

Jane Tomlinson

- I don't know how you could fail to have been struck by the story of Jane Tomlinson:
- [From her own website](#): "Since being told she was suffering from incurable cancer in 2000, Jane Tomlinson has inspired a Nation, by running in a phenomenal variety of races, including the London Marathon, London Triathlon, Great North Run, Gatorade 1/2 Ironman Triathlon and cycling on a tandem bike from Land's End to John O'Groats. Her fundraising efforts through Jane's Appeal have now passed the £400,000 mark, with the new fundraising target for 2004 being £1 million."

- From BBC news website:

[Heroine to carry Olympic torch: Wednesday 16th June, 2004](#)

Jane Tomlinson will be among 140 people carrying the torch in London Terminal cancer sufferer Jane Tomlinson has been selected to carry the Olympic torch through the streets of London ahead of this summer's games in Athens. The Leeds mother is settling back into family life after raising £275,000 by cycling from 'Rome to Home'. Others chosen to relay the torch on 26 June are London mayor Ken Livingstone and Sir Roger Bannister. A British Olympic Association spokesman said Mrs Tomlinson, aged 40, was a 'popular and inspirational' runner. She will be among 140 British people to carry the torch through the capital for the first time since 1948. "Her courage and determination in dealing with her terminal cancer diagnosis have made her a natural choice to take part in this great event," said the association spokesman.

Pain control

Mrs Tomlinson's husband Mike said she was delighted and honoured by the request. The mother-of-three arrived back in Leeds earlier this month after completing a 2,000 mile tandem charity ride with her brother Luke Goward. Mr Tomlinson said his wife had returned to her job as a paediatric radiographer at Leeds General Infirmary. "She is planning to have some radiography in the next few days to control the pain and this is important as she needs to get on top of the pain before she can do anything else," he said. "We are just trying to get her well. We can't do another event like Rome to Home as it's too dangerous for Jane."

- [\(Jane was awarded an MBE in June 2003\)](#)

- She's shown an incredible determination to "[keep on running](#)", despite the cancer she is fighting
 - sometimes stories like that make me wonder: [what would I do in a similar situation?](#)
 - would I show similar fortitude?
 - [in life, in faith?](#)
- The whole of Hebrews can be seen as an encouragement to Christians to "[keep going](#)", to "[keep on running](#)" the race set before us
 - in the series on Hebrews through the Autumn I propose outlining 12 good reasons that the writer to the Hebrews suggests for not giving up
 - 12 reasons all to do with [Jesus...](#)
 - by way of introduction, let me suggest that those 12 reasons are all, in some way, related to three core themes that run through the book and are touched on in the passage we read in chapter 10:
 - [we have a Great Saviour \(v.32, 38\)](#)
 - [we are in a Great Contest \(v.32-34\)](#)
 - [we will enjoy a Great Future \(v.35-39\)](#)

We have a Great Saviour (v.32, 38)

- "received the light" (32) and "righteous one..." (38), quoting Habakkuk 2:3,4
- We have been saved, we are now in the light, we are now alive, not dead, because Jesus, the righteous one, lived by faith a perfect life, he did not shrink back from doing God's will, he did not shrink back from dying for our sake on the Cross, he did not despise the suffering and shame, rather he bore them that we might be saved!
 - we are now fully, totally, completely saved, released from death's hold, made children of the living God, brothers and sisters of Jesus!
 - **Hallelujah, what a Saviour!**
- We have been redeemed, bought out, filled with gratitude...
- During our holiday we witness a great thunderstorm:
 - I've found myself talking about it, with enthusiasm!
 - **it was only a thunderstorm!!**
- We have a great Saviour!!

We are in a Great Contest (v.32-34)

- Great contest between good and evil, between God and the Devil, between those who seek to follow God and those who oppose him
 - great contest for the hearts and minds and souls of mankind
 - great contest to do that which is right and pleasing to God
- A contest with significance:
 - God's honour is at stake!
 - people's eternal destiny is on the line
 - where the stakes are high - insult, persecution, identification with those so affected, prison, financial loss...
- Almost a hackneyed illustration, but **Olympic athletes will endure incredible hardship for the contest is great!**

We will enjoy a Great Future (v.35-39)

- Finally, the prospect of a great future, with God in heaven:
 - a great inheritance, a rich reward, that which has been promised, a future with the Lord (when he comes back), a time of justice, all the various images the Bible uses - wedding feast, no more tears, lion and lamb, etc....
 - heavenly bodies, as we thought about in late July in the mornings!

Conclusion

- **Where are you tempted to give up just now?**
 - a job that is just a drag?
 - a relationship - **family, friend, colleague** - that is difficult in some way, and all you want to do is walk away?
 - a struggle with your health that saps energy and will?
- Or perhaps it's something more directly **"spiritual"**?
 - you've really given up trying to share your faith...
 - why should you struggle to retain your integrity and honesty when everyone else around you is getting on fine without such scruples?
 - prayer? every day? that's a joke!
 - church....?
- But when we re-orient ourselves on our **Great Saviour**, when we remember that we are in a **Great Contest**, when we lift our eyes from what is immediately around us to the **Great Future** still in store for us:
 - **then we won't give up quite so readily!**