

# Moving Forward By Looking To the Past

Insights from Hebrews 12:1-3  
Rabbi Barney Kasdan, May 3rd, 2020

## I. The Spiritual Marathon (Heb. 12:1)

*Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us. Hebrews 12:1 (ESV)*

- **Run!**
- **With Endurance**
- **Rid of Entanglement**

## II. The Necessary Focus (Heb. 12:2)

*... looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Hebrews 12:2 (ESV)*

- **OT witnesses**
- **Yeshua**
- **Start and Finish**
- **Suffering + Glory**

## III. The Consideration (Heb. 12:3)

*Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. Hebrews 12:3 (ESV)*

- **Messiah = Matzah Tash**
- **3 Matzahs ?**
- **Afikoman**
- **Cup of Redemption**
- **The Lord's Supper**

## This Week's Discussion Guide:

Welcome to our third week of this 11 week study of Hebrews 11-13. Our last week of small groups for this season will be the last week in June.

At GPC, we are big on small groups :). May our church family grow warmer together even through this social distancing season as we connect with each other through our phones and computers.

The good news is that we don't have to wait to be physically together to meet together, develop friendships and encourage each other as we learn to apply God's truths to our everyday lives.

### Getting Started:

Can we all agree that it was great to have Rabbi Barney back :) ? His love for God and His Word and his understanding of Jewish context and culture is a blessing for us at GPC.

From his insights on Hebrews 12:1, Barney described what God calls us to run as a "Spiritual Marathon". Long distance runners know a lot about endurance.

What are some parallels that come to mind that helps a marathon runner finish their race well that we can apply to our Spiritual race set before us?

Barney also pointed out the need for our 'necessary focus' as described in Hebrews 12:2. Focus is huge! Whatever gets our attention ... usually gets us!

Read Philippians 4:8, 2 Corinthians 10:3-5, and Colossians 3:1-2 as further encouragements to stay focused on what God has for us.

What are some decisions, attitudes, actions, steps, insights ... that have helped you stay focused on Godly truths rather than allowing this pandemic season to mentally get the better of you?

One opportunity to 'mentally stay on course' with God and the race He has for us to run with endurance, is to not run alone.

How have any brothers and sisters in Christ either directly or indirectly been able to help strengthen you to stay focused on God's presence, principles and promises in the past days or weeks?

## Quick Review:

Let's re-read Hebrews 12:1-3, which was the text that Barney taught from last Sunday.

Looking back at your notes from this passage, was there anything you heard for the first time or that caught your attention, challenged, confused you, encouraged you, or stretched your thinking?

After Barney's message, he led us to take the Lord's Supper together. What was that like for you? What encouraged you? What was mentioned that you would want to understand more about?

From Hebrews 11 and now the beginning of Hebrews 12, we are called to live differently from our culture and those around us that aren't on a similar faith journey with Jesus.

In the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) Jesus taught a similar message.

For each of the passages below, write down or discuss the two different types of behaviors Jesus talks about one each one.

- Matthew 5:21-26
- Matthew 5:27-30
- Matthew 5:38-42
- Matthew 5:43-48
- Matthew 6:19-24

After reflecting on the above passages, answer the following three questions to help surface some possible next steps.

1. What does living differently in this area of my life look like?
2. What are the biggest hurdles I am facing in living life differently in this area?
3. Do I need to make any changes in my life differently in this area?

If so, where can I find help to make those changes?

## Wrapping Up:

Looking back on the message from Sunday and from our discussion, what is one truth that stands out to you that you can prayerfully ask God to help apply to your life somehow?

## Praying Up: :)

Before we wrap up our sharing time, let's prayer for one another!

What are some specific requests we have that we can pray for?