

Part 2. Word Study -- Session 1 (Sample)

Verse (Heb 12:1-2)

“¹Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance 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 has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

Word/Strong's/Transliteration	Gloss Definition (2-3 words)	Behind or Within Text
Weight G3591 <i>ogkos</i>	Encumbrance (BLB)	<p style="text-align: center;">Behind the Text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The community to whom Paul wrote had endured persecution with sufferings including Paul in chains (Heb 10:34, 32; Chronological Study Bible, p. 1400). Authorities confiscated their goods. • Their future <u>reward comprised their BETTER possession</u>. Upon enduring by laying aside every weight and sin they would join the faithful others who went before them (11:36-38; CSB, p. 1400). • A weighted pace prevents one from winning the race. Athletes used artificial weights during training, but not in the race! They removed the weights so they could run fast! (Keener, <i>Bible Background Commentary: New Testament</i>, p. 678). Weight denotes a heaviness to eliminate or remove (Koestner, <i>Hebrews Commentary</i>, p. 522) • Gladiators participated in the race. They experienced intense struggle to prepare for the games, and even more to make it out of the games alive! (<i>Chronological Study Bible</i>). Probably refers to the Greek custom of stripping off clothes to run unencumbered (Keener, BBC, p. 678). <p style="text-align: center;">Within the Text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The word “therefore” signals the reader that Heb 12:1-2 concludes the argument in chapter 11. • One of the two categories to lay aside that hinders one in the race of faith. • Paul exhorts the runner with the phrase “Let us!” as an intimate call to fellow believers.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The word every, an adjective, modifies it indicating anything unnecessary. • Blue Letter Bible states any and every, of every kind (A. V. often all manner of); so especially with nouns designating virtues or vices, emotions, character, condition, to indicate every mode in which such virtue, vice or emotion manifests itself, or any object whatever to which the idea expressed by the noun belongs. • Sometimes ancient writers used weights figuratively for vices. • Weights represent anything that hinders the believer individually and collectively in the community from winning with genuine persevering faith– Vices! • A weight is a noun. As a direct object it demonstrates what the runner (plural) must lay aside or remove or take off. <p>Cross References</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Tim 2:4 serves as a parallel passage illustrating the act of traveling light with the metaphor of the sheep who got it wool caught in the thorn. • Heb 10:35: Scripture said they endured hard struggles; thus, they only endure by laying aside ever weight (and sin) that encumbers them in remaining faithful! • Heb 10:32. Paul exhorted them to lay aside every weight because they had to endure a great struggle with sufferings. The weight to lay aside does not connect to temptation but to the “great struggle with sufferings.”
<p>Four-Sentence Summary</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Weights relate to the sufferings one faces as opposed to temptations and represent anything such as vices that hinders the believer individually and collectively from running the successful, spiritual race of faith over their lifetime with genuine, persevering faith (Heb 12:1a). 2. The weights drag down one from enduring the great struggles of sufferings they face in that race of faith (10:32). 		

3. Thus, Paul exhorts the runner with the phrase “Let us!” as an intimate call to fellow believers to lay aside, meaning to remove or take off, anything that encumbers them in remaining faithful!
4. Since the believers faced intense persecution, they lost much. By removing concerns such as physical losses and by looking to Jesus, they gain their future reward with a better possession to join faithful others who went before them (10:11:36-38).

Verse (Heb 12:1-2)

“¹Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance 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 has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

Word/Strong's/ Transliteration	Gloss Definition (2-3 words)	Behind or Within Text
Sin G266 <i>hamartia</i>	To miss the mark (Vine's)	<p style="text-align: center;">Behind the Text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hebrews, as the book of better things, shows Jesus' superiority over Aaron as the fulfilled High Priest. Jesus has an exalted priestly purpose (Heb 7:21) to destroy His enemies of sin by making His foes His footstool (Josh 10:24; Acts 2:34-35). • The first-century Jewish Christians wanted to return to the Law of Moses. The author premised to show Jesus and the New Covenant as greater (Heb 8). His greater connects to laying aside besetting sin of which He put away through His sacrifice on the Cross. (Heb 9:25-26, 28; 10:10, 12, 14). • Sitting in the right position of the host metaphorically represents the ancient practice of a seating locale as the greatest of honor (Ramm, <i>Biblical Interpretation</i>).

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus who “has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Heb 12:2d) refers to His seated position of power and authority. Thus, from Jesus’ position of power and authority in His glorified state, He supports the believer in overcoming besetting sins—those which so easily ensnare us. • Christians had difficulty accepting all or parts of the New Covenant (Segraves, <i>Hebrews Better Things</i>, p.11). <p style="text-align: center;">Within the Text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With a plural subject (let us); the author applies the laying aside besetting sins to the individual within the community of believers and the collective witness of the community. Sin acts as one of the direct objects of the subject. • “Let us” in Heb 12:1b, exhorts believers “to lay aside every weight and the sin which so easily beset us” (cf. Heb 13:22). • The author of Hebrews uses the metaphor of a race. Sin comprises one part of what hinders the metaphoric race of the Christian experience (Heb 12:1b). • First, the author tells the reader to lay them down (or put them away) because it holds them back or hinders them from running the race (12:1b). • Second, this same verse targets sins that “so easily ensnare us” (or beset). Blue Letter Bible defines besetting as those sins that “prevent or retard running.” Thus, besetting sins constantly surround the believer, making one liable or susceptible to them. In other words, it connotes their weaknesses in an addictive sense. Besetting sins resemble traps the runner steps into during the race (v.1b). • Third, in other words besetting sins come from the old man that one puts off when putting on the new. (Col 8) <p style="text-align: center;">Cross References</p>
--	--	--

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Col 3:8,10: Since believers willingly accept Jesus Christ as their Savior, in the same manner, they put off sin and put on the new nature to endure the race over the course of their Christian life • Heb 2:10; 10:32-29: Believers should keep their eyes on Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith: (1) the captain of our salvation perfect through sufferings (Heb 2:10), (2) who perfects those being sanctified (10:14), and (3) who provides a better and enduring possession in heaven and the promise (Heb 10:32-39). • Heb 11: Since Heb 12:1 links to faith in the prior chapter, the author refers to the readers' lack of it, specifically sin manifested as unbelief (Heb 3, 4, 11). • Heb 13: The book also discusses other sins in chapter 13.
<p style="text-align: center;">Four-Sentence Summary</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Since individual and the community of believers willingly accept Jesus Christ as their Savior, they should lay aside (or put off) sin and put on the new nature to endure the metaphoric race over the course of their Christian life (Col 3:8,10), in context sin manifested as unbelief (Heb 3, 4, 11). 2. Sin holds the believer back or hinders one from running the race, specifically sins that “so easily ensnare us” (or beset)--those sins from the old man that constantly surround and trap the believer, making one liable or susceptible preventing or retarding running (12:1; BLB). 3. Through the New Covenant (Heb 8) Jesus’ laid aside besetting sins through His sacrifice on the Cross. (Heb 9:25-26, 28; 10:10, 12, 14); overcame sin from His position of power and authority in His glorified state (Heb 7:21) and destroyed sin by making it His footstool. (Josh 10:24; Acts 2:34-35) as the exalted High Priest. 4. Believers should keep their eyes on Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith: (1) the captain of our salvation perfect through sufferings (Heb 2:10), (2) who perfects those being sanctified (10:14), and (3) who provides a better and enduring possession in heaven and the promise (Heb 10:32-39). 		

