

# GOODNEWS LETTER

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## RUNNING FROM GOD

**"Woe to them! For they have gone the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the rebellion of Korah," Jude 11.**

**And they're off!** Whether sandals or Adidas, man is laced up. Every man born among women gets caught up in the race. When God speaks, men run, fast! But not Jude. He warns us to seek God, **"...Him that is able to keep you from falling"** (v 24).

Jude covers a lot of historical miles of running by man. He lists Cain and Balaam, Korah, and then **"mockers in the last time"** (v18). That's over 4000 yrs.

Jude emphatically states that the sole remedy against falling is **"to earnestly contend for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints"** (v3). Emphasis that I place on **"the faith"** and **"once for all delivered"** is supported by Greek scholars.

A. T. Robertson says **"the faith (tei-pistei)... is not in the original sense of trust, but rather of the thing believed"** (Word Pictures, pg. 186). Vincent's "Word Studies" cites Bengel: "No other faith will be given" (pg. 712).

Jude never looked for a reformation. He wants his readers to know that "The Faith" he was writing about can never to be superceded. He is pleading against heretical teachers that are sure to come (and, have).

### ADAM, THE FIRST MAN

**The fact that Adam** set a scenario of sin for man to run after is clear in Scripture. **"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world"** means that **"for that all have sinned," Rom. 5:12**. Adam's running and hiding becomes a sequence of events throughout the life of every man. All have sinned.

Thus, like a relay race, in Adam, all men run! Off goes Adam because of sinful disobedience. He hands off to Cain, who runs eastward of Eden, to Nod.

But it isn't long before God gets tired of man's running away from Him. He floods man and the creation with His hot anger - His wrath! Adam's race stops running; for awhile, anyway.

Doesn't man know that God's care is way better than running away from Him? Noah proved this. His lofty position in the Ark allowed Noah to view the flood from a different point of view than the rest. No more running for man; that is until they devise and attempt to implement a plan for safety without God's approval. The Tower had to go!

From the time of Babel, God seems to change His mind; now demanding that man runs. It's as if God said, '*You want to run? Go! And, don't come back to me until you find the way, the truth and the life in My Son, Jesus the Christ.*'

In mass confusion, man was sent here and there! Suddenly, man was scattered all over the face of the earth (Ge 11:9) and hasn't stopped running since.

Amazingly, only eleven (11) chapters transpire before God speaks to man and slows down his running. The race has turned into a walk. "*Abram believed God and it was accounted (reckoned) for righteousness,*" Romans 4:3.

After Abraham, the Lord has kept aloof from man. He lets man run his race - his course at his own chosen speed. God no longer focuses on all mankind. Now the **All Seeing Eye** looks upon just one man. Until Jesus arrives, God sees and cares for only Abraham.

After Abraham, man has been given another scenario for his life; a real blessing, for Abraham has allowed man to employ "FAITH" and expect a new sequence of events. From now on, in the faith of Abraham, man isn't running any from God any longer. Abraham has shortened man's stride and slowed it to a walk; in the pace of Enoch. "*And Enoch walked with God...*" Genesis 5:24.

In the presence of the Almighty, man has learned to slow and submit to His will. And here we see that even Abraham needed to be slowed; in order to walk at God's movement.

By removing Abraham from Haran, which means '**strength and enlightenment,**' to Canaan, it seems that God has limited the strength of man. Living in the "**low**" land of Canaan, man trusts the Lord. That's spiritualization, but don't we love to get (surmise) such meaning from Scripture? And everyone said, "Amen!"

Nevertheless, God's care for mankind is extraordinary! And, man responds. Once again, "*Abram believed God and it was accounted (reckoned) for righteousness,*" Romans 4:3.

When Jesus came on the scene, life came to a crawl, it seems. All the events of this most important time of man's history were performed at Jerusalem, or just a few miles each way from the holy city.

Running under the cover of the Law, the Jews stuck with their crowd. The disciples of Jesus, on the other hand, moved differently. They trusted in His teaching of the Kingdom. Although difficult to understand at times, the disciples longed for the words of Jesus and no longer trusted in their doing.

Later, Paul would learn much more meaning of the words of Jesus. He found out how to "*run, not as uncertainly;*" keeping his body under subjection in order to receive an incorruptible crown (I Cor 9:25, 6 & 7).

In Paul's letter to the Philippians, he told them "*that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither labored in vain*" (2:16).

Running for God, not away from Him, is glorious for man. All that is needed it to accept the call. The new way is narrow, but, oh, so exciting!

When we stop running and start our return home, God sees us coming to Him as Jesus explained in parable of the lost son of Luke 15:20. While the son was a great way off, "his father saw him, and had compassion and ran, and fell on his neck and kissed him."

God cares! He is slow to anger so, all mankind needs to hear what God says about running from him. A close study of Adam will do wonders, slowing us down. Then, listen and obey in the faith of Abraham.

Next, become a disciple of Jesus and His truth. Here, strong conviction sets in the heart and we are really slowed down, way down. Content, there is no need to run to this event or that event. The settled heart abides in the local congregation of a New Testament Church, and there finds contentment. Again, as Jude "gave all diligence to write unto us of the Common Salvation," (V 3), his desire was to "build up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God..." (v20, 21).

**THEREFORE,**

"...let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and let us **run with patience** the race that is set before us" Hebrews 12:1.