

# **Hebrews Bible Study**

## **A Better Hope**

### **Hebrews 12**

**Warning Against Defying**  
**5/4/2025**

# Supplemental Verses

- ❑ 2 Corinthians 13:5-8
- ❑ Galatians 5:16-21
- ❑ Matthew 25:14-18
- ❑ Hebrews 2:10
- ❑ Philippians 3:12-17
- ❑ Romans 12:1-2
- ❑ Ecclesiastics 9:11-12
- ❑ Proverbs 3:11-12
- ❑ 1 Peter 5:1-5
- ❑ Matthew 5:8
- ❑ Revelation 22:4-5
- ❑ Matthew 5:22-24
- ❑ Psalms 34:14
- ❑ Revelation 21:1-3
- ❑ Numbers 16:8-11
- ❑ John 6:60-66
- ❑ Acts 2:44-47
- ❑ 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

# Five Warnings in Hebrews

- ▶ Warning Against Drifting - Hebrews 2:1-4
- ▶ Warning Against Doubting - Hebrews 3:7-19
- ▶ Warning Against Dullness - Hebrews 5:5:11-6:12
- ▶ Warning Against Despising - Hebrews 10:26-39
- ▶ **Warning Against Defying - Hebrews 12:14-29**

# A Great Cloud of Witnesses



- ▶ Though not actually looking down on them, they were in their remembrance in support of their faith and endurance in all they have lived and experienced. They have the **spirit of *martyrs*** – the root of the ancient Greek word translated to witnesses.
- ▶ For this nomadic Hebrew population, the stories of their ancestors and the required adherence to the Mosaic Law led to real examples of the power of God and also serves today.
- ▶ **Who are in your cloud or spirit of martyrs?** Parents, grandparents, best friends, mentors, church family, etc. They are watching you compete in this thing called life. Don't we actually think of them when we are going through tough times?

# Movie, Amistad By Steven Spielberg

w/ Anthony Hopkins and Matthew McConaughey, Morgan Freeman

- ▶ In 1839, the US seized the Amistad off Long Island. The Africans who mutinied in revolt were jailed and charged with murder.
- ▶ Running out of viable arguments to make their case, former President John Adams asked the leader of the Africans, Cinque, what would you do in such a dire situation.
- ▶ He said, ***We won't be going in there alone. I will call into the past to my ancestors and beg them to help me, and they must come. For at this moment, I am the very reason they exist at all.***
- ▶ Calling upon their "**great cloud of witnesses**", represented a deep connection to their heritage and a plea for emotional support in a desperate situation.
- ▶ John Adams successfully takes these words and quotes ***who we are is who we were***, inferring that the Africans' identity and inherent worth were not defined by their forced enslavement or their circumstances.

# *...so, what are we to do?*

- ▶ ***Let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles us.***
  - Be in prayer asking the Holy Spirit to show you. **2 Cor. 13: 5-8**
  - **What are we doing?** What about our time? Distractions? Our phone; are they a new master? Social Media? Comparing ourselves to others?
  - **What are we not doing?** Are we living in a way that others can't readily see Christ in us.
  - We clearly have a great deal more outside influences than these people in Hebrews. Some to avoid include **Galatians 5:16-21.**
- ▶ ***Run the race marked out for you with endurance and perseverance.*** Your race is not my race and visa versa. **Matthew 25:14-18.** What is the Holy Spirit asking of you? You matter and we all need your gifts. What are we doing with our time, talent, finances?

**Francis Chan Rope Illustration** - YouTube.

# Jesus

## Author and Finisher of Our Faith

- ▶ God calls those he has brought unto himself sons and daughters. Now God the Father is making the founder of salvation, perfect through suffering. **Hebrews 2:10**
- ▶ He had to be made like man in every way, emotions and all, to be the perfect sacrifice for us. Also, He had to be strong in what was asked of Him.
- ▶ The **finished work of the cross** necessary because of:
  - Propitiation – God’s wrath and the need to satisfy it through sacrifice
  - Redemption – To buy out of or redeem from sin (we were enslaved)
  - Reconciliation – Act of bringing us to a completely changed relationship with God.
- ▶ Now go back and think of His race using Paul’s words in **Phil.: 3:12-17**.
- ▶ Despising the shame, he endured it for our salvation. Crucifixion was no joke and was meant to be a long, painful and embarrassing deterrent.  
**Can you imagine that was done for you?**

# Don't Be Weary

- ▶ Jesus is way more than an example however, the author is telling them that he is with us every step of the way in our race.
- ▶ The Christian walk will come with its own challenges as we navigate in this world as a follower of Christ. Remember what Marc taught us about **Believe...Think/Feel...Actions.**
- ▶ ***Romans 12:1-2** I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to **present your bodies as a living sacrifice**, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. **Do not be conformed to this world**, but **be transformed by the renewal of your mind**, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.*
- ▶ Remember the toothpaste / balloon example I showed a few chapters ago. The world will attempt to shape you like a mashed-up tube of toothpaste but instead let the Holy Spirit help shape you from within.
- ▶ We are running for Christ, and we must keep that as our main thing.  
**Ecclesiastics 9:11-12**

# Discipline and Correction vs 5-13

- ▶ The author reminds them that as sons and daughters, Jesus needs to discipline is good and occasionally needed. Reminding them of **Proverbs 3:11-12**. If we are unwilling to accept discipline and correction, we are considered illegitimate.
- ▶ The author further is making the comparison between **how a parent disciplines** something small in their human nature, for a short period of time, and they are respected for it.
- ▶ The **Father disciplines** for our good that we may share in his holiness, to yield peaceful fruit, for eternity sake.
- ▶ Therefore, He is **exhorting us** to pick ourselves up, dust ourselves off, and get get back after it, so that we do not live with only our own survival in mind. There are others that are following our example, and we must not be a hinderance to their growth. **1 Peter 5:1-5**
- ▶ As a coach think of it as Him calling a timeout, to make you aware of the correction needed. For us it's good to be "coachable".

**Warning Against Defying**

**Don't Turn Back!**

# Warning Against Refusing God vs 14-17

- ▶ Live purely in every aspect of life. Counter to the Jewish thought of being “externally clean”, instead looking at a pure “clean heart”. **Matt. 5:8, Rev. 22:4-5.** Letting them know you don’t want to go back.
- ▶ Look out for one another so that what you do as a witness doesn’t cause others to fail to obtain the grace of God. As an example, we have a **Riva Trace Membership Covenant** that many have signed which includes:
  - *Protecting the unity of the church by acting in love toward other members*
  - *Sharing in the responsibility of the church*
  - *Serving the ministry of the church*
  - *Supporting the testimony of the church*
- ▶ Look to make sure no bitter roots grow which defile many. **Matt. 5:22-24**
- ▶ Don’t sell out our birthright like Esau for today’s shiny thing. Whatever it is can’t measure up to eternal life.
- ▶ Offer sacrifices of praise, which are pleasing to God versus the sacrifice of external cleanliness. **Psalms 34:14**

# A Tale of Two Mountains

## Sinai –Place of Old Covenant

Mountain range of fear and uneasiness for people of Israel.

Witnessing of fire, thunder, lightening, smoke, quakes, and trumpet sounds.

**God speaks** in a way that the people begged to not hear another word.

Moses trembled in fear as God gave the ten commandments.

The people asked, why are we here, and is God real? Next thing you know they worshipped a golden calf.

God not fully satisfied in relationship with Israel, **so another lap**. However, this sin thing needs to be addressed.

**Praise God we are not called to this mountain!**

## Zion – Place of New Covenant

A spiritual reference to a living heavenly new Jerusalem. **Revelation 21:1-3**

Accompanied by innumerable angels and God judge of all.

**God separates** himself from Christ on the cross in acceptance of Jesus' blood sacrifice

All are made complete through the **finished work of the cross**, what Jesus did for us (Grace and mercy)

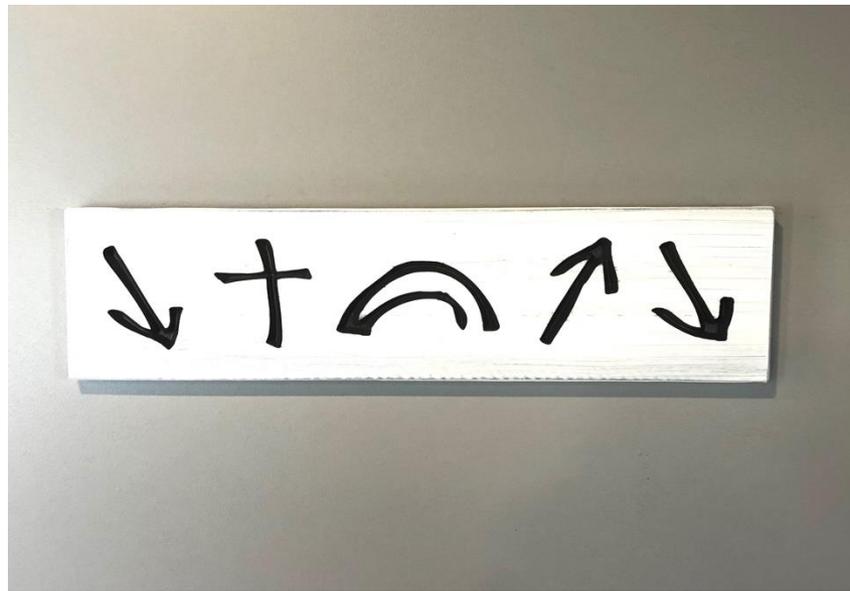
God calls us **his firstborn** entitled to all the rights and privileges. **We are all on daddy's lap.**

God is satisfied with the sacrifice of Jesus, the better Priest and better sacrifice.

The author is continually encouraging his Hebrew audience to endure in this New Covenant.

# Keep Your Hope on Things Eternal

- ▶ These Hebrews that have heard the Christian teachings are getting restless in their position in faith similar to the Levites under Moses. **Numbers 16:8-11.**
- ▶ Their requirement now is to exhibit faith. They have left the law behind.
- ▶ Though these new Christians have accepted Jesus and are following this “New Way”, they are in a very small minority, being persecuted and frankly being rejected by their own.
- ▶ The Jewish people at large have rejected Jesus, which will lead to the **tribulation.**
- ▶ The author is leading them and likewise us to not reject this warning from heaven, committing apostasy (rebellion or abandonment). **John 6:60-66**
- ▶ Reminds them that he has shaken the earth before, ***but my paraphrase “you ain’t seen nothing yet”***. He will shake everything up, as part of His final judgment – The Day of The Lord.



## Grace

- ▶ From the cross & ascension until the rapture (The Church Age). **Now!**
- ▶ We are to believe and obey his new commandments. **Acts 2:44-47.**  
More on this next week!
- ▶ Cautions about apostasy (rejection). Remember **all** of the warnings, but specifically **Warning Against Defying**
- ▶ Believers who have accepted Christ will be raptured out of this world prior to the Tribulation. **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**
- ▶ We will get to see those who went before as they have not died but instead are asleep. **What a day of rejoining that will be!**

# Final Thought

## He Came, He Saw, and He Conquered

- ▶ As chapter 11 is about faith, chapter 12 is about hope, and a call to look to the author and finisher of our faith, Jesus Christ.
- ▶ **Remember this: He came, He saw, and He conquered.**
  - He **came** and became flesh as a living witness to them, and is our personal spiritual coach, the one we need to keep our eye on.
  - He **saw** and knew who we were. Remember Jesus wept! He lived a totally sinless life for us, “keeping the main thing as the main thing” offering himself as a perfect and permanent sacrifice.
  - He **conquered** our sin problem and ushered in a new relationship with God and sits at His right hand! It is finished!
- ▶ He is with us now guiding and directing through our moral compass, The Holy Spirit, which continually sustains and corrects us.
- ▶ Own your race for the betterment of His kingdom on earth and to lay up treasures in heaven.

**Next Week: Chapter 13: Concluding Exhortations**