

Reading: Hebrews 12

“I have fought a good fight; I have finished the race; I have firmly held the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the victor’s crown” (2 Tim 4:7,8)

Christian life is a race, full of hurdles and hindrances, ups and downs, thorns and bruises, sufferings and shame. What encourages us is the honours and prizes that await us at the end of the race. Hebrews Chapter 12 discloses them—

1. We will see the Lamb of God, even the Lord Jesus, face to face, as the Finisher of our faith at the finishing point! (v 2). He started the race for us and now He will be there to receive us with hands open.

2. We will enter the joy of the Lord (v 2). The end of the race is eternal bliss. No more tears, sorrow or death. It’s joy, joy and only joy—never ending!

3. Jesus “sat down at the right hand of the Throne of God” (v 2). So shall we sit with Him on His Throne! (Rev 3:21). Our eternal occupation will be worship. No prayer, no preaching, but only praise!

4. Our sanctification will be complete—we will partake of God’s holiness in all fullness (v 10). We shall be transformed and be just like Him. We will enjoy the deliverance from the very presence of sin.

5. We will see the invisible God (v 14). God who dwells in unapproachable light will then dwell with us literally. We shall be His people and He will be our God in every sense (Rev 21:3).

6. We shall fully enjoy “the blessing” of blessings, even our birthright as the children of God (vv 16,17). “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him. But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit” (1 Cor 2:9,10). What is *revealed* now will be fully *realised* then!

7. Finally, we shall be serving God as kings and priests in His unshakable Kingdom forever and ever (v 28). In all earthly races, people receive a cup or cash. But in the Christian race we will be receiving a Crown— “a Kingdom!” Unlike the races in sportsfield, the faith race is not a competition but completion! All can make it—not just one or two!

*Far away beyond the shadows,
There a bright and joyful throng
Wave their palms of holy triumph,
While they sing the glad New Song!*
(Julia Sterling)

O God who is High and Exalted, You are great and greatly to be praised. You are mighty in power. You are wise in Your purposes. You are faithful to Your promises. You are merciful in Your dealings with us. You are the Rewarder of those who diligently seek You. You are the Restorer of those who are humble and broken before You. You reign in majesty and glory. You have done marvellous things to us. What awaits those who fear You cannot be imagined.

Father God, we thank You for Your Son who as Your Lamb was slain for us even before the foundation of the world. We thank You for choosing us in Him even before we were born. Your foreknowledge and predestination are beyond our understanding. We thank You for the glorious gift of Salvation in spite of our absolute unworthiness. It's purely Your grace, O God. Thank You for Jesus who has taken upon Himself the *penalty* for our sins. Thank You for the Holy Spirit who grants us *power* to overcome sin. We are looking forward to the day when we would be ushered into a Land free from the very *presence* of sin.

Yes, Lord, except for what Your Spirit has graciously revealed to us, our eyes have not seen nor our ears heard what You have prepared for us. Oh to think that we would see You and Your Son face to face! Oh to think of a place where there would be no sorrow or pain! Oh to think that we would sit with Jesus on Your throne! Oh to think that Your name would be written on us! Oh to think that we would freely eat of the Tree of Life! Oh to think that Your hidden manna would be our food! Oh to think that we would become morning stars to shine forever! Oh to think that we would reign with You forever! Oh to think that we would see our names in the Book of Life and be clothed with white angelic garments! Oh to think that we would be exactly like Jesus Your Son! Oh to think that we would be serving You as kings and priests in Your unshakable Kingdom forever and ever! Oh, Oh, Oh, we faint!

Dear Lord, a day with You in eternity would be better than a thousand years on this earth. Our sufferings of today are not comparable to the glory that awaits us. We thank You for the comforting presence of the Holy Spirit who keeps uplifting our sagging spirits while we pass through the valley of tears. Not only we but also entire creation groans with birth pangs to be delivered from the bondage of corruption. Thank You for the daily supply of Your power to conquer the devil who keeps attacking us from all sides. His days are numbered but our everlasting days are near. Come, Lord Jesus! Amen!

*(1 Chr 16:25; Psa 48:1; 93:1; 105:5; Rev 2:7,10,17,26; 3:5,12,21; 5:10; 13:8;
Eph 1:3,4; Isa 53:4-6; Heb 9:27,28; 1 Cor 2:9-11; Rom 8:18)*