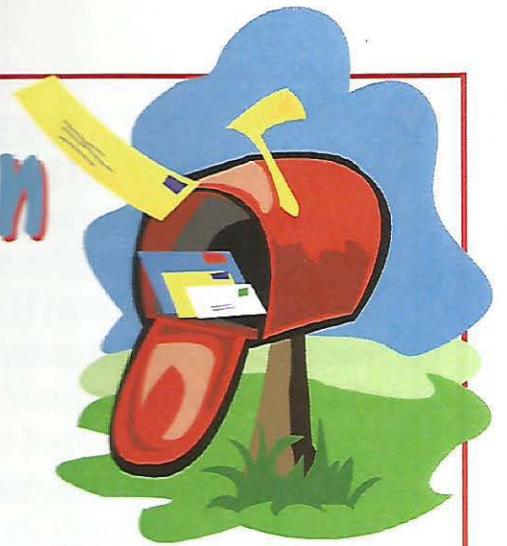


# Letters From Heaven



## Lesson 9

### Running the Race

**Theme:** Faith—Believing and obeying the Son of God

#### Memory Verse

“Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us...let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith....”

Hebrews 12:1-2

#### Daily Bible Readings

- 1 Hebrews 1:1-4; 2:17-18; 3:12-14
- 2 Hebrews 4:12-15; 5:8-9; 7:26-28
- 3 Hebrews 8:1-2; 9:11-12, 26-28
- 4 Hebrews 10:19-25; 11:1-7
- 5 Hebrews 11:32-40; 12:1-2; 13:15-16

#### After this lesson you should be able to ...

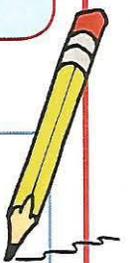
- Identify how we should listen to God’s Word.
- Name three ways Jesus is “better.”
- Define “faith” in your own words.
- Describe how to run a good race.
- Identify at least four people in the Old Testament who had great faith.

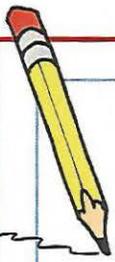
**W**e do not know exactly who wrote Hebrews. The first readers would have known him, but we don’t. We usually call him “the writer of Hebrews.” What we know is that the writer was guided by the Holy Spirit so that his letter is God’s Word and a part of the New Testament. He had a message about running the race with Jesus all the way to the finish line.

#### Hebrews 1:1-4; 2:17-18; 3:12-14

In these “last days” God speaks to us through a) the prophets, b) His Son, c) the elders.

Jesus is able to help people who are tempted because a) He was never tempted, b) He was tempted as we are, c) He yielded to temptation.





### Hebrews 4:12-15; 5:8-9; 7:26-28

Jesus was tempted just as we are. But the important difference between us and Him is that a) His temptations were not as hard as ours, b) He did not sin, c) He did not repent.

Jesus' sacrifice of Himself for our sins was a) repeated each year, b) once for some, c) once for all.

### Listen to God

God has spoken! Think about it. God created the world with His mighty voice. He said, "Let there be light," and what happened? Light was created. God spoke to His people from the top of Mount Sinai. As God spoke, the thunder roared and the mountain shook. He gave the Ten Commandments to guide His people. The writer of Hebrews begins his book with the message that God has spoken in His Son. To do this, Jesus came to the earth and lived as a man. Jesus

"spoke" God's message both with His life and His words. We need to listen to what God has spoken.

How can we be good listeners? We must pay attention. We must *listen to hear* so we can *act*. God speaks to us through the life and words of Jesus Christ. He speaks to us through the words of the Bible. We must listen carefully and with great respect. To hear God's Word, we read the Bible and listen to teachers and preachers. God has spoken. Are you listening?

### Stay with Jesus

Hebrews was written first to Christians who were thinking about not following Jesus any more. They had been Jews who once followed the Old Testament, and they were thinking about going back to it. Following Jesus was hard for them, and they thought that going back to their old way would be easier. The writer wants them to understand that to leave Jesus for something else would be a big mistake, because Jesus is greater and better.

The writer says that Jesus created the world and keeps the world running by His powerful word. He says that Jesus shows who God is and that He died for our sins. And this is just the beginning.

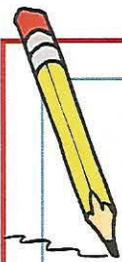
Throughout Hebrews, the writer shows that Jesus is a great high priest and a better sacrifice than animals. Jesus is greater than angels and has given a better covenant with better promises. If you have what is greater and better, why would you leave it for something else? The writer says to stay with Jesus. Following Him may not always be easy, but it is always right and best.

### Hebrews 8:1-2; 9:11-12, 26-28

A main point of Hebrews is that we have a great a) father, b) high priest, c) Levitical priest.

Jesus made a great sacrifice of Himself once for all. He will come a second time a) to make another sacrifice, b) to be King in Jerusalem, c) to save those who wait for Him.





**Hebrews 10:19-25; 11:1-7**

We should not forsake our coming together with Christians for worship so we can a) be a great high priest, b) get more money, c) encourage one another.

“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” Try putting this in your own words and write them here.

**Run the Race**

The important message of Hebrews is to believe that Jesus is great and to follow Him and never turn back. The writer gives a long list of people who had faith to follow God and not turn back. You can think back to other lessons you have studied and remember many of these men and women – Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, and Rahab. The writer also mentions Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, and Samuel. These were not perfect people, and living for God was not always easy for them. But they were people with faith who obeyed God. We must decide to do this.

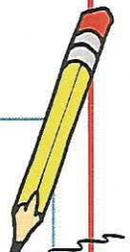
The writer of Hebrews says that believing in God is like running a race, and we must run to win. He tells us how to do it. Don't carry a bunch of stuff that will slow you down. Put away bad attitudes and wrong actions to run well. Keep your eye on the finish line. If you don't, you can be distracted and get off course. Christians must keep their eyes on Jesus. He is greater and better. Don't look anywhere else. Stay in the race. Don't slow down and don't drop out of the race. Stay with Jesus, and run all the way to the end!

**Hebrews 11:32-40; 12:1-2; 13:15-16**

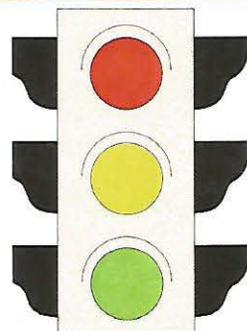
Name two hard things people did “by faith.”

What does it mean to “run with endurance”?

What kind of sacrifices do Christians make that will please God?



I want to listen to God.

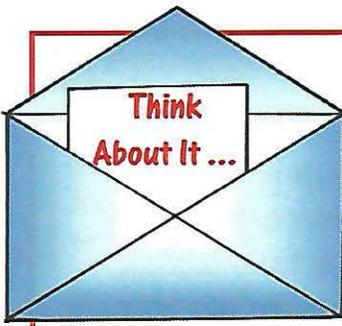


Put an X in the light that best describes you.

**Red — almost never**

**Yellow — sometimes**

**Green — all the time**



List two things that describes a good listener.

List two things you will do to be a better listener of God's Word.

Practice turning to the following Scriptures without using the Table of Contents or Index Tabs:

Malachi 1:1

Job 1:1

Philemon 1:1



Which book in the Old Testament is about suffering for Jesus?

On a map inside the back cover, use the eraser end of a pencil to point out the cities of Jerusalem and Nazareth as well as the Mediterranean Sea.