3:11-12)

If God does not chasten us, what are we? What does chastening yield? (vv. 5-11)

How are we to approach God’s discipline and the suffering of this life? (vv. 12-13)

What are we to pursue? How are we to pursue it? What things are we to avoid? (vv. 14-15)

How is Esau described? What can we learn from him? (vv. 16-17; Gen 25:29-34)

## Teacher's Notes

### Therefore

#### Hebrews 11 (ESV)

<sup>1</sup> Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. <sup>2</sup> For by it the people of old received their commendation. <sup>3</sup> By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.

<sup>4</sup> By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, through which he was commended as righteous, God commending him by accepting his gifts. And through his faith, though he died, he still speaks. <sup>5</sup> By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death, and he was not found, because God had taken him. Now before he was taken he was commended as having pleased God. <sup>6</sup> And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him. <sup>7</sup> By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.

<sup>8</sup> By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. <sup>9</sup> By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. <sup>10</sup> For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God. <sup>11</sup> By faith Sarah herself received power to conceive, even when she was past the age, since she considered him faithful who had promised. <sup>12</sup> Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born descendants as many as the stars of heaven and as many as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore.

<sup>13</sup> These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. <sup>14</sup> For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. <sup>15</sup> If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. <sup>16</sup> But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.

<sup>17</sup> By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his only son, <sup>18</sup> of whom it was said, "Through Isaac shall your offspring be named." <sup>19</sup> He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back. <sup>20</sup> By faith Isaac invoked future blessings on Jacob and Esau. <sup>21</sup> By faith Jacob, when dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, bowing in worship over the head of his staff. <sup>22</sup> By

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faith Joseph, at the end of his life, made mention of the exodus of the Israelites and gave directions concerning his bones.

<sup>23</sup> By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw that the child was beautiful, and they were not afraid of the king's edict. <sup>24</sup> By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, <sup>25</sup> choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. <sup>26</sup> He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward. <sup>27</sup> By faith he left Egypt, not being afraid of the anger of the king, for he endured as seeing him who is invisible. <sup>28</sup> By faith he kept the Passover and sprinkled the blood, so that the Destroyer of the firstborn might not touch them.

<sup>29</sup> By faith the people crossed the Red Sea as on dry land, but the Egyptians, when they attempted to do the same, were drowned. <sup>30</sup> By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they had been encircled for seven days. <sup>31</sup> By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had given a friendly welcome to the spies.

<sup>32</sup> And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets— <sup>33</sup> who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, <sup>34</sup> quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. <sup>35</sup> Women received back their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, so that they might rise again to a better life. <sup>36</sup> Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. <sup>37</sup> They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword. They went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, mistreated— <sup>38</sup> of whom the world was not worthy—wandering about in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

<sup>39</sup> And all these, though commended through their faith, did not receive what was promised, <sup>40</sup> since God had provided something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

### Hebrews 6:12 (ESV)

<sup>12</sup> so that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

## The Race

### Hebrews 10:32–36 (ESV)

<sup>32</sup> But recall the former days when, after you were enlightened, you endured a hard struggle with sufferings, <sup>33</sup> sometimes being publicly exposed to reproach and affliction, and sometimes being partners with those so treated. <sup>34</sup> For you had compassion on those in prison, and you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property, since you

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knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one. <sup>35</sup> Therefore do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. <sup>36</sup> For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised.

### 1 Corinthians 9:24–25 (ESV)

<sup>24</sup> Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. <sup>25</sup> Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable.

### Philippians 2:14–18 (ESV)

<sup>14</sup> Do all things without grumbling or disputing, <sup>15</sup> that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, <sup>16</sup> holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain. <sup>17</sup> Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. <sup>18</sup> Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me.

### Philippians 3:12–14 (ESV)

<sup>12</sup> Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. <sup>13</sup> Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, <sup>14</sup> I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

### 2 Timothy 4:7 (ESV)

<sup>7</sup> I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

Cast off every weight and sin

### Matthew 5:27–30 (ESV)

<sup>27</sup> “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ <sup>28</sup> But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. <sup>29</sup> If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. <sup>30</sup> And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.

### Mark 9:42–48 (ESV)

<sup>42</sup> “Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him if a great millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into

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the sea. <sup>43</sup> And if your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than with two hands to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. <sup>45</sup> And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame than with two feet to be thrown into hell. <sup>47</sup> And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into hell, <sup>48</sup> 'where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.'

### Ephesians 4:17–24 (ESV)

<sup>17</sup> Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. <sup>18</sup> They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. <sup>19</sup> They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. <sup>20</sup> But that is not the way you learned Christ!— <sup>21</sup> assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, <sup>22</sup> to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, <sup>23</sup> and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, <sup>24</sup> and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

### Colossians 3:9–10 (ESV)

<sup>9</sup> Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices <sup>10</sup> and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.

## Right Hand of God

### Psalms 110:1 (ESV)

<sup>1</sup> The Lord says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool."

### Mark 16:19 (ESV)

<sup>19</sup> So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God.

### Luke 22:69 (ESV)

<sup>69</sup> But from now on the Son of Man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God."

### Acts 2:33 (ESV)

<sup>33</sup> Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing.

### Acts 5:31 (ESV)

<sup>31</sup> God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.

### Romans 8:34 (ESV)

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<sup>34</sup> Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.

### **Ephesians 1:20 (ESV)**

<sup>20</sup> that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places,

### **Colossians 3:1 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

### **Hebrews 1:3 (ESV)**

<sup>3</sup> He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

### **Hebrews 8:1 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven,

### **Hebrews 10:12 (ESV)**

<sup>12</sup> But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God,

### **Hebrews 12:2 (ESV)**

<sup>2</sup> looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

## **Reminder**

### **Proverbs 3:11–12 (ESV)**

<sup>11</sup> My son, do not despise the LORD's discipline  
or be weary of his reproof,

<sup>12</sup> for the LORD reproves him whom he loves,  
as a father the son in whom he delights.

## **Lift**

### **Isaiah 35:3–8 (ESV)**

<sup>3</sup> Strengthen the weak hands,  
and make firm the feeble knees.

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<sup>4</sup> Say to those who have an anxious heart,

“Be strong; fear not!

Behold, your God

will come with vengeance,

with the recompense of God.

He will come and save you.”

<sup>5</sup> Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,

and the ears of the deaf unstopped;

<sup>6</sup> then shall the lame man leap like a deer,

and the tongue of the mute sing for joy.

For waters break forth in the wilderness,

and streams in the desert;

<sup>7</sup> the burning sand shall become a pool,

and the thirsty ground springs of water;

in the haunt of jackals, where they lie down,

the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

<sup>8</sup> And a highway shall be there,

and it shall be called the Way of Holiness;

the unclean shall not pass over it.

It shall belong to those who walk on the way;

even if they are fools, they shall not go astray.

### **Make Straight**

#### **Proverbs 3:6 (ESV)**

<sup>6</sup> In all your ways acknowledge him,

and he will make straight your paths.

#### **Proverbs 4:26 (ESV)**

<sup>26</sup> Ponder the path of your feet;

then all your ways will be sure.

#### **Isaiah 26:7 (ESV)**

<sup>7</sup> The path of the righteous is level;

you make level the way of the righteous.

#### **Jeremiah 31:9 (ESV)**

<sup>9</sup> With weeping they shall come,

and with pleas for mercy I will lead them back,



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I will make them walk by brooks of water,  
in a straight path in which they shall not stumble,  
for I am a father to Israel,  
and Ephraim is my firstborn.

### 2 Peter 2:15 (ESV)

<sup>15</sup> Forsaking the right way, they have gone astray. They have followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved gain from wrongdoing,

## Strive

### Matthew 5:9 (ESV)

<sup>9</sup> “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

### Mark 9:50 (ESV)

<sup>50</sup> Salt is good, but if the salt has lost its saltiness, how will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.”

### Romans 12:18 (ESV)

<sup>18</sup> If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

## See To it

### Galatians 5:1–6 (ESV)

<sup>1</sup> For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.

<sup>2</sup> Look: I, Paul, say to you that if you accept circumcision, Christ will be of no advantage to you. <sup>3</sup> I testify again to every man who accepts circumcision that he is obligated to keep the whole law. <sup>4</sup> You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace. <sup>5</sup> For through the Spirit, by faith, we ourselves eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness. <sup>6</sup> For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love.

## Esau

### Genesis 25:24–34 (ESV)

<sup>24</sup> When her days to give birth were completed, behold, there were twins in her womb.

<sup>25</sup> The first came out red, all his body like a hairy cloak, so they called his name Esau. <sup>26</sup> Afterward his brother came out with his hand holding Esau’s heel, so his name was called Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when she bore them.

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<sup>27</sup> When the boys grew up, Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field, while Jacob was a quiet man, dwelling in tents. <sup>28</sup> Isaac loved Esau because he ate of his game, but Rebekah loved Jacob.

<sup>29</sup> Once when Jacob was cooking stew, Esau came in from the field, and he was exhausted. <sup>30</sup> And Esau said to Jacob, "Let me eat some of that red stew, for I am exhausted!" (Therefore his name was called Edom.) <sup>31</sup> Jacob said, "Sell me your birthright now." <sup>32</sup> Esau said, "I am about to die; of what use is a birthright to me?" <sup>33</sup> Jacob said, "Swear to me now." So he swore to him and sold his birthright to Jacob. <sup>34</sup> Then Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew, and he ate and drank and rose and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright.

### **Genesis 26:34–35 (ESV)**

<sup>34</sup> When Esau was forty years old, he took Judith the daughter of Beerli the Hittite to be his wife, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite, <sup>35</sup> and they made life bitter for Isaac and Rebekah.

### **Genesis 27:46 (ESV)**

<sup>46</sup> Then Rebekah said to Isaac, "I loathe my life because of the Hittite women. If Jacob marries one of the Hittite women like these, one of the women of the land, what good will my life be to me?"