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For Hebrews 12

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HEBREWS CHAPTER 12

In Your Group Read Hebrews chapter twelve (aloud) in a modern translation or read it in the King James Version (below). As a Group, Discuss the general content of the chapter.

THE LETTER OF HEBREWS CHAPTER 12 King James Version

HEB 12: [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. (PROVERBS 3:11-12)** **[7]** If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? **[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. [12] Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; [13] And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed. [14] Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: [15] Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; [16] Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. [17] For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears. [18] ¶ For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, [19] And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: [20] (For they could not endure that which was commanded, **AND IF SO MUCH AS A BEAST TOUCH THE MOUNTAIN, IT SHALL BE STONED, OR THRUST THROUGH WITH A DART: (EXODUS 19:12-13)**) [21] And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I **EXCEEDINGLY FEAR AND QUAKE: (DEUTERONOMY 9:19)** [22] But ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, [23] To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, [24] And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. [25] See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: [26] Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, **YET ONCE MORE I SHAKE NOT THE EARTH ONLY, BUT ALSO HEAVEN. (HAGGAI 2:6)** [27] And this word, **YET ONCE MORE**, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. [28] Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: [29] **FOR OUR GOD IS A CONSUMING FIRE. (DEUTERONOMY 4:24)**

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE GROUP: Read and Discuss each verse and translation along with the “Additional Information” in each box provided.

HEBREWS CHAPTER 12

VERSES 1-3

Hebrews 12:[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. (King James Version)

¹Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily hinders our progress. And let us run with endurance the race that God has set before us. ²We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, on whom our faith depends from start to finish. He was willing to die a shameful death on the cross because of the joy he knew would be his afterward. Now he is seated in the place of highest honor beside God’s throne in heaven. ³Think about all he endured when sinful people did such terrible things to him, so that you don’t become weary and give up. **(New Living Translation)**

¹We have around us many people whose lives tell us what faith means. So let us run the race that is before us and never give up. We should remove from our lives anything that would get in the way and the sin that so easily holds us back. ²Let us look only to Jesus, the One who began our faith and who makes it perfect. He suffered death on the cross. But he accepted the shame as if it were nothing because of the joy that God put before him. And now he is sitting at the right side of God’s throne. ³Think about Jesus’ example. He held on while wicked people were doing evil things to him. So do not get tired and stop trying. **(New Century Version)**

¹Such a large crowd of witnesses is all around us! So we must get rid of everything that slows us down, especially the sin that just won’t let go. And we must be determined to run the race that is ahead of us. ²We must keep our eyes on Jesus, who leads us and makes our faith complete. He endured the shame of being nailed to a cross, because he knew that later on he would be glad he did. Now he is seated at the right side of God’s throne! ³So keep your mind on Jesus, who put up with many insults from sinners. Then you won’t get discouraged and give up. **(Contemporary English Version)**

[1] With so many witnesses in a great cloud on every side of us, we too, then, should throw off everything that hinders us, especially the sin that clings so easily, and keep running steadily in the race we have started. **[2]** Let us not lose sight of Jesus, who leads us in our faith and brings it to perfection: for the sake of the joy which was still in the future, he endured the cross, disregarding the shamefulness of it, and from now on has taken his place at the right of God’s throne. **[3]** Think of the way he stood

such opposition from sinners and then you will not give up for want of courage.

(Jerusalem Bible)

[1] A huge cloud of witnesses is all around us. So let us throw off everything that stands in our way. Let us throw off any sin that holds on to us so tightly. Let us keep on running the race marked out for us. **[2]** Let us keep looking to Jesus. He is the author of faith. He also makes it perfect. He paid no attention to the shame of the cross. He suffered there because of the joy he was looking forward to. Then he sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. **[3]** He put up with attacks from sinners. So think about him. Then you won't get tired. You won't lose hope. **(New International Reader's Version)**

Therefore, with all this host of witnesses encircling us, we must strip off every handicap, strip off sin with its clinging folds, to run our appointed course with steadiness, our eyes fixed upon Jesus as the pioneer and the perfection of faith – upon Jesus who, in order to reach his own appointed joy, steadily endured the cross, thinking nothing of its shame, and is now seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Yes, compare him who steadily endured all that hostility from sinful men, so as to keep your own hearts from fainting and failing. (verses 1-3) **(Moffatt Translation)**

Additional Information: (Verse 1) - "Witnesses" (Gk. *martyron*) During the terrible days of martyrdom following the New Testament era, this word became the common term for identifying those who testified through their death. In our verse these witnesses testified to the need for a persistent faith through their lives. These saints may also be spectators, and some were surely martyrs; yet the emphasis of this verse (in harmony with the choice of *martyron*) is upon the witness their lives demonstrated. **"Let us run."** We also need to run as they. The author is emphatic about this point. What they have done, we must do. **"Let us lay aside every weight"** is an aorist participle used circumstantially, probably telling us how we are to run – by laying aside every weight. **(Verse 2)** Just as verse 1 establishes some qualities for the entrance and actual running of the race, so verse 2 directs our eyes to the finish line. Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. He has "blazed the trail for us and has completed the course" (Kent, p. 258). As Jesus fixed His gaze upon the joy which lay at the end of the course, so we must fix our gaze upon Jesus; as the finisher of our faith. (Liberty Bible Commentary, Vol.2. pg. 708-7100). **"The joy that was set before him"** I believe could be the joy of having us as his brothers and sisters.

HEBREWS CHAPTER 12

VERSES 4-6

Hebrews 12: [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. (PROVERBS 3: 11-12) (King James Version)

⁴After all, you have not yet given your lives in your struggle against sin. ⁵And have you entirely forgotten the encouraging words God spoke to you, his children? He said, "My child, don't ignore it when the Lord disciplines you, and don't be discouraged when he corrects you. ⁶For the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes those he accepts as his children." **(New Living Translation)**

[4] You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your striving against sin;

[5] and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, “MY SON, DO NOT REGARD LIGHTY THE DISCIPLINE OF THE LORD, NOR FAINT WHEN YOU ARE REPROVED BY HIM; **[6]** FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES, AND HE SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES.” (**New American Standard Bible**)

⁴ You are struggling against sin, but your struggles have not yet caused you to be killed. ⁵ You have forgotten the encouraging words that call you his children: “My child, don’t think the Lord’s discipline is worth nothing, and don’t stop trying when he corrects you. ⁶ The Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as his child.” (**New Century Version**)

⁴ None of you have yet been hurt in your battle against sin. ⁵ But you have forgotten that the Scriptures say to God’s children, “When the Lord punishes you, don’t make light of it, and when he corrects you, don’t be discouraged. ⁶ The Lord corrects the people he loves and disciplines those he calls his own.” (**Contemporary English Version**)

⁴ After all, you have never yet struggled against sin and temptation until you sweat great drops of blood. ⁵ And have you quite forgotten the encouraging words God spoke to you, his child? He said, “My son, don’t be angry when the Lord punishes you. Don’t be discouraged when he has to show you where you are wrong. ⁶ For when he punishes you, it proves that he loves you. When he whips you, it proves you are really his child.” (**The Living Bible**)

In this all-out match against sin, others have suffered far worse than you, to say nothing of what Jesus went through – all that bloodshed! So don’t feel sorry for yourselves. Or have you forgotten how good parents treat children, and that God regards you as his children? “My dear child, don’t shrug off God’s discipline, but don’t be crushed by it either. It’s the child he loves that he disciplines; the child he embraces, he also corrects.” (verses 4-6) (**The Message**)

[4] You struggle against sin. But you have not yet fought to the point of spilling your blood. **[5]** You have forgotten that word of hope. It speaks to you as children. It says, “My child, think of the Lord’s training as important. Do not lose hope when he corrects you. **[6]** The Lord trains those he loves. He punishes everyone he accepts as a child.” (Proverbs 3:11-12) (**New International Reader’s Version**)

Additional Information: (Verse 5) – “Rebuked” is the Greek word *elegcho*. This word means to rebuke another with the truth so that the person confesses, or at least is convicted of his sin. In Heb. 12:5 and Rev. 3:19, the word is used of reproof by action. (Vine’s Lexicon).

HEBREWS CHAPTER 12

VERSES 7-11

Hebrews 12: [7] If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? [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. (King James Version)

⁷ Be patient when you are being corrected! This is how God treats his children. Don't all parents correct their children? ⁸ God corrects all of his children, and if he doesn't correct you, then you don't really belong to him. ⁹ Our earthly fathers correct us, and we still respect them. Isn't it even better to be given true life by letting our spiritual Father correct us? ¹⁰ Our human fathers correct us for a short time, and they do it as they think best. But God corrects us for our own good, because he wants us to be holy, as he is. ¹¹ It is never fun to be corrected. In fact, at the time it is always painful. But if we learn to obey by being corrected, we will do right and live at peace. **(Contemporary English Version)**

⁷ As you endure this divine discipline, remember that God is treating you as his own children. Whoever heard of a child who was never disciplined? ⁸ If God doesn't discipline you as he does all of his children, it means that you are illegitimate and are not really his children after all. ⁹ Since we respect our earthly fathers who disciplined us, should we not all the more cheerfully submit to the discipline of our heavenly Father and live forever? ¹⁰ For our earthly fathers disciplined us for a few years, doing the best they knew how. But God's discipline is always right and good for us because it means we will share in his holiness. ¹¹ No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening—it is painful! But afterward there will be a quiet harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way. **(New Living Translation)**

HEBREWS CHAPTER 12 VERSES 12-13

Hebrews 12: [12] Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; [13] And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed. (King James Version)

So don't sit around on your hands! No more dragging your feet! Clear the path for long-distance runners so no one will trip and fall, so no one will step in a hole and sprain an ankle. Help each other out. And run for it! (verses 12-13) **(The Message)**

¹² You have become weak, so make yourselves strong again. ¹³ Live in the right way so that you will be saved and your weakness will not cause you to be lost. **(New Century Version)**

Come, then, stiffen your drooping arms and shaking knees, and keep your steps from wavering. Then the disabled limb will not be put out of joint, but regain its former powers. (verses 12-13) **(New English Bible)**

[12] So then, brace up and reinvigorate and set right your slackened and weakened and drooping hands and strengthen your feeble and palsied and tottering knees, [Isa. 35:3.] **[13]** And cut through and make firm and plain and smooth, straight paths for your feet [yes, make them safe and upright and happy paths that go in the

right direction], so that the lame and halting [limbs] may not be put out of joint, but rather may be cured. **(The Amplified Bible)**

[12] So lift your sagging arms. Strengthen your weak knees. **[13]** “Make level paths for your feet to walk on.” (Proverbs 4:26) Then those who have trouble walking won’t be disabled. Instead, they will be healed. **(New International Reader’s Version)**

[12] So, lift up your drooping hands and strengthen your shaky knees; **[13]** step out straight ahead with your feet, so that which is lame may not be dislocated but rather be healed. **(Berkeley Version)**

[12] So up with your listless hands! Strengthen your weak knees! **[13]** And make straight paths for your feet. Let no lame souls be dislocated, rather set them right. **(Moffatt Translation)**

[12] And so, if your hands are letting go, take a firm hold; if you feel weak in your knees, stand firm, **[13]** and smooth out the paths for your feet. Do this so that the crippled limb will not be dislocated, but will be made well. **(God’s Word to the Nations)**

[12] You have become weak. So make yourselves strong again. **[13]** Walk (*live*) in the right way so that you will be saved and your weakness will not cause you to be lost. **(The Easy-to-Read New Testament)**

Additional Information: The author returns to the race metaphor begun in verses 1-3 (cf. Prov. 4:25-27) and incorporates language taken from Isaiah 35:3 to describe the disciplined individual’s condition like a weary runner whose arms drop and knees wobble. (MacArthur Bible Commentary, p.1874). The description of weakened hands and feeble (Gk. *paralyo*), even disabled, knees depicts those who were too weak or weary to run with endurance the course which lay before them. (Liberty Bible Commentary, Vol.2, pgs. 710-711). Relaxed hands or stumbling knees, do not describe the patient endurance required to finish the course. (Wycliffe Bible Commentary, p. 936). To “make straight paths for your feet” one must keep the obstacles which would trip them up spiritually out of their path. The concept of apostasy which has been prominent in the thought of the author of Hebrews ought to be considered here also (Liberty Bible Commentary, Vol.2, pg. 711).

HEBREWS CHAPTER 12 VERSES 14-17

Hebrews 12: [14] Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: [15] Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; [16] Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. [17] For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears. (King James Version)

¹⁴ Try to live at peace with everyone! Live a clean life. If you don’t, you will never see the Lord. ¹⁵ Make sure that no one misses out on God’s wonderful kindness. Don’t let anyone become bitter and cause trouble for the rest of you. ¹⁶ Watch out for immoral and ungodly people like Esau, who sold his future blessing for only one meal. ¹⁷ You

know how he later wanted it back. But there was nothing he could do to change things, even though he begged his father and cried. **(Contemporary English Version)**

[14] Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord. **[15]** See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled; **[16]** that there be no immoral or godless person like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a single meal. **[17]** For you know that even afterwards, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought for it with tears. **(New American Standard Version)**

¹⁴Try to live in peace with everyone, and seek to live a clean and holy life, for those who are not holy will not see the Lord. ¹⁵Look after each other so that none of you will miss out on the special favor of God. Watch out that no bitter root of unbelief rises up among you, for whenever it springs up, many are corrupted by its poison. ¹⁶Make sure that no one is immoral or godless like Esau. He traded his birthright as the oldest son for a single meal. ¹⁷And afterward, when he wanted his father's blessing, he was rejected. It was too late for repentance, even though he wept bitter tears. **(New Living Translation)**

[14] Try to be at peace with all men, and try to live a holy life, because no one will see the Lord without it. **[15]** Be careful that no one turns back from the grace of God. Be careful that no one becomes like a bitter plant that grows up and troubles many with its poison. **[16]** Be careful that no one becomes immoral or unspiritual like Esau, who for a single meal sold his rights as the older son. **[17]** Afterward, you know, he wanted to receive his father's blessing; but he was turned back, because he could not find a way to change what he had done, even though he looked for it with tears. **(Today's English Version)**

[14] Be at peace with all men. Live a holy life. No one will see the Lord without having that kind of life. **[15]** See that no one misses God's loving-favor. Do not let wrong thoughts about others get started among you. If you do, many people will be turned to a life of sin. **[16]** None of you should fall into sex sins or forget God like Esau did. He had a right to get all Isaac had because he was the oldest son. But for one plate of food he sold this right to his brother. **[17]** You know that later he would have received everything. But he did not get it even when he asked for it with tears. It was too late to make right the wrong he had done. **(The New Life Testament)**

[14] Strive to live in peace with everybody and pursue that consecration and holiness without which no one will [ever] see the Lord. **[15]** Exercise foresight and be on the watch to look [after one another], to see that no one falls back from and fails to secure God's grace (his unmerited favor and spiritual blessing), in order that no root of resentment (rancor, bitterness, or hatred) shoots forth and causes trouble and bitter torment, and the many become contaminated and defiled by it - **[16]** That no one may become guilty of sexual vice, or become a profane (godless and sacrilegious) person as Esau did, who sold his own birthright for a single meal. [Gen. 25:29-34.] **[17]** For you understand that later on, when he wanted [to regain title to] his inheritance of the blessing, he was rejected (disqualified and set aside), for he could find no opportunity to repair by repentance [what he had done, no chance to recall the choice he had made], although he sought for it carefully with [bitter] tears. [Gen. 27:30-40.] **(The Amplified Bible) Additional Information:** Justification and Sanctification was never meant to be separated in the Christian life. Justification (is the root) and Sanctification (is the Fruit) in the life of every genuine believer.

HEBREWS CHAPTER 12
VERSES 18-21

Hebrews 12: [18] ¶ For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, [19] And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: [20] (For they could not endure that which was commanded, AND IF SO MUCH AS A BEAST TOUCH THE MOUNTAIN, IT SHALL BE STONED, OR THRUST THROUGH WITH A DART: (EXODUS 19:12-13) [21] And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I EXCEEDINGLY FEAR AND QUAKE:.) (DEUTERONOMY 9:19) (King James Version)

¹⁸You have not come to a physical mountain, to a place of flaming fire, darkness, gloom, and whirlwind, as the Israelites did at Mount Sinai when God gave them his laws. ¹⁹For they heard an awesome trumpet blast and a voice with a message so terrible that they begged God to stop speaking. ²⁰They staggered back under God's command: "If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned to death." ²¹Moses himself was so frightened at the sight that he said, "I am terrified and trembling." **(New Living Translation)**

Unlike your ancestors, you didn't come to Mount Sinai – all that volcanic blaze and earthshaking rumble – to hear God speak. The earsplitting words and soul-shaking message terrified them and they begged him to stop. When they heard the words – "If an animal touches the Mountain, it's as good as dead" – they were afraid to move. Even Moses was terrified. (verses 18-21) **(The Message)**

[18] For you have not come [as did the Israelites in the wilderness] to a [material] mountain that can be touched, [a mountain] that is ablaze with fire, and to gloom and darkness and a raging storm, **[19]** And to the blast of a trumpet and a voice whose words make the listeners beg that nothing more be said to them. [Exod. 19:12-22; 20:18-21; Deut. 4:11, 12; 5:22-27.] **[20]** For they could not bear the command that was given: If even a wild animal touches the mountain, it shall be stoned to death. [Exod. 19:12, 13.] **[21]** In fact, so awful and terrifying was the [phenomenal] sight that Moses said, I am terrified (aghast and trembling with fear). [Deut. 9:19.] **(The Amplified New Testament)**

[18] Unlike the people of Israel, you have not come to a Mount Sinai which can be touched. It was on fire. There were storms. It was dark and gloomy. **[19]** You have not come to the blast of a trumpet and a Voice speaking words. The people who heard this Voice begged Moses that nothing more be said to them. **[20]** They could not stand what was ordered: "Even if an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned to death!" Exodus 19:12-13 **[21]** This was such a terrible sight that even Moses said: "I am so afraid that I'm trembling." Deuteronomy 9:19 **(The Simple English Bible)**

[18] For you have not come up to a mountain that was not to be touched, a blazing fire and gloom, darkness and storm, **[19]** to trumpet sound and audible words, the hearers of which implored that no further message be brought them, **[20]** for they could not bear the command, "Even if an animal touches the mountain it must be stoned." **[21]** And the phenomenon was so dreadful that Moses said, "I am terrified and trembling." **(The Berkeley Version)** Additional Information: (Verses 18-21) "For ye are not

come unto the mount that might be touched.” The author describes the day at Sinai when God spoke to the whole congregation of Israel (Ex. 19:9-25; 20:18-21; Deut. 4:10-24). When God spoke, His presence was accompanied with fire, blackness, darkness and tempest. God’s purpose for that day is expressly recorded in the Old Testament: “...I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth...” (Deut. 4:10; cf. Ex. 20:20). God was warning them from heaven with an awesome demonstration in order that they might fear and obey Him. They “**entreated**” God. The verb (Gk. *paraiteomai*) could also be translated to require or to beg. More significantly, it can also mean to refuse, which is its translation only several verses later: “**See that ye refuse not him that speaketh**” (verse 25). Since this whole warning involves the drawing of a comparison between then and now, the author’s use of this verb for both parties should suggest approximately the same idea for both uses of the verb. At Sinai the Israelites refused to hear God’s awesome voice from heaven; now we must not do the same. (Liberty Bible Commentary, Vol.2, pgs. 712-713). You refused to hear Him then, don’t refuse to hear Him now. You have come to Mt. Zion, the refuge of His mercy. What a contrast between the people’s terrified approach to God at Mount Sinai and their approach at Mount Zion. Before Jesus came, God seemed distant and threatening. After Jesus came, God welcomes us through Christ into his very presence. ((Life Application Bible, pg. 2240).

HEBREWS CHAPTER 12 VERSES 22-24

Hebrews 12: [22] But ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, [23] To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, [24] And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. (King James Version)

²²No, you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to thousands of angels in joyful assembly. ²³You have come to the assembly of God’s firstborn children, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God himself, who is the judge of all people. And you have come to the spirits of the redeemed in heaven who have now been made perfect. ²⁴You have come to Jesus, the one who mediates the new covenant between God and people, and to the sprinkled blood, which graciously forgives instead of crying out for vengeance as the blood of Abel did. **(New Living Translation)**

²²You have now come to Mount Zion and to the heavenly Jerusalem. This is the city of the living God, where thousands and thousands of angels have come to celebrate. ²³Here you will find all of God’s dearest children, whose names are written in heaven. And you will find God himself, who judges everyone. Here also are the spirits of those good people who have been made perfect. ²⁴And Jesus is here! He is the one who makes God’s new agreement with us, and his sprinkled blood says much better things than the blood of Abel. **(The Contemporary English Version)**

No, that’s not your experience at all. You’ve come to Mount Zion, the city where the living God resides. The invisible Jerusalem is populated by throngs of festive angels and Christian citizens. It is the city where God is Judge, with judgments that make us just. You’ve come to Jesus, who presents us with a new covenant, a fresh charter from God. He is the Mediator of this covenant. The murder of Jesus, unlike

Abel's – a homicide that cried out for vengeance – became a proclamation of grace. (verses 22-24) **(The Message)**

No, you have been allowed to approach the true Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. You have drawn near to the countless angelic army, the assembly of the Church of the first-born whose names are written in Heaven. You have drawn near to God, the judge of all, to the souls of good men made perfect, and to Jesus, mediator of a new agreement, to that cleansing blood which tells a better story than the blood of Abel. (verses 22-24) **(The Phillips Translation)**

²²But you have come right up into Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to the gathering of countless happy angels; ²³and to the church, composed of all those registered in heaven; and to God who is Judge of all; and to the spirits of the redeemed in heaven, already made perfect; ²⁴and to Jesus himself, who has brought us his wonderful new agreement; and to the sprinkled blood, which graciously forgives instead of crying out for vengeance as the blood of Abel did. **(The Living Bible)**

[22] But what you have come to is Mount Zion and the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem where the millions of angels have gathered for the festival, **[23]** with the whole Church in which everyone is a "first-born son" and a citizen of heaven. You have come to God himself, the supreme Judge, and been placed with the spirits of the saints who have been made perfect: **[24]** and to Jesus, the mediator who brings a new covenant and a blood for purification which pleads more insistently than Abel's. **(Jerusalem Bible)**

[22] But instead, you have come to the mountain of Jerusalem. It is the city of the living God. It is the Jerusalem of heaven with its thousands of angels. **[23]** You have gathered there with God's children who were born long ago. They are citizens of heaven. God is there. He will tell all men if they are guilty. The spirits of all those right with God are there. They have been made perfect. **[24]** Jesus is there. He has made a way for man to go to God. He gave His blood that men might worship God the New Way. The blood of Jesus tells of better things than that which Abel used. **(The New Life Testament)**

[22] But you have come to Mount Zion. You have come to the Jerusalem in heaven. It is the city of the living God. You have come to a joyful gathering of angels. There are thousands and thousands of them. **[23]** You have come to the church of God's people. God's first and only Son is over all things. God's people share in what belongs to his Son. Their names are written in heaven. You have come to God. He is the judge of all people. You have come to the spirits of godly people who have been made perfect. **[24]** You have come to the sprinkled blood. It promises better things than the blood of Abel. **(New International Reader's Version)**

[22] But you have not come to that kind of place. The new place you have come to is Mount Zion. You have come to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. You have come to thousands of angels gathered together with joy. **[23]** You have come to the meeting of God's firstborn children. Their names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all people. And you have come to the spirits of good people who have been made perfect. **[24]** You have come to Jesus-the One that brought the new agreement from God to his people. You have come to the sprinkled

blood that tells us about better things than the blood of Abel. **(The Easy-to-Read new Testament)**

Additional Information: “On Mount Zion we can come into God’s own presence, an incomprehensible concept to a Jew who knew only the God of Sinai. But at Jesus’ crucifixion, ‘the veil of the temple was torn in two’ (Luke 23:45), and the way into God’s presence forever made open... To come into God’s presence at Sinai was to die; to come into His presence at Zion is to live (cf. Ps. 73:25; Rev. 21:3)” (MacArthur NT Commentary, p. 415).

HEBREWS CHAPTER 12 VERSES 25-27

Hebrews 12: [25] See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: [26] Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, YET ONCE MORE I SHAKE NOT THE EARTH ONLY, BUT ALSO HEAVEN. (HAGGAI 2:6) [27] And this word, YET ONCE MORE, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. (King James Version)

²⁵ See to it that you obey God, the one who is speaking to you. For if the people of Israel did not escape when they refused to listen to Moses, the earthly messenger, how terrible our danger if we reject the One who speaks to us from heaven! ²⁶ When God spoke from Mount Sinai his voice shook the earth, but now he makes another promise: “Once again I will shake not only the earth but the heavens also.” ²⁷ This means that the things on earth will be shaken, so that only eternal things will be left.

(New Living Translation)

²⁵ Make sure that you obey the one who speaks to you. The people did not escape, when they refused to obey the one who spoke to them at Mount Sinai. Do you think you can possibly escape, if you refuse to obey the one who speaks to you from heaven? ²⁶ When God spoke the first time, his voice shook only the earth. This time he has promised to shake the earth once again, and heaven too. ²⁷ The words “once again” mean that these created things will someday be shaken and removed. Then what cannot be shaken will last. **(Contemporary English Version)**

²⁵ So see to it that you obey him who is speaking to you. For if the people of Israel did not escape when they refused to listen to Moses, the earthly messenger, how terrible our danger if we refuse to listen to God who speaks to us from heaven! ²⁶ When he spoke from Mount Sinai his voice shook the earth, but, “Next time,” he says, “I will not only shake the earth but the heavens too.” ²⁷ By this he means that he will sift out everything without solid foundations so that only unshakable things will be left. **(The Living Bible)**

So don’t turn a deaf ear to these gracious words. If those who ignored earthly warnings didn’t get away with it, what will happen to us if we turn our backs on heavenly warnings? His voice that time shook the earth to its foundations; this time – he’s told us this quite plainly – he’ll also rock the heavens: “One last shaking, from top to bottom,

stem to stern.” The phrase “one last shaking” means a thorough housecleaning, getting rid of all the historical and religious junk so that the unshakable essentials stand clear and uncluttered. (verses 25-27) **(The Message)**

[25] Be careful, then, and do not refuse to hear him who speaks. Those who refused to hear him who gave the divine message on earth did not escape. How much less shall we escape, then, if we turn away from him who speaks from heaven! **[26]** His voice shook the earth at that time, but now he has promised, “I will once more shake not only the earth but heaven as well.” **[27]** The words “once more” plainly show that the created things will be shaken and removed, so that the things that are not shaken will remain. **(Today’s English Version)**

[25] Be very careful, then, that you do not refuse to hear this one who is speaking to you. For if the people of Israel did not escape punishment when they refused to hear Moses, the one who gave them the divine message here on earth, how much less will we escape if we turn away from Him who speaks to us from heaven? **[26]** At that time God’s voice shook the earth, but now He has promised, “I will shake the earth once and for all time, and not only the earth but also the heavens.” **[27]** Now this declaration, “once and for all time” clearly indicates the removal of those things that can be shaken, that is, the things of this creation, so that only the things that cannot be shaken will remain. **(The New Translation)**

[25] See to it then that you don’t refuse to listen to the one who is speaking to you now. After all, those people at Mt. Sinai didn’t escape God’s holy anger when they refused to listen to the man who brought them God’s message here on earth. And it’s surely much more certain that we aren’t going to escape His anger if we turn our backs on the one who is bringing God’s message to us from heaven. **[26]** There at Mt. Sinai God’s voice shook the earth. But now He has given us His promise which says, “One more time I will shake not only the earth, but also the heavens!” **[27]** And the words “one more time” tell us plainly that God is going to destroy the things that are shaken, since they are things that have been created, so that the things which can’t be shaken will remain. **(New Testament in Everyday American English)**

[25] So see to it that you do not reject Him or refuse to listen to and heed Him Who is speaking [to you now]. For if they [the Israelites] did not escape when they refused to listen and heed Him Who warned and divinely instructed them [here] on earth [revealing with heavenly warnings His will], how much less shall we escape if we reject and turn our backs on Him Who cautions and admonishes [us] from heaven? **[26]** Then [at Mount Sinai] His voice shook the earth, but now He has given a promise: Yet once more I will shake and make tremble not only the earth but also the [starry] heavens. [Hag. 2:6.] **[27]** Now this expression, Yet once more, indicates the final removal and transformation of all [that can be] shaken – that is, of that which has been created – in order that what cannot be shaken may remain and continue. [Ps. 102:26.] **(The Amplified New Testament)**

[25] Be careful! Be sure you listen to the One who is talking to you. God warned the Jewish people, but they didn’t listen. They did not escape on earth. If we turn away from God who speaks from heaven, we will be punished even more. **[26]** At that time, God’s voice shook the earth, but now He has promised this: “Once again, I will shake not only the earth, but also heaven!” Haggai 2:6 **[27]** The words, “once again,” clearly

show that things which can be shaken will be taken away. (This means things that were made). Then what cannot be shaken will remain. **(The Simple English Bible)**

[25] Be careful and don't refuse to listen when God speaks. Those people (Israelites) refused to listen to him when he warned them on earth. And those people did not escape. Now God is speaking from heaven. So now it will be worse for those people who refuse to listen to him. **[26]** When he spoke before, his voice shook the earth. But now he has promised, "Once again I will shake the earth. But I will also shake heaven." **[27]** The words "once again" clearly show us that everything that was made will be destroyed. Those are the things that can be shaken. And only the things that cannot be shaken will continue. **(The Easy-to-Read New Testament)**

Additional Information: (Verse 25) - "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh." Verse 25 contains the heart of this warning. The danger lies in refusing to hear the warning of Him who speaks from heaven; for if those at Mount Sinai did not escape God's wrath, much more shall not **we** escape. (Liberty Bible Commentary, Vol.2, p.713). The consequences for apostates is dire indeed. The judgment to be experienced and the expected terror is far in excess of that on Mount Sinai (MacArthur Bible Commentary, p.1875). **(Verse 27)** This shaking will occur only **once more**; so this probably refers to the occasion of Christ's second coming. The shaking at Sinai was physical; and since this is God's final shaking of heaven and earth, it relates well to the physical calamity at Christ's second coming, prophesied by Old and New Testaments (Joel 3:14-16; Isa.34:1-8; Mt. 24:27-30; Rev. 16:16-21). (Liberty Bible Commentary, Vol.2, pgs. 713-714). **(Verse 26)** – The reference to Haggai 2:6 was understood by the author as speaking of the ultimate remaking of the heavens and earth...What remains after this cataclysmic event will be eternal. (The Bible Knowledge Commentary, p. 811). **(Verses 25-29)** – Heed Christ. Do not refuse the voice of Christ speaking through the Gospel. If peril came to those who refused the voice of God at Sinai, how much greater peril must come to those who refuse or reject God's messenger, his own Son (Heb. 1:2). Judgment is then described...the earth will be shaken, and the impermanent will vanish in the shaking; only the permanent and eternal will remain – a kingdom that cannot be shaken. (Wycliffe Bible Commentary, p.938). The author issues a final warning to those who contemplated turning away from Christ. If severe punishment fell upon those who rejected the revelation of Sinai, much **more severe** will be the penalty upon those who disregard the fuller revelation they have in Christ. (Spirit Filled Life Bible, p. 1888).

HEBREWS CHAPTER 12 VERSES 28-29

Hebrews 12: [28] Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: [29] FOR OUR GOD IS A CONSUMING FIRE. (DEUTERONOMY 4:24) (King James Version)

²⁸Since we have a Kingdom nothing can destroy, let us please God by serving him with thankful hearts and with holy fear and awe. ²⁹For our God is a consuming fire. **(The Living Bible)**

[28] Since we have received a Kingdom that cannot be *shaken*, let us be thankful and so serve Him in a way that pleases Him, with fear and awe, **[29]** because our *God is a consuming fire*. **(God's Word to the Nations)**

[28] So we should be thankful because we have a kingdom that cannot be shaken. We should be thankful and worship God in a way that will please him. We

should worship him with respect and fear, [29] because our God is like a fire that can destroy. **(The Easy-to-Read New Testament)**

Additional Information: (Verses 28-29) – This kingdom will be given by God... Membership in it through faith in Christ ought to result in glad service and reverent worship on the part of all. The final word is again that of warning. For indeed our “**God is a consuming fire**” (cf. Deut. 4:24). Fire is the final form of judgment (Rev. 20:10,14). (Wycliffe Bible Commentary, p. 938).

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QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

(Hebrews Chapter 12)

Instructions for Group Leader: Do not let the group read the following questions and answers. The leader of your group should ask the group the following questions and encourage the group to discover the answers by going to the appropriate Scriptures. **Discuss and answer (as a group) the questions correctly by using the Scripture(s). Turn to Hebrews Chapter 12.**

1. **Read Hebrews 12:1.** Hebrews chapter 11 shows us many people whose lives tell us what faith means. True or False.

2. **Read Hebrews 12:1.** We are in a race spiritually speaking. To finish and win it is necessary to: a. get rid of things that slow us down. b. lay aside sin. c. all of the above.

3. **Read Hebrews 12:2.** To finish and win this race we must continue to look: a. at television. b. at magazines. c. unto Jesus.

4. **Read Hebrews 12:3.** Jesus is an example of: a. the rich and the famous. b. what not to do. c. not getting discouraged and giving up.
5. **Read Hebrews 12:5-6.** The Lord corrects and disciplines: a. those He hates. b. those He loves. c. those that are His children.
6. **Read Hebrews 12:10.** God corrects us for our own good, that we might partake: a. of the joys of Christmas. b. of His holiness.
7. **Read Hebrews 12:11.** Those that are chastened and disciplined yield the fruit of righteousness or right living for those who are trained in this way. True or False.
8. **Read Hebrews 12:14.** As a Christian we are to pursue: a. consecration. b. holiness. c. sanctification. d. all of the above.
9. **Read Hebrews 12:24.** Abel's blood cried out for vengeance, Jesus blood cries out for forgiveness and grace. True or False.
10. **Read Hebrews 12:25.** What will happen to us if we turn our backs on God's heavenly warning?
11. **Read Hebrews 12:28.** Believer's have received a Kingdom: a. that nothing can destroy. b. that cannot be shaken. c. all of the above.

Instructions for Group Leader: You may want to summarize the chapter (for the group) by reading aloud the following.

Putting the Chapter in Context: Hebrews Chapter 12.

- (Verses 1-3)** Follow Jesus' Example
- (Verses 4-11)** The Discipline of God
- (Verses 12-17)** Take Heed to How You Live
- (Verses 18-29)** The Unshakable Kingdom

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