

## I. Review

- A. The author is placing before the reader, the faithful: those who endured all the various pulls of this age and pressed in faith to set their eyes and hearts on the promised age-to-come which the faithful will inherit. They all looked for the promise of restoration of the earth and heaven and the elimination of the curse which would be brought about through the promised one. Adam - Abel - Enoch - Noah - Abraham - Sarah - Isaac - Jacob - Joseph - Moses - Joshua - Rahab - Gideon - Barak - Samson - Jephthah - David - Samuel - all the prophets.
- B. They declare and seek a homeland; they desire better. Therefore, God is not ashamed to be their God. He has prepared a city for them. All of these have obtained good testimony through faith, but did not receive the promise. Their faith was perfected through the temporary blessings and trials that God brought upon them in this age. (Heb. 11:16, 39-40)
- C. Context - The Hebrews, to which this letter of exhortation is directed, are currently facing great trouble for their faith in Jesus as the Messiah who has saved them and will bring about the restoration of all things. After a long season of peace they are now facing loss of business, rejection of family, threats of prison, torture, and martyrdom. All they have to do to avoid these painful circumstances is publicly declare themselves not Christians, but rather, faithful to Judaism.

## II. Verse-by-Verse

- A. Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses - The writer uses this language of a sporting event with a multitude of spectators. However, these are more than fans; they are previous champions who have been where we are and have all run their races and finished well. They cheer us on sympathetically, expectantly, and confidently that we too can finish well. (Rev. 6:10; 11:17-18)
- B. Let us lay aside every weight, and sin - The writer points out two distinct things that cause us to stumble, stop running, or be taken out of the race of faith.
  - 1. Every Weight - This particular Greek word is only used once in the scripture and it means, "something more prominent that encumbers." Our choices are not always right and wrong, but rather, distracting and hindering, or not. It should be very sobering that distractions are listed before sin as hindering our faith. (Song 2:15; Lk 10:40, 14:15-33; Acts 6:2)

2. Every Sin - Through Christ's great sacrifice and mercy we can be forgiven and stand justified and righteous before God in our legal position. However, even though legally we are forgiven and justified for sin, it still brings death to our heart in the arena of faith and love. (Rom. 6:14-23)
3. Ensnarers - The original Greek used means to “skillfully surround in order to thwart movement.” Notice that the writer tells us that every weight and sin does this easily.

*Patience - The NT the characteristic of a man who is not swerved from his deliberate purpose and his loyalty to faith and love by even the greatest trials and sufferings - Blue Letter Bible*

- C. Let us run with endurance the race set before us - The Greek word translated “endurance” is used 32 times in the new testament and generally translated “patience”. It is critical to understand that word does not mean to wait, or to remain calm. It is used only to speak of a necessary posture of heart to overcome difficulties and trials that come against us. (Lk. 8:11-15; Rom 5:3-4; 2 Thes. 1:4, 3:1-5; Jam. 1:2-4)
- D. Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith - We cultivate divine patience the same way we cultivate any other divine characteristic; by beholding that characteristic through the supernatural inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The readers are exhorted to look at the patience of Christ in order to cultivate patience in their own heart to overcome their current trials. The race and growth of our faith and love is orchestrated and fully matured by Him and through Him. (Rom. 8:29, Eph. 4:17-24; Col. 3:8-11)
- E. Who for the joy set before Him endured the cross - Like every other writer of the inspired word of God, the author calls us to walk out Christlikeness then immediately talks about the aspect of Christ to behold, in order to have it formed in us. Jesus endured the greatest amount of suffering and trial imaginable to the human frame because of the joy that would result from His sufferings. Jesus left behind the glory of being in the form of God, taking on a human frame forever, and then suffering to the depths because of His confidence in the glorious realities of intimacy and life in the age to come. (1 Pet. 1:10-11; 170 Chapters Document)
- F. For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners - Consider God, who was giving the breath and strength to the individuals who were using that breath and strength to curse and kill Him. Having all power to stop it, but doing nothing, knowing that the suffering was producing something far greater. (Rom. 8:14-25)

- G. You have not yet resisted to bloodshed - To this point, the recipients of this letter have not suffered torture or death, only the loss of business, financial hardship, and persecution from the culture and relationships. The writer is saying that there is beauty to behold concerning the sufferings of Jesus and the joy set before Him. This causes us to be able to endure trial unto torture and death unto the depths of what Jesus suffered.
1. More than you can handle - There is a very common exhortation in Christianity that says, "God won't give you any more than you can handle." This exhortation is based upon 1 Cor. 10:1-13. Not only is this verse not even talking about suffering or trial, but rather temptation of sin, the saying itself is incredibly inaccurate, biblically. We do not have the power in and of ourselves to overcome the fear of death, nor the ability to suffer unto death. The exhortation to the Hebrews, and in many other scriptures, is that God intentionally leads us progressively into the depths of trial and suffering. This is to increase our need for His grace and the supernatural increase of the patience of Christ, to overcome through love and intimacy, in the laying down of our lives through Him and for Him. (2 Thes. 3:1-5; John 15:9-13)