

Running the Race Set Before Us

By Kay Tolman

The Race of Faith

“Therefore, 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” Hebrews 12:1.

There is nothing like waking up to a beautiful cool morning, lacing up those running shoes and putting some miles on the road. I love the Texas countryside. There is a big red barn I pass on the right, a beautiful black horse I pass on the left and a menagerie of cows, chickens, barking dogs and even buffalo on my favorite route. I love the big blue Texas sky and the little white puffy clouds that look like cotton candy in the sky. The sunshine is glorious. For the first time in my life, I have tan lines around my ankles.

As an enthusiast, I get out and run, rain or shine. If it's too hot, I truck to the gym. But I don't let the weather deter me. Sometimes it's cloudy and overcast. Sometimes it's just too hot. Life's circumstances are that way. But I can always count on a great conversation with the Lord along the way.

“But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God” Acts 20:24.

When I was a child, I had exercise induced asthma. The slightest exertion caused me to lose my breath. I felt like a cripple without a wheelchair. But when I was forty years old, the first healing I received from asthma came with deliverance from Freemasonry. Freedom from iniquitous structures can release us into the freedom of our destiny!

It is the race of faith, in the everyday endurance. Somedays I just want to slow down and walk, others I just want to make excuses. The question is, will I keep going? Will I persevere? Running is as much a mental challenge as a physical one. But it also requires faith, faith to believe I can reach the finish line on the race set before me. Paul wrote, “Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it” 1 Corinthians 9:24.

Rest is as important as exercise. We require rest to build strength. There was a time when the Lord asked me, “Do you trust me as much in the rest as you do in the activity?” His question to me brought transformation.

For long distance runners, training includes the addition of just one extra mile each week. This builds a faith muscle as much as a physical one. If I believe I can run just one more mile, then over time, I discover I have gained the ability to reach my goal.

Last month I ran a half marathon. 13.1 miles! As I was rounding the corner on that last mile, I declared Isaiah 40 out loud to all my fellow runners, "WE WILL RUN AND NOT GROW WEARY!" I even got an "Amen" from the pack.

Isaiah 40:31 "But those who entwine their hearts with Yahweh will experience divine strength. They will rise up on soaring wings and fly like eagles, run their race without growing weary, and walk through life without giving up."

The voice of victory says, "Press through, keep going, don't stop. You can do it!" It is the voice of the forerunner, the spirit of Elijah!

"He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, 'to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,' and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord" Luke 1:17.

If a runner has trained well, recovery comes quickly, making one ready for the next challenge.

So now at the Head of the Year 5782, consider the race ahead of you and run the good race.

"When our time on earth is done we can say, 'I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith'" 2 Timothy 4:7.