

Ezra 5.1-5

Stirring words!

The cheers of a crowd make a big difference sometimes.

If you're playing sport, the crowd may not be that big – maybe just some of your family and friends.

But their cheers can keep you going and stop you giving up!

They can even help you win!



Draw a circle round the sports below which you like playing





Remember this?

great aberdeen
run

It's quite easy at the start of a long race!



All of the runners feel fit and fresh and raring to go!

Especially if they've done some training!

So when the whistle blows and the run begins, setting off isn't that hard.



It's reaching the end of the race which is tough!

And that's where the crowds come in handy.

Come on!

They support the runners.

They shout short messages which help the runners keep going.

You can do it!





the coach

The coach does that, of course, as well as the crowd. Only this is the coach's **job** – to help the runner (or any other sports person) to be their best, to complete the race, finish the game or win the match, whatever the sport may be.

The coach has a very important job!

The passage we're looking at in the Bible today is about two men whose job was a bit like that of the coach.

Have a read of **Ezra 5.1-2**

God gave His people prophets.

Like the crowds and the coaches they were there to **support** God's people in the work they'd been given to do.

Now Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the prophet, a descendant of Iddo, prophesied to the Jews in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel, who was over them. ²Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and Joshua son of Jozadak set to work to rebuild the house of God in Jerusalem. And the prophets of God were with them, supporting them.

The people needed a *lot* of help from their coach!

The exiles who had come back from Babylon had started off well enough: they put in the foundations of the temple

.... but for 18 years **nothing** more had been done.

Work on the temple had stopped.



God spoke to them through His prophets.

And the work started again!

When God speaks, things happen!

That's why it's important that we're reading the Bible ourselves and listening to what God is saying.

The Bible is God's Word, and He speaks to **us** today through the Bible.



Jesus said, ‘Follow Me!’

The **temple** was where people were able to get an idea of how great God is and how wonderful it is to have Him with you.

When Jesus calls us to follow Him, it’s because He means to build something out of our lives which will help others today to see just how great and good God is, and just how amazing it is to have Him with us.

This is what He calls you to work at with Him: this is the ‘temple’ He is building out of your life.



START Starting to follow Jesus is not that hard!

Have you taken that taken that step?
Have you told Him –

“Jesus, I’m going to follow You!”



Keeping going

is always the hard bit!



That's where **God's Word** is important.

The Bible is the coach calling out!

you need to
stick it out,
staying with God's plan so
you'll be there for
the promised
completion

(Hebrews 10.36, *The Message*)

1

Make sure you **read the Bible**, so that you can hear what the Lord is saying to you: after all He's your 'coach', and it's important that you listen!

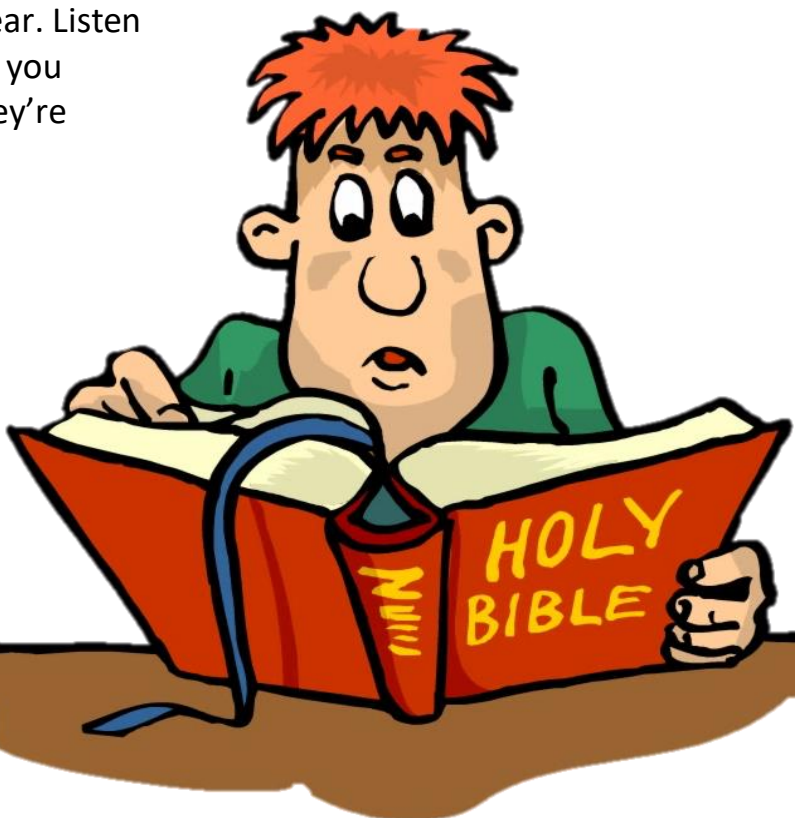
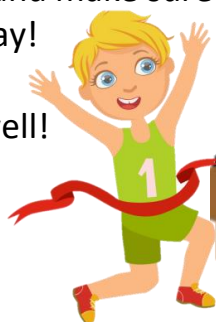
2

Make sure, too, you then **reflect on what God's saying** in the Bible. Because the Lord is your 'coach', He wants the best for you and knows what you need to hear. Listen carefully to those He sends to teach you from the Bible: think about what they're saying and how that applies to you.

3

Respond to God's Word as well!
In other words, **do** what the 'coach' is telling you to do – and make sure you do it without delay!

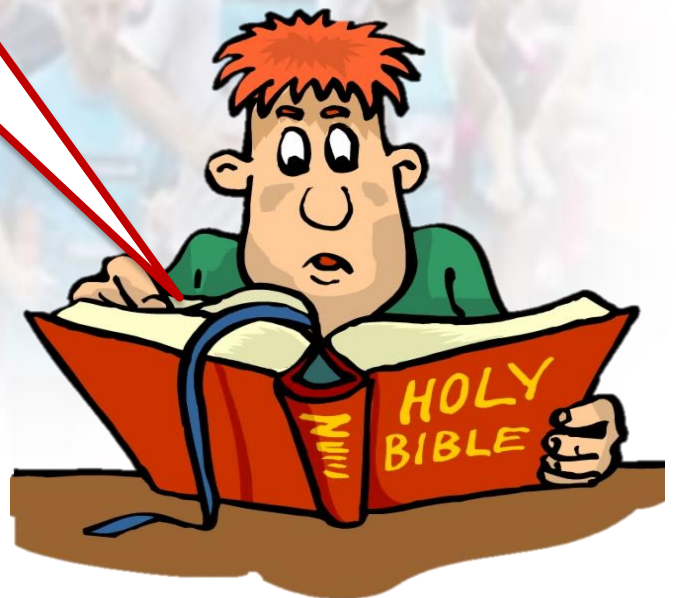
Make sure to finish well!



Today's verse for you to try and remember!

**Strip down,
start running—
and never quit!**

(Hebrews 12.1)



A WORDSEARCH

Try this Wordsearch and see if you can find all the words!

Run the Race



Since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us ...

G	Y	B	R	H	X	E	A	E	N	G	E	T	Z	Q
B	H	W	T	N	U	E	L	J	W	E	Q	H	U	S
S	F	I	P	A	T	E	G	H	F	V	V	A	E	B
D	A	I	P	Z	H	O	T	S	I	A	I	S	X	H
F	M	U	X	H	R	A	S	D	L	N	S	H	C	L
D	K	I	C	K	O	D	T	I	D	E	D	S	O	K
C	R	U	N	F	W	M	I	U	N	M	E	E	S	F
M	T	H	R	O	N	E	O	T	P	Y	O	F	R	V
U	A	A	Y	M	I	L	I	F	E	E	S	G	K	S
F	A	R	A	E	C	W	X	B	U	L	J	R	N	X
R	F	J	K	J	C	V	H	Q	G	U	E	E	I	T
A	K	B	Q	E	U	S	E	H	C	I	S	A	U	F
C	J	O	C	O	D	U	F	U	D	M	U	T	E	A
E	F	F	N	V	M	H	S	I	N	K	S	R	M	Z
R	G	W	R	I	P	K	J	O	Y	T	L	K	U	N

.. fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy that was set before Him, He endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God (Heb.12:1-2)

- | | | | | |
|-----------|-------|---------|-------|-------|
| GREAT | RACE | JESUS | JOY | FAITH |
| WITNESSES | THROW | THRONE | EYES | RUN |
| MARKED | FIX | HINDERS | CLOUD | SIN |

For you to COLOUR

Try designing your own *RUNNING SHOE*: make it as colourful as you can!



Now try colouring in these runners!

