

See Num. 16:22 (isa. 38:16)
 10^a [2 Pet. 1:4]; See Lev. 11:44
 11^a [1 Pet. 1:6] James 3:17, 18
 12^a Cited from Isa. 35:3; (Job 4:3, 4)
 13^a Prov. 4:26, 27 James 5:16; (Gal. 6:1)
 14^a See Rom. 14:19
 15^a Thess. 4:7 Matt. 5:8; (2 Cor. 7:1; Eph. 5:5; Rev. 21:27; 22:4)
 16^a ch. 4:1; (2 Cor. 6:1; Gal. 5:4) Deut. 29:18

My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him.
 For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives.
 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? If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. 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? 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. 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.
 Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed. Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. 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, that no one

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imagery of being surrounded by these witnesses gives the sense that they are eagerly watching from heaven, and the image of running the race that is set before us might lead one to think of an athletic race in a sports arena, with all these heroes of the faith from ch. 11 watching as present-day believers take their turn in the same race that they once ran. However, nowhere else does the NT envisage saints in heaven watching saints on earth, nor does it encourage Christians ever to pray to these believers in heaven or to ask for their prayers. Christ prays for his people (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25) and is the only mediator between them and God (1 Tim. 2:5). The Holy Spirit helps their prayers (Rom. 8:26–27), and all Christians are priests with the right of direct access to God (Heb. 4:16; 10:22; 1 Pet. 2:5, 9). **lay aside.** This first exhortation pictures sin as a weight (or "impediment") to be discarded, since otherwise it ensnares or obstructs the athlete. **let us run.** A metaphor also found in Paul (1 Cor. 9:24–27; 2 Tim. 4:7–8), with a focus on endurance in the faith (see Heb. 12:2–3; cf. 10:32, 36).
 12:2 **fouder.** See note on 2:10. **perfecter.** Through his atoning work, Christ's perfection leads to the perfection of his people (which will be realized fully on the last day; see note on 11:39–40). **for the joy that was set before him endured.** The cross of Christ represents the greatest suffering in history, for Jesus not only suffered physically but also experienced God's just wrath in taking upon himself the sin of the world. Still, the promise of future reward and joy gave Jesus strength to suffer, despising the shame. Crucifixion, performed naked and in public, and inflicting prolonged pain on the victim, was intended to cause shame as well as death (cf. 6:6; see note on Matt. 27:35). **at the right hand.** See Heb. 1:3, 13; 8:1; 10:12.
 12:3–17 **Do Not Grow Weary.** Earthly trials actually testify to the fatherly discipline of God. Such trials call for a response of endurance, and the author cautions against rejection of this character training.
 12:3 **Consider him.** Jesus (v. 2). **endured.** Again emphasizing perseverance (as in vv. 1–2). Many of the readers could identify with the hostility shown to Jesus (see 10:32–34; 13:3), though on a lesser scale (12:4). **weary or fainthearted.** See v. 5.
 12:4 **struggle against sin.** Although they are suffering persecution, the readers were not suffering martyrdom, and hence their main test

is fighting their own sinful nature. **Not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood** contrasts with Jesus' endurance of the cross (v. 2; cf. 11:37).
 12:5–8 Verses 5–6 cite Prov. 3:11–12, exhortation that addresses you as sons. God is viewed as speaking through the proverb; God's discipline proves that he considers believers to be his sons (on sonship, see Heb. 2:10), since God chastises every son whom he receives (12:6; see vv. 7–8). **Discipline** (Gk. *paideia*) was a common term for childrearing through instruction, training, and correction; however, here Hebrews focuses on the call for perseverance (**endure in v. 7**) in the painful tests of life (v. 11). These tests are to their benefit, prove their sonship, and require a response of perseverance. The readers, then, should not be discouraged.
 12:9–10 This lesser-to-greater analogy from the readers' own childhood training shows that it is appropriate for the heavenly Father to discipline, and it calls for a response of respect and submission; as a loving Father, the Lord always disciplines his children for their good.
 12:12–13 In poetic OT language (perhaps intentionally drawn from Isaiah and Proverbs) the author exhorts his readers to endurance in the race set before them.
 12:14 **peace with everyone.** Cf. Mark 9:50; Rom. 12:18–21; 14:19; 2 Cor. 13:11. **Holiness** is clearly expected of all Christians (**without which no one will see the Lord**). This is not salvation by works, however, for Christians are sanctified once-for-all by the death of Christ (Heb. 10:14); holy living is a part of the perseverance encouraged throughout Hebrews.
 12:15 **See to it that.** As they pursue peace and holiness (v. 14), Christians should watch out for each other (cf. 3:13; 10:24–25) in order that no one falls short of the gift of eternal salvation (i.e., fails to obtain the grace of God; cf. 4:16; 10:29). **root of bitterness.** The author warns against "bitterness" by alluding to Deut. 29:18, which describes one who turns away from God and pursues other gods. A bitter and resentful person is like a contagious poison, spreading his resentment to others.
 12:16–17 **Esau is deemed unholy** (likely due to his treating his birthright as profane; Gen. 25:33–34); **sexually immoral** probably also applies to him (there is no direct OT evidence of this, but cf. Gen. 26:34–35; 28:6–8). Clearly the author calls his readers to be holy and sexually responsible (see

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and willingness to submit to reproof (v. 11). Obeying this instruction brings favor and success before God and man (vv. 2, 4, 6b, 8, 10) so that one lives in light of the Lord's delight (v. 12).
 3:3 **steadfast love and faithfulness.** These terms are used together in the Lord's self-declaration to Moses of his character in covenantal relationship (Ex. 34:6, "abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness"). In light of the appeals in Prov. 3:5, fear (v. 7), and honor (v. 9) the Lord, the call here to bind them around your neck and write them on the tablet of your heart is best understood as encouragement to live faithfully to the covenant (see also 18:22; 16:6; 20:28) by heeding faithful parental instruction (cf. Ps. 25:10).
 3:5–8 Subordinating one's own understanding to the Lord is in keeping with the major thesis of Proverbs, that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge (1:7).
 3:5 **Trust to the Lord** is necessary for fulfilling any of the wise ways of life taught in Proverbs; trusting the Lord is closely connected to "fearing" him (cf. 1:7; 2:5; 9:10; 15:33; 19:23; etc.). **With all your heart** indicates that trust goes beyond intellectual assent to a deep reliance on the Lord, a settled confidence in his care and his faithfulness to his Word. **Do not lean on your own understanding** further explains trusting in the Lord. One's "understanding" in Proverbs is his perception of the right course of action. The wise will govern themselves by what the Lord himself declares, and will not set their own views and often-mistaken understanding against his.
 3:6 **to make straight a person's paths** means to make the course of the personal life that continually progresses toward a goal. In Proverbs, the emphasis is on the moral quality of one's life path (here, its moral "straightness").

3:9–10 **Honor the Lord.** This requires giving proper weight to your wealth by using it only for righteous, just, and equitable purposes ("in all your ways acknowledge him," v. 6), which begins with offering the firstfruits of everything to the Lord (see Deut. 18:1–5). To give the firstfruits is to imply that the whole belongs to God, indeed the whole worshiper. The prosperity described in Prov. 3:10 is the blessing of the covenant (Deut. 28:1–14), a kind of restored Eden. **Your barns will be filled with plenty** is a generalization concerning the effect of honoring the Lord with all that one has and is. It is not, however, more than a generalization (as Job's comforters held), for to view this as a mechanical formula dishonors God and his inscrutable sovereign purposes.
 3:11–12 A father who reflects on these words will take pains to mold his own parenting (esp. discipline) according to the pattern set by the Lord's parenting. Hebrews 12:4–5 cites these verses, commending endurance to harried believers.
 3:13–20 **A Hymn to Wisdom.** In extolling their benefits, this section makes it clear in the repeated reference to wisdom and understanding (vv. 13, 19) that they are both given and governed by the Lord (vv. 19, 20). Following the encouragement to humbly trust the Lord's instruction and discipline (v. 1–12), this section describes the benefits of wisdom as more precious than anything that could be gained on earth (v. 14, 15), as the way of true peace and life (v. 16–18a), and thus as the means by which those who cling to her are blessed (v. 13, 18) by the Lord. Just as wisdom is the means by which the Lord founded and established creation (v. 19), so it is also the means by which the one who finds it will be sustained (vv. 13–18) and established (vv. 21–35).

strange" is likely use of the same word that follows in the relationship. Likewise, the parallel description of the companying to here is her marriage.
 th and life to indicate inhabit the land although but to the inheritance with the wicked on the "land" used in the wicked and the
 we address to "my sets of instruction. Ends for doing so (v. faithful and honest of one's labors as a

might gain a better resurrection. ³⁶Some faced jeers and flogging, while still others were chained and put in prison. ³⁷They were stoned; ³⁸they were sawed in two; they were put to death by the sword. ³⁹They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, ⁴⁰destitute, persecuted and mistreated—the world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves ⁴¹and holes in the ground.

⁴²These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised. ⁴³God had planned something better for us so that only together with us ⁴⁴would they be made perfect.

God Disciplines His Sons

12 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run ¹with perseverance ²the race

11:36 ^wJer 20:2;
37:15 ^xGe 39:20
11:37
11:38 ^y2Ch 24:21
11:39 ^z1Ki 19:10;
Jer 26:23 ^a2Ki 1:8
11:40 ^b1Ki 18:4;
19:9
11:41 ^cver 2,4
11:42 ^dver 13;
Heb 10:36
11:43 ^eRev 6:11
11:44 ^fHeb 2:10
12:1 ^g1Co 9:24
12:5 ^hHeb 10:36

12:2 ⁱPs 25:15
12:3 ^jHeb 2:10
12:4 ^kPhp 2:8,9;
12:5 ^lHeb 2:9
12:6 ^mHeb 13:13
12:7 ⁿMs Mk 16:19
12:8 ^oGal 6:9;
12:9 ^pRev 2:3
12:10 ^qHeb 10:32-34;
12:11 ^r13:13
12:12 ^s12:5 ^tPver 3
12:13 ^u12:6 ^vPs 94:12;
119:75; Rev 3:19;
1Pr 3:11,12

marked out for us. ²Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, ³the author ⁴and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, ⁵scorning its shame, ⁶and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ⁷Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary ⁸and lose heart.

⁹In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. ¹⁰And you have forgotten that word of encouragement that addresses you as sons:

“My son, do not make light of the Lord’s discipline, and do not lose heart ¹when he rebukes you, ²because the Lord disciplines those he loves, ³and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son.” ⁴

⁵Endure hardship as discipline;

⁶Some early manuscripts *stoned; they were put to the test;* ⁷6 Prov. 3:11,12

11:37 They were stoned. Men like Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada the priest, who were put to death for declaring the truth (2Ch 24:20–22; Lk 11:51). See also Introduction to Jeremiah: Author and Date. *sawed in two.* Perhaps refers to Isaiah, who, according to tradition, met this kind of death under wicked King Manasseh (see Introduction to Isaiah: Author). **11:39** all commended for their faith. Not all the heroes of faith experienced immediate triumph over their circumstances, but all were blessed by God.

11:40 God had planned something better. The fulfillment for them, as for us, is in Christ who is “the resurrection and the life” (Jn 11:25–26). *only together with us would they be made perfect.* All persons of faith who had gone before focused their faith on God and his promises. The fulfillment of God’s promises to them has now come in Jesus Christ, and their redemption too is now complete in him.

12:1 surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses. The imagery suggests an athletic contest in a great amphitheater. The witnesses are the heroes of the past who have just been mentioned (ch. 11). They are not spectators but inspiring examples. The Greek word translated “witnesses” is the origin of the English word “martyr” and means “testifiers, witnesses.” They bear testimony to the power of faith and to God’s faithfulness. *run with perseverance.* See Ac 20:24; 1Co 9:24–26; Gal 2:2; 5:7; Php 2:16; 2Ti 4:7. The Christian life is pictured as a long-distance race rather than a short sprint. Some Hebrew Christians were tempted to drop out of the contest because

of persecution.

12:2 fix our eyes on Jesus. Just as a runner concentrates on the finish line, we should concentrate on Jesus, the goal and objective of our faith (Php 3:13–14). *author.* See note on 2:10. *perfecter of our faith.* Our faith, which has its beginning in him, is also completed in him; he is both the start and the end of the race. He is also the supreme witness who has already run the race and overcome. *joy set before him.* His accomplishing our eternal redemption and his glorification at the Father’s “right hand” (see note on 1:3; cf. Isa 53:10–12). *endured the cross.* See Php 2:5–8. *scorning its shame.* As with Christ, the humiliation of our present suffering for the gospel’s sake is far outweighed by the prospect of future glory (see 11:26; Mt 5:10–12; Ro 8:18; 2Co 4:17; 1Pe 4:13; 5:1,10).

12:3 Consider him. He suffered infinitely more than any of his disciples is asked to suffer—a great encouragement for us when we are weary and tempted to become discouraged. *not grow weary.* See Isa 40:28–31.

12:4 not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. Though they had suffered persecution and loss of possessions (10:32–34), they had not had to die for the faith.

12:5 the Lord’s discipline. Suffering and persecution should be seen as corrective and instructive training for our spiritual development as his children.

12:6 punishes. The Greek for this verb means “to whip.” God chastens us in order to correct our faults.

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