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Sermon Study on Heb.12:1-6

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for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias" (Matt.17:3,4). The disciples knew Moses and Elijah, when they saw them, by name. Likewise we shall know Adam, Noah, Isaiah, Paul, Augustine, Luther, Walther, and countless others.

After the resurrection of Jesus "they knew Him" (Luke 24:31). Jesus "showed them His hands and His side. Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord." (John 20:20.) When Jesus said, "Mary," she evidently recognized Him by His voice. When He spoke to them at length, they could recognize the speaker as the same person who spoke chapters fourteen to seventeen of John on Maundy Thursday evening. His actions in preparing breakfast on the shore of the Sea of Galilee were similar to those they had seen when He washed their feet. We shall live and speak with one another as the risen Savior did with His disciples and as He now intercedes with the Father. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is" (1 John 3:2).

On February 17, 1546, the day before he died, Luther said: "What did Adam do? He had never seen Eve; he lay there and slept. But when he woke up, he didn't say, 'Where do you come from? What are you?' but 'This is flesh of my flesh.' How did he know that the woman had not sprung from a stone? He knew it because he was full of the Holy Spirit and had a true knowledge of God. According to this knowledge we shall similarly know Father and Mother and learn to know one another face to face better than Adam and Eve."

St. Louis, Mo.

W. F. BECK

Sermon Study on Heb. 12:1-6

Eisenach Epistle for Palm Sunday

The Eisenach Epistle for Palm Sunday is taken from the second, or exhortatory, section of the Letter to the Hebrews. The writer pleads with his readers to remain loyal to their great High Priest, whose person and work he had presented in the first section, 1:1 to 10:8. At the same time he points out in what manner such loyalty is to be manifested in their lives. And always he motivates his exhortation by recalling to their mind the exalted person and the glorious work of Him whose disciples they profess to be. As we enter Holy Week to see the Son of God go forth to war against the enemies of our salvation in the last and fiercest and the decisive battle, the contemplation of this Scripture text will help to put us in the proper Lenten spirit.

V. 1. *"Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the*

sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us."

"Wherefore," τοιγαροῦν. This Greek particle, used in the New Testament only here and 1 Thess. 4:8, introduces a conclusion with some special emphasis or formality, "surely therefore now." In the preceding chapter the writer had inscribed on a sacred roll of honor a large number of heroes of faith living in the days of the Old Testament, shining examples, all of them, of living, patient, enduring faith and trust in God's unfailing promises still awaiting fulfillment. In chapter 12 the writer proceeds to make an exhortative application to his readers: therefore now surely we also should run with patience the race which lies before us. This main clause is preceded by two participial phrases, one introduced by a present participle, the other by an aorist participle. The first participial phrase points to an ever-continuing, unchanging fact, "Having so great a cloud of witnesses lying round about us." As we read in the Old Testament the biographies of God's children, young and old, men and women, we are standing as it were on a high mountain far away from the turmoil and troubles of this present day, and on every side there surrounds us a great cloud reaching as far as our eyes can see, to the very limit of time's horizon, a huge mass of "witnesses." The two verbal forms ἔχοντες and περικειμένον are present tense forms, durative, lasting. This cloud of witnesses has been laid down permanently in Holy Writ, so that at all times to the end of days all readers may have that same blessed experience of being encompassed by a large number of fellow believers who have lived in the same faith of God's Word, have suffered patiently in this faith the various trials of life, and have through this faith obtained glorious victories and endured to the end. We are not alone in the battle of life. Surrounding us are untold numbers who have already fought and overcome and reached the end of their faith, the salvation of their souls. And these men are "witnesses," μάρτυρες. This word is never used in the New Testament in the sense of spectators, eagerly and with deep interest watching us from heaven, as many interpreters understand this passage. Delitzsch even goes so far as to write, "How solemn is the admonition, and how full of comfort the encouragement, which is contained in the looks that we exchange with this invisible company of spectators!" How can we exchange looks with an invisible company? This thought is contrary to the meaning of the term μάρτυς, which throughout the New Testament denotes one who testifies, bears witness, of what he has experienced. And it has no warrant in Scripture, which nowhere tells us that the deceased believers sit like spectators in an arena and are eagerly, anxiously watching our battles and races. This cloud of witnesses can be seen. This cloud is the whole number of believers held before our

eyes whenever we read the Old Testament; and as we read the history of their lives as written by inspiration of the Spirit of Truth, we read the record, reliable and trustworthy, of battles fought, and tribulations endured, and mistakes made, and sins committed, and victories won, and conquests gained. They are flesh of our flesh, sinful, mortal, weak, without spiritual strength as far as their own nature is concerned; yet through faith in the promised Redeemer they were strong, able to overcome the enemies confronting them, patiently fighting the good fight of faith, more than conquerors, heroes enduring to the end.

Having such a cloud of witnesses encompassing us whenever we open the pages of our Old Testament, ought we not, must we not, run with patience the race set before us? They had only the promise of the coming of Messiah. We are living in the day of fulfillment. Let us the more eagerly run the race, since the consummation of our salvation is so much closer.

"Let us lay aside every weight," having put away every burden. The author is preparing his readers for the figure of a race.

"ὄγκος" denotes something prominent, bulky, hence a burden. An athlete must rid himself of excess weight, superfluous flesh. Not fat but muscle and agility count in the arena. Spiritual training demands the denial of whatever our sinful flesh craves. Our sinful flesh is excess weight, hindering our new man, rendering it impossible for the new man to gain such swift and decisive victories, and to make such good progress, as he could and would if he were rid of the bulkiness of his sinful flesh. Every weight must be laid aside, all things directly sinful, and also things permissible, adiaphora, if they engross our mind and demand our time to the exclusion of attending to our primary duty to run with patience the race set before us.

"And the sin which doth so easily beset us." While every weight must be laid aside, whether in itself sinful or not, the writer joins to this general idea a particular item, already comprised in the general notion, but which he desires to emphasize, "and especially." (On this use of *καί* cp. Matt. 8:33; Mark 16:7; Acts 1:14.) "The sin which doth so easily beset us," εὐπερίστατον. The term occurs only here in the entire Greek literature. Of all the various translations suggested, we regard "standing round about well, skillfully" as the one best suiting etymology and context. God has placed a cloud of witnesses round about us to encourage us to run patiently. Sin is exceedingly skillful in placing itself round about us. It has an uncanny ability of standing around us, of hanging itself like a dead weight upon our souls and bodies, of obtruding itself between the Christian and the surrounding witnesses, so that the Christian no longer sees their encouraging example of patient suffering and running the race, but only the

alluring beauty and enticing form of sin, permitting himself to be entwined by its tendrils, which embrace him closer and closer, sapping finally every ounce of spiritual strength and life. The article may be the generic article, describing sin in general, or it may be specific, pointing to the specific sin of reverting to Judaism, against which the epistle so consistently warns. In the latter case, which we favor, the writer would warn against the pet sin of his readers and, in application, against any favorite sin which would draw the Christian back into the life of sin and worldliness, away from Christ. Such sins must be laid aside before we can hope to run with patience, like the Old Testament believers, the race, set before us. Τρέχειν τὸν ἀγῶνα occurs also in profane Greek writers and denotes the incurring of extreme peril, which can be overcome only by exerting all one's strength, straining all efforts, working out our salvation with fear and trembling, Phil. 2:12. This battle, this race is set before us. Again the writer includes himself. The term denotes something set, or placed, before a person; something appointed, destined. The way to glory is the way of trials, battlings, fightings without and fears within; but it is at the same time a race appointed by our heavenly Father, who daily strengthens us, and by our Savior Jesus Christ, made unto us wisdom and power of God. That is the next encouraging thought brought out by the text.

V. 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 is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."*

Ἀφορῶ like ἀποβλέπω in Heb. 11:26 designates the steady fixing of one's eye upon one object, to the exclusion of all others, which might cause the beholder to lose sight of this one object. The present participle is durative. The Christians should be such as constantly keep before their eyes "Jesus," never permitting any advantage or any peril to divert their attention from Him. Jesus is here called the "Author and Finisher of faith." What is meant by this title? Faith is evidently the Christian faith. The chief aim of the entire letter is to encourage and exhort the readers to remain steadfast and immovable in this Christian faith. In order to motivate his exhortation, the writer brought at great length the object of Christian faith, Jesus Christ, the God-man, our great High Priest, and His perfect, vicarious, atoning sacrifice, chaps. 1-10. In chap. 11 he proceeds to another motive by calling the attention of his readers to the nature of this saving faith, whereby they receive the promise, 10:36; whereby the just shall live, v. 38; whereby one believes to the saving of the soul, v. 39. It is this *Christian* faith which he defines, chap. 11:1, as *Christian faith*, as unwavering assurance of things hoped for and unseen. That he

has saving faith as it manifests itself in various situations in mind also in chap. 11, becomes evident, e. g., from vv. 7, 10, 13-16, 24-26, 33, 39, 40. Christian faith, the only faith recognized by the author, is first of all *Christian* faith, whose heart and life is Jesus, the great High Priest, and His work, chaps. 1-10, and in the second place, it is *Christian faith*, the assurance, conviction, that Jesus is my own High Priest, a living conviction which manifests itself in loving and God-fearing trust in all divine promises. Since throughout the letter πίστις is used of saving faith, there is no reason to assume a different meaning here, such as faith in the sense of Christian creed, or trust in God, which is a fruit of faith, a good work. That the writer has saving faith, faith in Jesus, in mind here also is evident from the terms he applies to Jesus, the Author and Finisher of faith. Ἀρχηγός may mean a leader, ruler, prince, Acts 5:31; or the instigator, originator, author of something, Acts 3:15; Heb. 2:10, and in profane Greek is combined with αἴτιος, the cause, the person causing, author (cp. *Exp. Gr. Test.* on Acts 3:15) just as ἀρχηγός, Heb. 2:10, is explained by αἴτιος in Heb. 5:9. Jesus is the Founder, the Author, the ultimate Cause of saving faith, just because He is the Author, the Founder, of our salvation. By His redemptive work He laid the foundation on which faith rests, He established Himself as the Rock of Ages, to which faith clings. Without this salvation which Christ procured by His vicarious priestly work there would and could be no saving faith, Acts 4:12. And by His Word, His Gospel, He begins, He creates, saving faith, created it in the Old Testament, created it in the days of His flesh, John 17:8, and still creates it to the end of days, John 17:14, 20, 21. And He is the Finisher of faith, τελειωτής, a word occurring only here in Greek literature. The term points back to τελειωθῶσιν, made perfect, of 11:40. The verb means to bring to the goal. As Christ has set our feet on the race course leading to life eternal, so He in keeping with His promise, John 10:27, 28, will strengthen, sustain, encourage us, help us overcome all obstacles, lead us from victory to victory, enable us to receive the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls, 1 Pet. 1:9; and on yonder day give us the victor's crown. Heb. 9:28; 2 Tim. 4:8.*

* Goodspeed's translation, "our leader and example in faith," does violence to the context, and his translation "example" is unwarranted. "When Moffatt, like Delitzsch, makes ἀρχηγός 'the pioneer of personal faith,' he clashes with 2:10 and 5:9; with all Greek exegetes, who regard ἀρχηγός = αἴτιος; with the fact that Scripture nowhere speaks of Christ as a believer (Delitzsch stating that this is the only place); with the second term, τελειωτής, which cannot mean that Christ is the completer of His own faith, an example for us likewise to complete our faith." (*Lenski, Heb.*, p. 433.) Christ certainly had no need of saving faith, such as the writer describes in his letter; else Christ could not have saved us.

This glorious truth that Jesus, the Author of our salvation, is also the Author and Finisher of our faith gives us strength to run with patience the race set before us. The example of Christ's patience, 12:2b, 3, could not enable us to follow Him in like patience if He would not give us spiritual life, if He would not create and preserve to the end that faith which alone enables us to follow Him, which alone brings us to the goal. And the examples listed in chap. 11 would not even exist if Christ had not been the Author and Finisher of the faith of these believers and through faith made them such noble witnesses. Look to Him, the Author and Finisher of your faith, and remember that He demands no more, yea, far less, than He Himself endured in order to be your Jesus, your Redeemer.

"Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the Cross, despising the shame." The joy does not refer to the joy of heaven which the Son of God left at His incarnation, choosing in its stead a life of suffering and shame, nor does the writer mean to say that Christ chose the latter rather than a life of joy and happiness which He as a sinless man might have enjoyed. The word "set before," προκειμένης, here as in 6:18 and 12:1 refers to the future. The entire context, the example of the Old Testament believers, chap. 11, who are to be our examples in patient hope of a future, unseen glory, the *καί* connecting the two clauses and marking the sitting at the right hand as the result of His suffering, the description of the future benefits derived by the readers from divine training, vv. 9-11, all demand that we refer the joy to the future joy awaiting Christ after having finished His work of redemption. There would have been no glory for Jesus without patient endurance of the sufferings He was to endure by predetermined counsel of the Trinity, Acts 2:23. This glory was for Christ a powerful incentive to patient endurance of the Cross, as Scripture clearly testifies by calling attention to the glory as the fruit of His suffering, Ps. 16:8-11; 22:21-31; Is. 49:4-7; 53:10-12. Rarely does Christ speak of His suffering without mentioning His resurrection; cp. also John 8:28, 29; 12:23-28; 13-3; 14:28; 17:4, 5. Hence the *ἀντί* is used here, as quite regularly, in speaking of a price or of the thing for which a price is paid; cp. Heb. 12:16.

In view of the future joy set before Him Christ "endured" cross, despising shame; *ὑπέμεινεν*, "endured," recalls the *ὑπομονή*, "patience," of v. 1. Christ's patient endurance is the noblest example of that patient endurance which the Christian is to practice. This patient endurance is further described as despising, utterly disregarding, shame. While keenly feeling the agony, while wrestling with shame and death until His soul was exceedingly sorrowful, not once was there the slightest unwillingness, the least impatience.

Here was that Messiah who was God, despising, laughing to scorn, holding in derision, that shame which caused His human soul to agonize and His human body to sweat great drops of blood. Marvelous endurance! A despising of shame that passes human comprehension. The two nouns "cross" and "shame" lack the article because the writer intends to stress the qualitative force of the nouns. It was cross and shame in the fullest sense of the terms. A cross was painful and shameful for a human being, and here this shame, this pain, was inflicted on the Creator and Ruler of the universe! And still for our sake He endured the Cross and disregarded shame! What a noble example for all that call themselves His followers!

"And is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." That does not mean that, after all, He is not occupying the same throne with God. Two expressions are simply combined—on the right hand of God, on the throne of God—or if one prefers, call the second phrase the explanatory genitive. While the writer uses a similar expression 8:1, compare, on the other hand, 1:3, 13; 10:12. As stated before, the $\tau\epsilon$ marks this clause as the result of the action described in the preceding clause. That same Jesus, that Son of Mary called Jesus by the angel, that truly human being, flesh of our flesh and bone of our bones, though without sin, our brother, 2:11-14, was in consequence of the patient endurance, practiced in accomplishing His work of redemption, exalted to God's throne. A human being passing from deepest humiliation, from the depths of shame, from lowest hell, to the very throne of the Most High! Truly, without controversy great is the mystery of godliness—in its nature: God is manifested in the flesh; in its unfathomableness: past comprehension; as an example: without parallel; in its efficacy: the very basis and at the same time the capstone of our salvation, our justification, our sanctification, our perfection, the Alpha and Omega of our faith and love and hope.

V.3. *"For consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."*

V.3 states the reason for the admonition to look unto Jesus, v.2. There is danger of fainting unless we look unto Jesus. The writer uses a different term for "looking unto," ἀφοράω, v.2. What is implied in the latter term is more definitely stated by the new term, which occurs only here in the New Testament, ἀναλογισασθε, to meditate, ponder, think over, denoting "comparing and reflective contemplation" (Luenemann). Scrutinize His example from all sides, weigh the circumstances under which it was exhibited, compare His sufferings and temptations with those to which you are exposed, and then consider well His exalted person, "Him that

endured." The verb refers back to the verb "endured" in v. 2 and the "patience" of v. 1. The perfect in v. 3 designates the lasting effect of His having suffered. He has completely and forever accomplished for us what He set out to do, to be the Author and Finisher of our faith as well as the perfect Example of that endurance demanded of all Christians.

Jesus has endured "contradiction," gainsaying, enmity, by word and deed; cp. Jude 11. This opposition came from "sinners." He, the righteous Son of God, the Creator, was exposed to the blasphemies of sinful man, was a sign spoken against, Luke 2:34. Cp. Mark 2:3, almost every chapter in John, and the story of His Passion. On His patience, prophesied already in Is. 50:6, 7; 53:7; etc., cp. Matt. 27:11-14; Luke 22:47-51; 23:8-11, 34. Τοιαύτην, such as this, of this kind, points back to the shame and cross of v. 2, comprising His whole life on earth. At the same time it suggests to the readers that their hardships were far inferior. Where is there a man that suffered to the extent that He suffered? Is. 53:3. And where is another man that has borne with such patience the self-assumed torment and shame? Him consider, and learn of Him patient endurance!

"Lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." The same verb is used which in James 5:15 is translated "be sick." The expression "to be sick and tired of something" fits the sense exactly. "Faint," become feeble, exhausted. To prevent weariness and exhaustion, Christians must look unto Christ not only as their example, but chiefly as the Author and Finisher of their faith, their spiritual life. Through believing contemplation and consideration of His patient endurance of shame and suffering and death they will receive willingness and strength to learn and practice endurance similar to that of Jesus, and so run with patience the race set before them.

V. 4. *"Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin."*

The implication, of course, is that Christians must be ready for hardships, persecutions, even death, if they follow Christ. The writer does not promise his readers that they will be carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease. They must seriously reckon with the possibility of bloody, painful death, and must face that possibility with a steadfast determination to endure even that if the Captain of their salvation, who was made perfect through suffering, chap. 2:10, deems it necessary in their battle against sin. The article before ἀμαρτία again may be generic, but again the specific sin of turning from Jesus to Jewry seems to be indicated. That is a serious matter. Return to the Jewish religion would be, indeed, ἀμαρτία, missing the mark, missing the goal, the end of their course, on which their feet have been set by their Savior. And sin

is a never-tiring enemy, v. 1, cunning and treacherous, 3:13, not easily conquered. Note the massing of expressions designating the fierceness of this combat with sin. Sin must be "resisted." Ἀντικατέστητε in the second aorist means to stand down (put one's foot down) in definite and determined opposition, κατά, over against, ἀντί, boldly facing the enemy, taking one's stand in spite of the scowls and threats and strength and trickery of the enemy opposing one, and that "unto blood," willing to have one's blood shed rather than yield to the enemy; and thus "striving," ἀνταγωνιζόμενοι, struggling in an ἀγών, a battle in the arena, where both contestants fight face to face, ἀντί, each exerting all his strength to vanquish the opponent and gain the victory for himself. These two verbs occur only here in the New Testament, and are purposely chosen by the writer to picture the seriousness of the conflict. The second verb recalls to our mind the agony of our great High Priest in the Garden of Gethsemane, where He fought face to face with sin unto blood. Note that the writer uses the present participle, "striving," the durative presence, describing a state, a condition. It is a lifetime battle, no quarters being given, no compromises to be made, no armistice to be agreed on; while there may be times where sin attacks with particular force, there may be times when sin seems to desist from its efforts to subdue the Christian, when it seeks to lull him into false security and suddenly in a surprise attack to outmaneuver him and to lay him low. Therefore it is necessary all the time to strive, to be on one's guard, to be ready for battle at a moment's notice.

Not yet have the readers battled unto death. Not yet have they been asked to make the supreme sacrifice, which their High Priest has a right to ask. Not yet have they suffered the death hundreds of martyrs have willingly suffered, 11:37; and already their faith is growing weak, their loyalty to Jesus waning, their heart contemplating the advisability to turn back to Judaism in order to escape the mockery, the petty persecutions and afflictions which all that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer! 2 Tim. 3:12.

Vv. 5, 6. *"And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him; for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth."*

"Ye have forgotten," ἐκλήθησθε. While the simple verb λανθάνω is quite frequently used, this composite occurs only here in the New Testament. The active form means "to cause to forget," the middle, to cause oneself to forget, the ἐκ strengthening the idea, forget completely. There seems to be in this form an implied

charge that forgetfulness is due to the readers' carelessness and neglect, particularly such complete forgetfulness of which they have been guilty.

The readers have quite forgotten the exhortation, *παράκλησις*. The Greek term denotes a calling to one's side, a summons for the purpose of instruction, admonition, encouragement, rebuke, comfort, or whatever the context suggests. Here the summons is personified, "which speaketh unto you," *διαλέγεται*, to mingle thought with thought within one's own mind or with another person, to discourse, discuss, converse. And the thoughts which are to be brought to the attention of the readers, the discussion for which they are called to God's side, have the purpose, as the context clearly shows, not only of exhortation, but include also instruction, warning, rebuke, consolation, encouragement. The summons is that of a father about to converse with his children. The writer quotes Prov. 3:11, 12, where Wisdom, the personal Wisdom of God, His Son, speaks through the wisest of all men, Solomon, 1 Kings 3:12. Cp. 1 Pet. 1:10, 11. In this age-old, yet ever-living (Heb. 4:12) word, the Son of God converses with His believers, those children given to Him by His heavenly Father (Heb. 2:13), the sons of God which He is bringing to glory (2:10), with every one individually and personally, for the salvation of every single one is a matter of deepest concern to Him who, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man (2:9). My son, so He accosts him lovingly, affectionately. "Despise thou not." *Ὀλιγορέω* means to care little for, regard lightly. "The chastening," *παιδεία*. A comparison of all the passages in which this term and its stem words occur will show that they include every form of training of children, *παιδες*, and adults, from teaching by word and example (Acts 7:22; 22:3; Rom. 2:20; Eph. 6:4; 2 Tim. 3:16; Titus 2:12) to reproof, correction of faults (2 Tim. 2:25; Heb. 12:9), inflicting chastisement (1 Cor. 11:32), and even severe penalties (Luke 23:16, 22; 1 Cor. 11:32; 2 Cor. 6:9; 1 Tim. 1:20; Heb. 12:6), where it is used parallel with *μαστιγῶω*, scourge, the same word used John 19:1 to describe the scourging of Jesus by Pilate. This chastisement, no matter what form it takes, is not to be despised by the child of God. As modern child psychologists frequently frown upon corporal punishment as a disciplinary method and deride such passages as Prov. 13:24; 23:13, 14, etc., as remnants of barbarism, so natural man hates and detests God's punitive righteousness; and even Christians are apt to underestimate the value of God's chastisement, "despise" it, do not think very highly of its merits, do not properly appreciate it. Instead of regarding it as wholesome training, they would rather be spared sorrow and tribulation, and will even be dissatisfied with God's government and accuse Him of injustice, of lack of love, of

cruelty. And many a Christian will faint, ἐκλύομαι, will grow weak and weary; his spiritual strength will flag, fade, fail. Wisdom calls a sharp yet loving halt by summoning these weakening children of God, reminding them of their high calling as God's sons, reproving their foolish dislike and hatred of God's discipline and training. Instead of criticizing God, pitting their puny understanding against God's wisdom, they ought to sit in judgment upon themselves and thank God that He "rebukes" them. The writer uses the term ἐλέγχω, to convince, convict, confute, with a suggestion of shame of a person so convicted. God sends sorrow and afflictions to His children in order to convict them of their sinfulness and unworthiness. That is a lesson every Christian needs, a truth so often forgotten, the simple lesson that we daily sin much and indeed deserve nothing but punishment. It is not cruelty, therefore, on the part of God or lack of concern for His children when He permits them to be harassed and troubled. Nor ought they on that account lose their faith in their God and Savior. No, says the writer, do not "faint, when thou art rebuked of Him; for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth." He that has given His own Son into death that they might have life, He that has through His Spirit entered into their hearts to make them His temple, He loves them and so shapes their life's path that it will surely lead them to His eternal home. He who knows that it is better to enter into eternal life halt or maimed than, having two eyes or two feet, to be cast into hellfire, He will in His great love to His child on earth remove every obstacle that might keep him from reaching the goal, no matter how precious and indispensable it may seem to the limited understanding of the believing child of God.

"He scourges every son whom He receiveth." God makes no exceptions. He has no favorites. Every child enjoys the full measure of His solicitous love. And since every child needs training, even scourging, He scourges every son, not to harm, to maltreat, to slay him. No; His purpose is to keep and preserve that child whom He has received into His arms, to keep him on the right path, the narrow way of repentance and faith, which alone leads to eternal glory. Not so much the severity of the scourging, therefore, as the lack of chastisement ought to make the Christian doubtful of his own sonship and of God's love. Cp. vv. 7, 8.

Like the readers of this Epistle, we all are in danger of disloyalty, to break our baptismal vow, renewed on the day of our confirmation. The text is *A Stirring Call to Unwearied Loyalty to Our Savior*. It tells us: (1) What is required of us: to lay aside every weight and sin; to run the race set before us with patience; untiringly to resist sin unto blood; to submit to His chastenings.

(2) What should persuade us willingly to show such loyalty to Jesus: the loyal patience of the Old Testament believers, v. 1a; chap. 11; the loyal service of Jesus in His work of redemption, vv. 2, 3; the knowledge that Jesus is the Author of our faith, enabling us to run the race, and the Finisher of our faith, who will give us the victor's crown, v. 2; the comforting exhortation, vv. 5, 6. — *Through Cross to Glory!* (1) No glory for the child of God without the cross. (The example of the Old Testament believers, v. 1; chap. 11; the example of Jesus, the incarnate Son of God, vv. 2, 3; that holds good of every child of God, vv. 4-6). (2) The cross of God's children must lead to glory. (That applies to the Old Testament believers, v. 1a; chap. 11; to the incarnate Son of God, v. 2: "joy set before Him"; "set down at right hand of God"; to all believing children of God, since Jesus, the Savior, is the Author of faith, has made God their Father, whose chastisements are evidences of His love, vv. 5, 6; and is the Finisher of faith, will lead them to their heavenly home. — *Let Us Run the Race God has Set Before Us!* Laying aside every weight, v. 1; patiently suffering its hardships, vv. 1b, 4; looking unto Jesus, our Example and Savior, vv. 2, 3; remembering God's exhortation, vv. 5, 6. — Vv. 1-3 are a very suitable text for an address to a class of confirmands. *Be You Faithful unto the End!* You are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses; your Savior went through shame to glory; this Jesus is the Author and Finisher of your faith.

THEO. LAETSCH

A Definite Need in the Field of New Testament Textual Criticism

(Paper read before the St. Louis section of the American Philological Association)

There are a number of desiderata that a person who is interested in New Testament textual criticism becomes aware of; and my caption must not be interpreted as signifying that we have arrived at that happy stage of development in this field where all difficulties have disappeared excepting one and all hands can now be summoned to dispose of this one disturbing element. Without much trouble rather many needs that should be supplied could be enumerated. This afternoon I should like to specify one of these. It is, to say it at once, a more accurate classification of the manuscripts containing the Epistles of St. Paul than we possess at present.

The most brilliant work in the field of New Testament textual criticism that was done in our generation pertained to the four Gospels. I shall make that my starting point. To understand it