

Hebrews

Study of Chapter 12

Day 1

I am so proud of you—you are nearly through the book of Hebrews. I hope this study has helped you grow and mature in your faith walk. This week we are going to look at Hebrews 12. As always, we want to read or listen to the chapter several times before beginning the study guide. Each time we read God's word, we will see a bit more of His divine nature and great love for us.

1. Look at the printout of Hebrews 12 in the back of your study guide. What is the first word in this chapter? _____

What does this word remind us to do? _____

To whom is the author pointing our attention to from the previous chapter? _____

2. Because we have this legacy of faithful servants of God who have gone before us, what does the author encourage us to do? _____
3. Were these men and women perfect? _____

What was the key factor mentioned in Hebrews 11 that led to a praiseworthy walk with God? _____

4. Read Ephesians 2:1-9, and 1) underline the details describing our condition prior to salvation, 2) highlight what God did for us, and 3) circle his reason for doing it.

Even though we are still living here on earth, if we are a child of God, what is true about us positionally speaking? _____

Ephesians 2:1-9

As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, ² in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. ³ All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. ⁴ But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. ⁶ And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, ⁷ in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast.

Considering all we learned in Ephesians 2:1-9 concerning our desperate condition before salvation, if we are a Christ follower, what should be our response according to Hebrews 12:1? How are we to run the race set for us?



Day 2

5. I love the word picture of a runner used to help us grasp the futility of our entanglements. Can you picture the absurdity of someone showing up to run the Olympic marathon dressed in a tuxedo and dress shoes, carrying bottles of water and energy bars in his pockets? I suppose he could still run the race, but would he be likely to win? _____

At this point would his finish really reflect his talent and ability? _____

What advice do you think his coach and loved ones might give this runner?

6. The question for believers is how are you running your divinely-designated course of life? _____
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7. If I am being transparent, I must admit that unreal expectations of myself, others, or an event have been an entanglement for me. I picture how things are going to go, and when it does not pan out as I imagined I can feel disappointed. This last decade of my life has been so much more peace-filled by practicing, "laying this aside." What things tend to hinder or entangle you? _____
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8. Lightening our load is not the only factor. We must take note of if we are to run well the race marked out for us. In verse 2, what was the second factor to running well? _____

9. Think about the words of Hebrews 12:1-2. The fact that we are encouraged to run our race this way tells us something about the race we are called to run. What can be gleaned about the race we are called to run when the emphasis is on running unencumbered and with perseverance? _____
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How might knowing this truth about our race be beneficial to our finishing well?

10. Running our race well requires more than merely laying aside encumbrances and persevering. What is the key mentioned in verse 2?
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Day 3

Genesis 14:18-20

Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God Most High,¹⁹ and he blessed Abram, saying, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth."²⁰ And praise be to God Most High, who delivered your enemies into your hand."

Psalm 110:4

The LORD has sworn an oath and will not change his mind: "You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek."

11. What two words are used to describe Jesus in verse 2?

• _____ • _____

12. Why do you suppose the author chose these two words to describe him?

13. Our faith story is being written each day. Every day we live out another chapter of our story. Jesus came with a clear purpose—the text calls this, "the joy set before him." What do you believe was the joy set before Jesus that he willingly endured the cross? _____

14. According to Hebrews 12:2, where is Jesus now? _____

In just a few words describe what this place and position represent?

15. Do not miss the facts shared in verse 3. What do you see about Jesus' life on earth? _____

Have you ever felt opposition from others because of your faith? _____

Are you ever discouraged? _____

Do you grow weary at times? _____

Do you believe Jesus can relate to your daily trials? _____

What is making it hard for you to run your race well? _____

16. We will experience difficult seasons, people and circumstances. We must be careful not to confuse running well with being problem free. Trials and problems provide opportunities for us to display our faith. Worldly suffering is not a direct sign of God's displeasure. Rather, God sometimes uses our hardships to "train" us to be more dependent on Him and more like Jesus. When we encounter opposition, what steps might we take to run well? _____

Day 4

17. The author of Hebrews uses an earthly example that every person would be familiar with. Who does he point the readers attention to in verses 5-11?

18. With a highlighter, mark the repeated word "discipline," and it's various forms, in verses 5-11. Look up this word in the Strong's Concordance or a good Bible

dictionary, and write a definition for this word. _____

19. Once again, the author is pointing our attention from the lesser to the greater. Who specifically would be the lesser example of loving discipline in verses 5-11, and who would be the example of the greater?

20. Do not miss the true nature of God's discipline. According to verses 6 and 10, what is the motive behind God's discipline? _____

21. What is the truth about discipline stated in verse 11? _____

22. If you are a parent, would you say that this is always the motive behind your discipline of your children? _____

23. If your answer is, "not every time I discipline is this my true motive," what might be some other factors that motivate your discipline? _____

Is a lack of discipline/training really loving? _____

Day 5

24. Write Hebrews 12:13 in your own words. _____

25. Do you feel a sense of responsibility when it comes to your example of living for Christ? _____

Do your words and actions give clarity to your testimony of being a Christ follower or confuse those who are watching you? _____

26. Verses 14-17 are a warning for all believers. The author brings up Esau. What was his problem? _____

What is the warning for us? _____

If you are unfamiliar with this part of Esau's story, read Genesis 25:29-34.

27. Verses 18-24 make a comparison between two mountains. The first is Mount Sinai, where Moses received instructions from God for the nation of Israel. In verse 20, God made it clear that no person or animal was to come up on the mountain while he met with Moses. What would happen if this command were broken?

Genesis 25:29-34

Once when Jacob was cooking some stew, Esau came in from the open country, famished. ³⁰ He said to Jacob, "Quick, let me have some of that red stew! I'm famished!" (That is why he was also called Edom.)

³¹ Jacob replied, "First sell me your birthright." ³² "Look, I am about to die," Esau said. "What good is the birthright to me?" ³³ But Jacob said, "Swear to me first." So he swore an oath to him, selling his birthright to Jacob. ³⁴ Then Jacob gave Esau some bread and some lentil stew. He ate and drank, and then got up and left. So Esau despised his birthright.

28. The second mountain mentioned in this section of Scripture is a place of joy. This is a reference to the heavenly Mount Zion. According to verses 22-23, who does the text say is rejoicing on this mountain? _____

Who else is present? _____

29. The author compares the sprinkled blood of Jesus to the blood of Abel in Hebrews 12:24. Read Genesis 4:1-10. In your own words, list below some of the differences in the blood of Jesus that was shed verses the blood of Abel? What did Abel's blood cry out for? What did Jesus blood offer?

Jesus' Blood	Abel's Blood

Genesis 4:1-10

Adam made love to his wife Eve, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Cain. She said, "With the help of the LORD I have brought forth a man."² Later she gave birth to his brother Abel. Now Abel kept flocks, and Cain worked the soil.³ In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the LORD.⁴ And Abel also brought an offering—fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The LORD looked with favor on Abel and his offering,⁵ but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast.⁶ Then the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast?⁷ If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it."⁸ Now Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let's go out to the field." While they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.⁹ Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?" "I don't know," he replied. "Am I my brother's keeper?"¹⁰ The LORD said, "What have you done? Listen! Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground."

30. In this study of Hebrews, we have seen the danger of drifting, the danger of doubting, the danger of not maturing, the danger of insulting the Holy Spirit, and now, we see a final warning in verses 25-29. The author reminds the readers of Mount Sinai and the giving of the law to Moses, who in turn shared it with God's people (Exodus 19). Mount Sinai shook, there was thunder and lightning, and the people trembled with fear and stayed at a distance.

What is the warning found in Hebrews 12:25-29?

Remember the warning question posed in Hebrews 2, "How shall we escape if we ignore such a great salvation?" What is the answer to this especially important question? _____

31. Hebrews 12:28 states that this kingdom cannot be shaken—that is the Greek word *asaleutos*, which means not liable to overthrow and disorder, firm stable. How much better is the new kingdom mentioned in verse 28?

32. When we place our trust in Christ's finished work, how does that change the way we approach God? _____

33. Title this chapter. _____

34. Which verse in Hebrews 12 would you say is a key verse? Or which verse spoke to you? _____