

### 5.3 Analysis of Heb 12:1-13

#### 5.3.1 The internal structure of Heb 12:1-13

##### 5.3.1.1 Colon analysis

v. c.

- 1 1 Τοιγαροῦν καὶ ἡμεῖς τοσοῦτον ἔχοντες περικείμενον ἡμῖν νέφος μαρτύρων,  
ῥῶγκον ἀποθέμενοι πάντα καὶ τὴν εὐπερίστατον ἀμαρτίαν,  
xxxxxxxxxxxx  
 δι' ὑπομονῆς τρέχωμεν τὸν προκείμενον ἡμῖν ἀγῶνα
- 2 ἀφορῶντες εἰς τὸν τῆς πίστεως ἀρχηγὸν καὶ τελειωτὴν Ἰησοῦν,
- A 2 ὃς ἀντὶ τῆς προκειμένης αὐτῷ χαρᾶς ὑπέμεινεν σταυρὸν αἰσχύνης καταφρονήσας  
xxxxxxxxxxxx
- 3 ἐν δεξιᾷ τε τοῦ θρόνου τοῦ θεοῦ κεκᾶθικεν.
- 3 4 ἀναλογίσασθε γὰρ τὸν τοιαύτην ὑπομεμενηκότα ὑπὸ τῶν ἀμαρτωλῶν εἰς ἑαυτὸν ἀντιλογίαν,  
xxxxxxxxxxxxxx  
 ἵνα μὴ κάμητε ταῖς ψυχαῖς ὑμῶν ἐκλυόμενοι.
- 
- 4 5 Οὕτω μέχρις αἵματος ἀντικατέστητε  
xxxxxxxxxx  
 πρὸς τὴν ἀμαρτίαν ἀνταγωνιζόμενοι.  
xxxxxxxxxxxx
- 5 6 καὶ ἐκλέλησθε τῆς παρακλήσεως,  
 ἧτις ὑμῖν ὡς υἱοῖς διαλέγεται.
- 6.1 "υἱέ μου, μὴ ὀλιγῶρει παιδείας κυρίου  
οοοοοο
- 6.2 μηδὲ ἐκλύου  
 ὑπ' αὐτοῦ ἐλεγχόμενος.
- 6 6.3 ὃν γὰρ ἀγαπᾷ κύριος παιδεύει,
- 6.4 μαστιγοῖ δὲ πάντα υἱὸν ὃν παραδέχεται."  
οοοοοοοο
- 7 7 εἰς παιδείαν ὑπομένετε,
- 8 ὡς υἱοῖς ὑμῖν προσφέρεται ὁ θεός.  
οοοοοοοο
- 9 τίς γὰρ υἱὸς ὃν οὐ παιδεύει πατῆρ;  
οοοοοοοο
- B 8 10 εἰ δὲ χωρὶς ἐστε παιδείας

ἥς μέτοχοι γεγόνασιν πάντες,

ἄρα νόθοι καὶ οὐχ υἱοὶ ἐστε.

9 11 εἶτα τοὺς μὲν τῆς σαρκὸς ἡμῶν πατέρας εἶχομεν  
παιδευτὰς

καὶ ἐνετρεπόμεθα.

οὐ πολὺ [δὲ] μᾶλλον ὑποταγησόμεθα τῷ πατρὶ τῶν  
πνευμάτων

12 καὶ ζήσομεν;

10 13 οἱ μὲν γὰρ πρὸς ὀλίγας ἡμέρας κατὰ τὸ δοκοῦν αὐτοῖς  
ἐπαίδευσον,

14 ὁ δὲ ἐπὶ τὸ συμφέρον εἰς τὸ μεταλαβεῖν τῆς ἀγιότητος  
αὐτοῦ.

11 15 πᾶσα δὲ παιδεία πρὸς μὲν τὸ παρὸν οὐ δοκεῖ χαρᾶς  
εἶναι ἀλλὰ λύπης,

16 ὕστερον δὲ καρπὸν εἰρηνικὸν τοῖς δι' αὐτῆς  
γεγυμνασμένοις ἀποδίδωσιν δικαιοσύνης.

12 17 Διὸ τὰς παρειμένας χεῖρας καὶ τὰ παραλελυμένα γόνατα  
ἀνορθώσατέ,

A'

13 18 καὶ τροχιὰς ὀρθὰς ποιεῖτε τοῖς ποσὶν ὑμῶν,  
ἵνα μὴ τὸ χωλὸν ἐκτραπῆ, ἰαθῆ δὲ μᾶλλον.

Grammatically colon 2 is a subordinate clause to colon 1. But colon 2 is treated as a separate colon because it semantically contains independent information, that is, it has "a strong semantic valency" (A. B. du Toit 1974, 64).<sup>1</sup>

Colons 4, 6.3, 9 and 13 are connected to the preceding colons by γὰρ. They are treated as separate colons because γὰρ is here a "co-ordinating conjunction" (Blass 1961, 235).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Du Plessis, who says that "ὃς ἀντὶ is regarded as expegetical rather than supplementary" (1959, 223).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. H. C. du Toit (1977, 7), who comments that when the particle γὰρ does not function as causative, but rather as a "linking particle," the γὰρ clause is to be treated as a

### 5.3.1.2 Explication of internal structure

As indicated by the thematic markers in the Greek text, we note nine important semantic slots in our passage:

1. The markers (~~~~~) indicating that the readers are engaged in an athletic contest (a footrace or boxing).
2. The markers (xxxxxxxxxx) indicating the impediments or obstacles in the athletic game.
3. The markers (\_\_\_\_\_) indicating that the readers need perseverance in the athletic game.
4. The markers ( \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ ) indicating the bad results caused by the impediments or obstacles.
5. The markers ( , , , , , , , , , ) indicating that the perseverance of the readers must be shown in correcting these bad results.
6. The markers ( □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ ) indicating the good results when the impediments or obstacles are overcome by perseverance or the bad results are corrected by perseverance.
7. The markers (\_\_\_\_\_) indicating that impediments or obstacles are put in the way for the sake of discipline.
8. The markers ( c o r e c o r e c o ) indicating that this discipline comes from the father-son relationship.
9. The markers ( \_ . . . . ) indicating that the readers are in need of submission to this discipline, which is tantamount to perseverance.

The first semantic slot is indicated by the image of an

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separate colon.

athletic game, which was also used in 10:32-33 (ἀθλησις and θεατρίζω). Now the image of a race is in focus. The verb τρέχω explicitly describes the christian life as a race. The object of τρέχω is described as ἀγών, which may have a broader meaning including a "fight" (Louw & Nida 1988, 496), but has the meaning of "race" in this context. The verb ἀνταγωνίζομαι is used in colon 5. The verb γυμνάζω in colon 16 also evokes the training of an athlete. The verb "resist" (ἀντικαθίστημι) in colon 5 probably still has the image of an athletic game, even if "the sporting associations, if present here, would be with boxing, rather than in v. 1 with a foot race" (Ellingworth 1993, 646).

The second semantic slot is indicated by words such as ὄγκος, ἁμαρτία, σταυρός, ἀντιλογία, αἰσχύνη, αἷμα, and λύπη. For example, the noun ὄγκος means "hindrance, impediment" (Louw and Nida 1988, 165) in the race. When we consider the word ἁμαρτία in comparison with other words like σταυρός, ἀντιλογία, αἰσχύνη and αἷμα, all of which invoke the painful (cf. λύπη) situation of persecution and suffering - the meaning of the word ἁμαρτία seems close to shrinking back<sup>3</sup> or falling out of the race.

The third semantic slot is indicated by the noun ὑπομονή and its cognate verb ὑπομένω. Heb 12:1-13 as a whole picks up again the words ὑπομονή and ὑπομένω used in 10:32, 36,<sup>4</sup> and develops the theme of perseverance in connection with the theme

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. ὑποστέλλω or ὑποστολή in 10:38-39.

<sup>4</sup> Lane comments that Heb 12:1-13 "elaborates the exhortation in 10:32-39, and specifically the pastoral directive in 10:36: ὑπομονῆς γὰρ ἔχετε χρεῖαν" (1991b, 404).

of "discipline" (παιδεία). The noun ὑπομονή occurs at colon 1 and the verb ὑπομένω occurs at colons 2, 4, 7. These two words do not appear elsewhere in the epistle except in 10:32, 36. In colon 7 perseverance is explicitly linked to discipline.

The fourth semantic slot is indicated by verbs such as κάμνω (colon 4), ἐκλύομαι (colons 4, 6.2), παρίημι (colon 17) or παραλύομαι (colon 17), which describe the conditions of tiredness, exhaustion, or illness resulting from the obstacles in the race or from the simple fact of being in the race. Louw and Nida explain the idiom κάμνω τῇ ψυχῇ as meaning "to gradually lose one's motivation to accomplish some goal" (1988, 320). The noun "lame" (χλωδός) describes a similar situation in the race. If what is lame becomes worse, then it becomes "put out of joint" or "wrenched" (passive of ἐκτρέπω in colon 18). According to Louw and Nida (1988, 270-73), the words κάμνω, παραλύομαι, παρίημι, χλωδός and ἐκτρέπω are all classified under the same semantic domain, "sickness, disease, weakness." And the word ἐκλύομαι and the idiom κάμνω τῇ ψυχῇ are classified under the same semantic domain, "discouragement."

The opposite process of strengthening is expressed by the fifth semantic slot. This semantic slot is indicated by the word ἰάομαι which has the semantic domain "health, vigor, strength" (Louw 1988, 268-69) in contrast to "sickness, disease, weakness." Other expressions in this semantic slot include the word ἀνορθόω or the phrase τροχιᾶς ὀρθᾶς ποιεῖτε τοῖς ποσὶν ὑμῶν, either of which recalls the scene of a race. In the midst of so many terms evoking the image of a race, it may not be too far-fetched to see a connection between τρέχωμεν

in colon 1 and τροχιᾶς in colon 18, which occurs only here in the New Testament.<sup>5</sup>

The sixth semantic slot is indicated by words suggesting the goal or aim of the race, which include words such as χαρά, ζῶω,<sup>6</sup> or phrases such as τὸ συμφέρον, τὸ μεταλαβεῖν τῆς ἀγιδότητος, and καρπὸς εἰρηνικὸς δικαιοσύνης.

The seventh semantic slot is indicated by both the noun παιδεία and the verb παιδεύω, which are repeatedly used in Heb 12:4-13. The noun παιδεία occurs at colons 6.1, 7, 10, 15. At colon 16 the pronoun (δι') αὐτῆς refers to it. The verb παιδεύω occurs at colons 6.3, 9, 13. The derivative noun παιδευτήσ occurs at colon 11. These three words occur nowhere else in the epistle. In colons 6.2 and 6.4 the verbs ἐλέγχω and μαστιγῶ are used paratactically in the same slot as the verb παιδεύω.

The logic of the argument in Heb 12:1-13 can be described as follows:

1. The author reminds his readers of the fact that they are involved in a race of faith (12:1-3, 12-13).

2. In this race, there are impediments or obstacles to hinder their running.

3. If the readers do not overcome these impediments, there

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<sup>5</sup> Vanhoye takes this as "a sort of inclusio". He says: "In the Greek text, between the phrase 'let us run with endurance' of 12,1 and the phrase 'make the track straight for your feet' of 12,13 the connection is close, for the words 'let us run' and 'track' come from the same root. It would be appropriate to translate the second 'track for running' in order to make the inclusion clear" (1989, 30). Mere connection of the two words would not be enough to include vv. 12-13 in Heb 12:1ff., as Michel (1975a, 426) thinks, unless there were a general correspondence in the metaphor.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. 10:38.

citation.<sup>44</sup> The first major change from the LXX is to add a definite article (ὁ) to ἐρχόμενος which represents the absolute infinitive ἔρχομαι. This change indicates that "he who is coming" is a person, not a vision as in the MT. And as explained above, by employing the technical use of ὁ ἐρχόμενος as a messianic title, the whole event is put in the setting of the second coming of Christ. This is further strengthened by the change of the tense of the verb χρονίζω from the subjunctive to the future.

The second major change is to transpose the order of the sentences of Hab 2:4. Once our author has made ὁ ἐρχόμενος refer to the Messiah, by the transposition he makes sure that not the Messiah but the righteous one is the one who "shrinks back" (ὑποστέλλω). While transposing the order, our author inserts an adversative particle "but" (καὶ) "effectively separating the antithetical clauses of Hab 2:4" and thus presenting "alternative modes of behavior in a period marked by stress and hostility" (Lane 1991b, 305). When we look at the application of this citation to the readers in v. 39,<sup>45</sup> this change seems to be designed and prepared by the author.

Another important point to note is the position of the pronoun "my" (μου).<sup>46</sup> Some manuscripts of LXX have "my

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<sup>44</sup> A detailed discussion about the changes our author made in relation to both the LXX and the MT can be found in Attridge (1989, 301-4); also see Thomas (1964-65, 316); McCullough (1979-80, 376-77).

<sup>45</sup> Cf. "we are not of those who shrink back" (ἡμεῖς οὐκ ἐσμὲν ὑποστολής).

<sup>46</sup> See Bruce (1992, 33-34) who compares the external supports for each variant and gives a good discussion on textual problems; cf. Cadwallader (1992, 283).

righteous one" as in Hebrews, but others have "my faithfulness." In Hebrews "my righteous one" has better external support (Metzger 1975, 670-71) and that reading is in agreement with the application of this citation to both the readers and the author in v. 39.

His argument goes as follows: "He who is coming will come and will not delay" (10:37). The Messiah's coming is certain (God will be faithful in fulfilling his promise), but until he comes there still remains the period requiring *πίστις* and *ὑπομονή* (now the Christians must show the same faithfulness). During that period the righteous one will persevere by *πίστις* and consequently gain the promised eschatological life. If he "shrinks back," he will lose life. The same principle also applies to the readers (v. 39).<sup>47</sup> So on the basis of and by means of *πίστις* steadfastness, faithfulness, or faithful perseverance (cf. German "Treue") of God's righteous people becomes possible. In that sense the outworking of *πίστις* in real life, which can be called faithfulness or steadfastness, may be implied in the meaning of *πίστις*.<sup>48</sup> This extended

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<sup>47</sup> Käsemann comments: "Wie der Glaube seinen eigentlichen Charakter im Durchhalten findet, so die Sünde den ihren im Nachlassen; wie *ὑπομονή* das eschatologisch ausgerichtete Verharren unter irdischer Belastung ist, so weicht die *ὑποστολή* dieser Belastung aus und führt so zu lässigen Händen und weichgewordenen Knien" (1961, 25).

<sup>48</sup> When Thompson comments: "*Πίστις* means steadfastness. It is thus closely related to *ὑπομονή* and *παρρησία*, signifying the steadfastness of the one who, despite suffering and disappointment, maintains his orientation toward God" (1982, 68), he slightly overstates. *Πίστις* may imply steadfastness, but is not identical with steadfastness. The relationship between *πίστις* and *ὑπομονή* will be closely examined when we study chap. 11. Note that faith here is not without christological content. If *ὁ ἐρχόμενος* is not coming, all our endurance is in vain. He who has come to deal with our sin



this passage as follows: "We are involved in the race of faith in which there are impediments. The way to overcome these impediments is to persevere by looking at Jesus, the supreme model of perseverance, and by accepting the suffering inherent in overcoming the impediments as discipline from the loving heavenly Father. If we persevere, we will produce good results and ultimately receive life."

### 5.3.2 Exegetical remarks

#### 5.3.2.1 Heb 12:1-3

The explicit call to persevere in 12:1 can be seen as a continuation of the implicit call in 10:36. But our author knows well that this perseverance is possible only on the basis of faith, which was illustrated by the men of old in chap. 11. Therefore, even if chap. 11 superficially seems to be an interruption of the theme of perseverance, it actually prepares for the call to perseverance in 12:1-3, which is based on the perfect model<sup>8</sup> of perseverance, that of Jesus,<sup>9</sup> who is "the initiator and perfecter of faith" (ἀρχηγὸς καὶ τελειωτῆς τῆς

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. Schrage's comment: "Despite Jesus' soteriological uniqueness, which makes him strictly beyond emulation ... we may speak of a paradigmatic ethics in which Christ serves as the true model" (1988, 324-25).

<sup>9</sup> See McGrath (1991, 289-98) who properly cautions about "exemplarism" in which Jesus is seen as a moral example. He points out that "ethical exhortations are grounded in the Christological insights in that Christology provides both the presuppositions of the Christian existential situation and the pattern for his conduct" (1991, 297). This aspect is further dealt with in the excursus on "faith of Jesus" below.

πίστεως). The faith of Jesus,<sup>10</sup> which can be seen as the climax of the faith of the ancients, is the basis for Jesus' perseverance. Enduring the cross was the result of his obedient act of faith, so the readers are exhorted to share the same faith as that of the ancients and Jesus and consequently to show the same perseverance that they showed by their faith in the midst of sufferings and persecutions.

The first two verses were considered to display a chiasmic structure and as such have been subjected to a detailed analysis. Horning (1983, 113; cf. 1978, 41) first recognized a chiasmic structure in Heb 12:1-2 and presented it as follows:

- Τοιγαροῦν καὶ ἡμεῖς,
- A τοσοῦτον ἔχοντες περικείμενον ἡμῖν νέφος μαρτύρων,
- B ὄγκον ἀποθέμενοι πάντα καὶ τὴν εὐπερίστατον ἁμαρτίαν,
- C δι' ὑπομονῆς
- D τρέχωμεν τὸν προκείμενον ἡμῖν ἀγῶνα,
- E ἀφορῶντες εἰς τὸν τῆς πίστεως ἀρχηγὸν καὶ τελειωτὴν Ἰησοῦν,
- D' ὃς ἀντὶ τῆς προκειμένης αὐτῷ χαρᾶς
- C' ὑπέμεινε σταυρὸν
- B' ἀισχύνης καταφρονήσας,
- A' ἐν δεξιᾷ τε τοῦ θρόνου τοῦ θεοῦ κεκάθικεν.

We can note that this analysis is forced in several ways. Specifically parallels in words can be found only in C-C' and

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<sup>10</sup> In Hebrews there is no controversy over how "the faith of Jesus Christ" is to be construed as in Paul (cf. Rom 3:22, 26; Gal 2:16, 20; 3:22, 26; Phil 3:9). The faith of Jesus means the faith that Jesus had and that the readers should imitate. But as we will see later in an excursus, the redemptive significance of Jesus as the author and source of salvation (2:10; 5:9) cannot be ruled out; for a good discussion of this problem, see du Plessis (1959, 222-27).

D-D'. But as D. A. Black pointed out, "by stressing the conceptual parallels ... it is possible to treat the verses as a case of loosely organized chiasmus" (1987a, 546). Although it is difficult to accept this analysis of vv. 1-2 as a chiasmus in the strict sense of the word, we can nevertheless note some elements of a chiasmus and especially that there is a definite shift of focus at E<sup>11</sup> from ἡμεῖς (A-D) to Ἰησοῦς (D'-A'), emphasizing the role of Jesus. This structure makes plain that the readers are exhorted<sup>12</sup> to imitate the faith of Jesus demonstrated especially in his death on the cross. Horning rightly concludes her study with these words (1978, 46):

Both the structure and vocabulary of our text [Heb 12:1-2] require that we see discipleship in terms of imitation of Jesus or following in his steps... We are called to accept hostility and shame (12:3 and 13:13), perhaps even suffering and death as the price of obedience - not passively, but in actively running the race set before us, persevering in following the pioneer and forerunner,<sup>13</sup> Jesus Christ.

Horning's attempt to classify v. 2b (colons 2, 3) as a credal formula is unconvincing because the evidence is not "as impressive as that for a passage such as Phil 2,6-11" (D. A. Black 1987a, 549). Therefore, D. A. Black modestly concludes that "perhaps Heb 12,2b is best termed confessional poetry, hence hymnic in the general sense, though not a 'hymn' in the more precise sense" (1987a, 550).

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<sup>11</sup> Because E does not have its corresponding part E', the precise name for this kind of structure would rather be a "palindrome" instead of "chiasmus."

<sup>12</sup> Vv. 1-2 form a single sentence whose main verb is a hortative subjunctive, *τρέχωμεν*. This fact underscores the paraenetic nature of vv. 1-2.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. ἀρχηγός in 2:10 and 12:2; also πρόδρομος in 6:20.

"Therefore" (τοιγαροῦν) shows that v. 1 is based on and inferred from what has been said in chap. 11. Therefore we expect in Heb 12:1-3 the same thrust of argument as in chap. 11. The participle ἔχοντες gives the motivation to run the race with perseverance by pointing out what the readers currently have.<sup>14</sup> Using the graphic imagery of a race in a stadium the author directly relates the readers (ἡμεῖς; ἡμῖν) to the men of faith presented in chap. 11 (νέφος μαρτύρων).

The reference to "witnesses" here recalls the participle μαρτυρηθέντες in 11:39.<sup>15</sup> So these witnesses can be considered to be those who were attested by God because of their faithful endurance and now in turn became witnesses to God. Following this line of thought, Lane argues that "the emphasis in v. 1 thus falls on what Christians see in the host of witnesses rather than on what they see in Christians" (1991b, 408). With this understanding the term μαρτύς may be on the way of gaining the later technical sense of martyr who dies for the faith.

But the race imagery in the stadium along with the word "surrounding" (περικείμενον) suggests that the witnesses are those who finished their race and now watch the readers' struggle for victory in the stadium.<sup>16</sup> In this case μάρτυς may simply mean "spectator." This understanding fits with the immediate context, but in view of the author's literary skills the former understanding cannot be excluded. Pfitzner may be right in commenting as follows: "[μάρτυς] has a double meaning

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<sup>14</sup> Cf. 4:14; 10:19; also 4:15, 6:19; 8:1; 13:10.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. 11:2, 4 (twice), 5, 39.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. 4 Macc 17:10-18 in the context of martyrdom.

in 12:1. The 'witnesses' are those who (11:32-38) have already finished the course of faith, and who are now spectators of the Agon of the Christians" (1967, 196).

The second participial clause in v. 1 is concerned about the preparation for the race. To run the race it is necessary first to "throw off" (*ἀποτίθεται*) every "burden" (*ὄγκος*). Both terms can have a literal or metaphorical meaning. This "burden" is interpreted (*καί* as *epexegetic*) in terms of "sin" (*ἁμαρτία*) which may be "a general reference to the moral impediments to running the race of Christian life" (Attridge 1989, 355). Of course, the sin of "shrinking back"<sup>17</sup> is included here and may be the primary sin in the author's mind in view of the reference to "struggle against sin," which might involve martyrdom (12:4).<sup>18</sup>

The word *εὐπερίστατος*, which is a biblical hapax,<sup>19</sup> modifies *ἁμαρτία*, but its meaning is uncertain. There are many suggestions, but most of them scarcely fit the context. Most likely it should be taken actively, meaning "easily surrounding" (Ellingworth 1993, 638) or "easily besetting"

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<sup>17</sup> Cf. 10:37-39; also see 3:12-19; 11:25; 13:9.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Minear, who characterizes "the sin that so easily entangles" as "whatever leads runners not to 'run with perseverance' this particular race ... whatever induces weariness and faintheartedness ... whatever leads them to fear disgrace rather than to despise it ... dread of the hostility that is turned against these runners ... dread of that discipline which involves pain and even bloodshed" (1981, 145).

<sup>19</sup> Braun notes that this word is "nicht belegbar vor Hb" (1984, 403).

(Zerwick 1981, 684).<sup>20</sup>

The main clause is given only after two participial phrases and will be followed by another participial phrase. The main verb is *τρέχω* and the main object is *ἀγών*. The hortative subjunctive *τρέχωμεν* shows the paraenetic intention of the author. In this image of a race, the author is specifically interested in "the possibility of success or failure, of reaching or failing to reach the goal (see Heb 2:1-4; 4:1, 11; 6:4-6; 10:26-31)" (Ellingworth 1993, 639). By beginning the main clause with the phrase *δι' ὑπομονῆς*,<sup>21</sup> "the conception of 'patient endurance' ... is both syntactically and semantically foregrounded" (D. A. Black 1987a, 545). D. A. Black (1987a, 545) comments aptly as follows:

Without such endurance and determination, no athlete can expect to win the prize of eternal life. As in 10,36, the stress falls upon the readers' need, a fact which fits in well with the background of the writer's fear for his readers.

This emphasis on *ὑπομονή* also suggests that this race is "more marathon than short sprint"<sup>22</sup> (Attridge 1989, 355).

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<sup>20</sup> Similarly, "haftet leicht an" suggested by Michel (1975a, 429) or "leicht bestrickend" by Braun (1984, 403); Rienecker suggests that "the picture here may be that of putting off a long heavy robe which would be a hindrance in running" (1982, 713).

<sup>21</sup> This phrase *δι' ὑπομονῆς* points forward to the endurance of Jesus (*ὑπομένω* in colons 2, 4) and the following paraenesis in vv. 4-11 (*ὑπομένω* in colon 7).

<sup>22</sup> Similarly, Gräßer: "Kennzeichnend für die zugrunde liegende Vorstellung von Pistis ist es, daß Hb bei der Wettkampf-Metapher gar nicht an der nächstliegenden Schnelligkeit, der Leichtigkeit und Plötzlichkeit gelegen ist, mit der ein guter Sprinter die Bahn abrennt. Eher ist das Bild des Marathon-läufers leitend! Es geht Hb um die Beharrlichkeit des Laufens" (1965, 57-58).

This race is expressed by the term ἀγών,<sup>23</sup> which may have a broader meaning of any "athletic contest"<sup>24</sup> or even a broader meaning of any "contest" or "fight." The image of an athletic contest of suffering in persecution, already expressed in 10:32-33, becomes more specific as a footrace in our context. The fact that the race is "lying before us" (προκειμένον ἡμῖν) reminds the readers that they are in this race for the rewarding goal. Indeed, the same word "πρόκειμαι" is used in v. 2 to describe the goal (χαρά) for which Jesus endured the cross. The race and its goal cannot be separated. Where there is a race, there is also a goal. When this goal is worthy and rewarding, "not only supreme effort but also supreme renunciation are demanded" (Ringwald 1975, 647).

V. 2 introduces Jesus, the supreme example or model whom the readers should "fix their eyes on" (ἀφορᾶω),<sup>25</sup> while the reason why Jesus is such an example is given in colons 2-4. Here the readers are required to look toward Jesus in addition to throwing off their burdens. The theme of "running the race

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<sup>23</sup> This word occurs frequently in 4 Macc to describe the suffering of martyrs along with the imagery of the stadium (4 Macc 11:20; 13:15; 15:29; 16:16; 17:11; cf. ἀγωνίζομαι in 2 Macc 13:14; 4 Macc 17:13). Note the following aspects in these writings: "the use of the athletic metaphor with emphasis on the struggle (agōn), an emphasis on endurance (hypomonē) for God's sake, and an understanding of the redemptive value of suffering for others" (Horning 1978, 45).

<sup>24</sup> In Paul, 1 Cor 9:24-27; Gal 2:2; 5:7; Phil 1:30; 2:16; 3:12-14; Col 2:1; 1 Thess 2:2; 1 Tim 6:12; 2 Tim 2:5; 4:7. Also see Pfitzner (1967).

<sup>25</sup> Cf. 4 Macc 17:10: "They vindicated their race looking unto God and enduring torments even unto death" (οἱ καὶ ἐξεδίκησαν τὸ γένος εἰς θεὸν ἀφορῶντες καὶ μέχρι θανάτου τὰς βασάνους ὑπομείναντες) (Charlesworth 1985, 562); also 4 Macc 17:23 for ὑπομονή (used twice) of the martyrs.

with perseverance" is highlighted by focusing on Jesus, who is the supreme example of perseverance. That is, the main verb is *τρέχωμεν*, but as we have seen above, the center of the loosely chiasmic structure is the historical Jesus,<sup>26</sup> "who is emphasized as the focal element of the discourse" (D. A. Black 1987a, 546).

This Jesus is called *ἀρχηγός καὶ τελειωτῆς τῆς πίστεως* in v. 2. As we have seen, the term *ἀρχηγός*<sup>27</sup> appeared once in 2:10. There the context suggests that *ἀρχηγός* is the one who leads many sons to glory. In other words, it can mean a "leader" or "forerunner."<sup>28</sup> When we consider the fact that the same word is used in the context of the racing metaphor, *ἀρχηγός* in v. 2 may have similar meanings. The word "leader" or "forerunner" respectively presupposes those who are led by the leader or those who will follow the forerunner. In this way, Jesus as *ἀρχηγός* becomes the model of faith which his followers should imitate.

There are two aspects of becoming a model. One is the similarity of Jesus' faith to his followers' faith. This similarity consists in the fact that the faith of both Jesus (12:2-3) and his followers (12:1; 10:36) must be demonstrated in perseverance. The other is the dissimilarity of Jesus' faith to that of his followers. This dissimilarity consists in "der

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<sup>26</sup> The proper name *Ἰησοῦς* is typically used to emphasize the human aspect of Jesus' experience such as suffering and death (cf. 2:9; 10:10, 19; 13:12).

<sup>27</sup> For further details on this word, see Johnston (1981, 381-85) and Scott (1986, 47-54).

<sup>28</sup> Cf. *πρόδρομος* in 6:20.



singulären Form und Intensität seines Glaubens, die aus der singulären Aufgabe Jesu resultiert, den Menschen als Hoherpriester das eschatologische Heil Gottes zu vermitteln" (Söding 1991, 231).

The pairing of this word with *τελειωτής* (*ἀρχ-* vs. *τελ-*), however, suggests a meaning of an "initiator" or "founder."<sup>29</sup> This meaning also fits the context of the racing metaphor. Jesus is the initiator of faith in the sense that he is the first one who begins and completes the faith-race. Here the initiator is inseparably connected to the perfecter. Only because Jesus is the perfecter of faith can he also be called the initiator of faith.

What does our author mean by *τελειωτής*? This is well explained in 12:2b (colons 2-3). Jesus is the perfecter of faith because 1) he proved his faith by enduring even the cross and thus has achieved the goal of the faith-race which is the session at the right hand of God's throne;<sup>30</sup> 2) he confirms that God is indeed faithful in keeping his promises;<sup>31</sup> and 3) consequently he is able to lead his followers to glory.<sup>32</sup> Only as the perfecter of faith is Jesus the initiator or founder of faith.

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<sup>29</sup> Cf. *ἀίτιος* in 5:9.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Lührmann, who wrongly limits the meaning of perfecter to "the only one who has reached the goal of the way" and now serves as "the model" (1992, 756).

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Huxhold, who comments: "He [Jesus] has proved the faithfulness of the Father" (1967, 660).

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Michel, who comments: "He [Jesus] has been made perfect by God and can now bring the struggle for perfection [of believers] to its conclusion" (1975b, 604).

Attridge summarizes as follows: "It is precisely as the one who perfectly embodies faith that he serves as the ground of its possibility in others (ἀρχηγός-αἴτιος) and the model they are to follow (ἀρχηγός-πρόδρομος)" (1989, 357). Söding also similarly concludes: "Jesus ist also nicht nur Vorbild des Glaubens, sondern als Anführer zugleich der Urheber des Glaubens, der Glauben ermöglicht, indem er den Weg zu Gott öffnet" (1991, 232).<sup>33</sup>

Colons 2-3 are devoted to describing what Jesus has done to become ἀρχηγός καὶ τελειωτής τῆς πίστεως. What Jesus has done is exemplary because his life and death demonstrate the typical pattern of the faith-race, consisting of both humiliation and exaltation. "God's election of 'suffering' as an appropriate way to glory is shown nowhere more clearly than in the prototypical life of 'the pioneer'" (G. Hughes 1979, 83-84).

An analysis of the structure of colons 2-3 will help us decide what ἀντί and χάρα mean. Theron suggests the following structure (1984, 204):

(victory-1)	"For the sake of the joy ahead of Him (as of the victor's laurel),	
(suffering-1)	He endured	a cross
(suffering-2)	and shame	having despised
(victory-2)	on the right hand of God sat down (now a "heavenly patron")	

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<sup>33</sup> Cf. Cullmann's comment that 12:2 means "both that Jesus himself believed and that he brought men to faith in his work" (1963, 98).

Some<sup>34</sup> have tried to understand the preposition *ἀντί* as "instead of," then interpreted *χαρά* to be "either the joy of his heavenly status or the joy that he might have had on earth" (Attridge 1989, 357). But in view of the above structural analysis the preposition *ἀντί* should rather be understood as "for" or "for the sake of." Not only does the same preposition have this meaning in 12:16, but this understanding has its parallel in Moses' faith. Moses "regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward" (11:26). The phrase "lying before him" (*προκειμένης αὐτῷ*) also supports this understanding.<sup>35</sup>

Thus *χαρά* is to be understood as the goal or prize of the faith-race, as Theron compared it to "the victor's laurel." Commenting on the "race" metaphor and the chiasm of colons 2-3, Theron rightly points out that "joy/race 'set before' are part of the metaphor; and in the chiasmus: 'joy'='session'<sup>36</sup> and 'cross'='shame'" (1984, 207).

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<sup>34</sup> Cf. Johansson (1979, 61); Lane (1991b, 399-400); also see footnote 117 in P. E. Hughes (1977, 523-24).

<sup>35</sup> Morrice calls "joy" in v. 2 "eschatological joy" because it indicates "the prospect of resuming that position of honour and power that had been his before the incarnation" which "was fulfilled in his exaltation." This joy is to be considered as "the reward of faithful service upon earth and of obedience to the Father's will even to death" (1984, 89-90, 136); cf. 10:34, where the readers accepted the confiscation of their property with "joy" in view of a better and lasting possession, or 13:17, where the leaders are urged to do their work with "joy" in view of the day of reckoning.

<sup>36</sup> Gräßer similarly understood "'die vor ihm liegende Freude' als *τέλος* seines Weges, d.i. die *sessio ad dexteram*" (1965, 58). Also Michel takes "die Freude" as "die seinem Leiden folgende Erhöhung" (1975a, 435).

So Jesus endured the cross for the joy set before him. By relating the cross specifically to "shame" (*αἰσχύνη*), the author reminds the readers of the shame they also must endure.<sup>37</sup> Jesus "scorned," "despised" or "disregarded" (*καταφρονέω*)<sup>38</sup> the shame and the readers are implicitly called to do the same. This call will be made more explicit in v. 3.

The allusion to Ps 110:1 is unique in that the perfect tense (*κεκῶθικεν*) is used in contrast to the aorist tense (*ἐκῶθισεν*) in other instances (1:3; 8:1; 10:12). This is probably because the author wants to make "an emphatic affirmation of the permanent triumph of Christ, and thus perhaps by implication of the permanent effects of that triumph for believers" (Ellingworth 1993, 642). Indeed, "the session at the right hand is the guarantee of the absoluteness of Christ's exaltation and the utter security of those who have placed their hope in him" (Lane 1991b, 415).

Before going over to the analysis of v. 3, the textual problem surrounding the pronoun *ἐαυτῶν* must be discussed. The UBS text has *ἐαυτῶν* in its text, but assigns it only a D rating, which indicates that the reading is very doubtful. Metzger explains in his textual commentary as follows (1975, 675):

Although external evidence strongly favors either *εἰς ἐαυτοῦς* (*κ\** *D<sup>97\*</sup>* *syr<sup>p</sup>* *Ephraem*) or *εἰς αὐτοῦς* (*p<sup>13,46</sup>* *κ<sup>b</sup>* *Ψ<sup>c</sup>* 048 33 1739\* *Origen al*), the difficulty of making sense of the

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<sup>37</sup> Cf. 10:32-34; 13:13.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. 4 Macc 6:9; 8:28; 13:1; 14:11; 16:2. For example, 4 Macc 6:9 describes Eleazar using similar terms: "But he suffered the torment and scorned the compulsion" (*ὁ δὲ ὑπέμεινε τοῦς πόνους καὶ περιεφρόνει τῆς ἀνάγκης*) (Charlesworth 1985, 551).

plural led a majority of the Committee to prefer the singular number, choosing εἰς ἑαυτὸν as the least inadequately supported reading (A P 104 326 1241 John-Damascus).

Some commentators, such as Westcott (1892, 397-98) or Montefiore (1964, 216), accept the externally better-attested plural reading as original. Also Ellingworth defended the plural reading by arguing that "sense can be made of the plural if, and only if, it is seen as a verbal allusion to the LXX of Num. 17.3" (1978, 90). In his textual commentary, Metzger presents in brackets A. Wikgren's motivation for accepting the plural reading (1975, 675): "The plural is the qualitatively best supported and the more difficult (though meaningful) reading, and the one more likely to be altered."<sup>39</sup>

However, the notion that the sinners bring about their own destruction or harm themselves is not in harmony with the context; therefore the plural reading is to be rejected.<sup>40</sup> Nestle-Aland has ἑαυτὸν in its text, and if we follow this reading, v. 3 can be translated as "consider him who endured ... such hostility against himself ..." (RSV), which is the most common understanding of the text.

The inferential particle γάρ in v. 3 shows its close link with v. 2. The readers are called not only to "fix their eyes on" (ἀφορᾶω) Jesus, but also to "consider" (ἀναλογίζομαι)<sup>41</sup> his

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<sup>39</sup> Braun also suggests that the singular reading "ist die einzig sinnvolle Lesart, aber so schlecht bezeugt, daß sie nicht alt, sondern Korrektur der älteren sinnlosen, also verderbten Lesart ... sein wird" (1984, 407).

<sup>40</sup> See Bruce (1992, 37).

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Michel's comment: "Während ἀφορᾶν in 12:2 durch das Bild begründet ist, kann ἀναλογίζεσθαι geradezu meditativ verstanden werden" (1975b, 436).

"perseverance" (ὑπομένω) (in both v. 2 and v. 3)<sup>42</sup> when under suffering and persecution (cf. v. 4) and consequently to follow his example in their response.

The focus in v. 3 is still on the perseverance of Jesus, but by changing what he persevered from the cross to such "opposition" (ἀντιλογία) from sinful men the author begins to address the readers' situation under pressure and hostility.<sup>43</sup> This is confirmed by the following ἵνα clause (cf. another ἵνα clause in v. 13). The reason why the readers must consider Jesus is in order not to "grow weary" (κάμνω τῇ ψυχῇ) and "lose heart" (ἐκλύομαι). The word ἐκλύομαι seems to remind the author of Prov 3:11, where the same word is used. "The formulation μὴ...ἐκλυόμενοι in v. 3b anticipates the Scriptural mandate, 'do not lose heart' (μηδὲ ἐκλύου), in v. 5 as well as the challenge expressed metaphorically in vv. 12-13" (Lane 1991b, 417).

#### 5.3.2.2 Heb 12:4-11

In v. 4 the athletic imagery is changed from racing to boxing or wrestling.<sup>44</sup> Both the words "resist" (ἀντικαθίστημι) and "struggle against" (ἀνταγωνίζομαι)<sup>45</sup> presuppose an

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<sup>42</sup> Cf. P. E. Hughes' comment: "The perfect participle ὑπομεμενηκότα suggests the abiding effect of Christ's redemptive suffering" (1977, 526).

<sup>43</sup> Cf. 10:32-34; 13:13-14.

<sup>44</sup> P. E. Hughes notes a similar mixing of both racing and boxing metaphors in 1 Cor 9:24-26 (1977, 527).

<sup>45</sup> Cf. καταγωνίζομαι in 11:33; ἀγών in v 1; also 4 Macc 17:14, where Antiochus IV Epiphanes is described as an adversary to martyrs: "The tyrant was the adversary" (ὁ τύραννος ἀντιγωνίζετο) (Charlesworth 1985, 562).

opponent<sup>46</sup> as in boxing or wrestling. As was the case with the racing metaphor, the impediment is called "sin" (ἁμαρτία) (v. 4; cf. v. 1). The sin is some kind of impersonal impediment in the race or a human opponent in boxing.<sup>47</sup> In this context, this sin seems related to the statement that they have not resisted "unto blood" (μέχρις αἵματος).<sup>48</sup>

Within the context the readers are rebuked because they do not exert all their efforts in the struggle with sin and "grow weary and lose heart" (v. 3). But there is probably more to it. Pfitzner rightly comments: "Heb 10:32ff. speaks of suffering, exposures, abuse and loss of property, but does not suggest that any of the faithful have as yet suffered death for the faith. This is probably how we should also understand Hebr 12:4" (1967, 196). That is, the readers did not face martyrdom yet,<sup>49</sup> but the author seems to anticipate it and to want to prepare his readers for it. In v. 4 "the author braces the addressees for what their imitation of Christ's endurance might

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<sup>46</sup> Cf. Ellingworth who comments that the word "resist" (ἀντικαθίστημι) "recalls the ἀντιλογία of Jesus' enemies (v. 3)" (1993, 645).

<sup>47</sup> In view of the personification of sin as an opponent, Michel takes ἁμαρτία as a reference to "eine der Gemeinde gegenüberstehende feindliche Macht" (1975a, 437).

<sup>48</sup> Ellingworth, who thinks that "the author of Hebrews looks ... through the glass of the Maccabean narratives" (1993, 612), comments that "the allusion to Judas Maccabaeus in 2 Macc. 13:14 - παρακαλέσας τοὺς σὺν αὐτῷ γωνναίως ἀγωνίσασθαι μέχρι θανάτου - is unmistakable" (1993, 645); also see μέχρι θανάτου in 4 Macc 17:10; Phil 2:8; Rev 12:11.

<sup>49</sup> Based on 13:7, some maintain that earlier leaders experienced martyrdom. This possibility cannot be summarily dismissed because of the ambiguity of the word ἔκβασις. This word may point to their faithfulness to the end of their lives which could have been expressed by martyrdom.

ultimately involve" (Attridge 1989, 360). This purpose of the author to brace the readers for martyrdom is achieved by reminding of Jesus' endurance of the cross in mentioning *μέχρις αἵματος*.

In v. 5 the author wants to strengthen the readers' resolve to resist even unto blood. As he exhorted them to "fix their eyes on" (*ἀφοράω*) Jesus (v. 2) and to "consider" (*ἀναλογίζομαι*) Jesus (v. 3), now the author exhorts them not to "forget" (*ἐκλανθάνομαι*)<sup>50</sup> "the encouraging exhortation" (*παράκλησις*) (cf. 6:18; 13:22; also 3:13 for the verb). Here we can catch a note of rebuke, as in v. 4, that the readers have forgotten something important.

This important *παράκλησις* is the citation of Scripture. The reason why this citation of Prov 3:11-12 is such an encouragement for the readers originates from the fact that Scripture itself "addresses" (*διαλέγομαι*) the readers "as sons" (*ὡς υἱοῖς*). This citation again confirms what has been said about sonship. Sonship is not incompatible with suffering;<sup>51</sup> it rather involves suffering as an inherent and necessary part. By citing and explaining Scripture, the author wants to justify<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Note the recurring words related to remembering or forgetting: *ἀναμιμνήσκομαι* (10:32), *ἐπιλανθάνομαι* (13:2, 16), *μιμνήσκομαι* (13:3), and *μνημονεύω* (13:7).

<sup>51</sup> Cf. 2:5-18; 5:8.

<sup>52</sup> Bornkamm (1960, 195-98), by viewing this relationship between sonship and suffering only from the christological perspective, downplays the role of the problem of theodicy which underlies the citation of Prov 3:11-12. Michel points out: "Das Auftauchen des Verknüpfungsbegriffes 'Sohn' (*υἱός* 2:10; *τὰ παιδία* 2:13) ... ist aber in unserem Zusammenhang rational und im Sinn der Weisheit, nicht christologisch, durchgeformt. Und doch wirkt natürlich die Erniedrigung des Menschensohnes 2:5-18 nach" (1975a, 426). Lane comments: "the



the sufferings which the readers have been undergoing (10:32-34) and probably will undergo in a more intense manner (12:4). He wants to strengthen their resolve to persevere in the midst of sufferings and persecutions by viewing their situation from the fresh perspective of παιδεία.<sup>53</sup> Sufferings as "discipline" or "correction" by the loving God are an indisputable proof of their sonship. As Michel points out, "'Sohnschaft' und 'Züchtigung' werden ... als von Gott gewollter Erziehungsprozeß angesehen" (1975a, 426).

The citation itself is from the LXX with little variation. The addition of μου is a natural one and makes the citation more personal.<sup>54</sup> In colons 6.1 and 6.2 both directives ("do not make light of" [μη̄ ὀλιγώρει] and "do not lose heart" [μη̄ δὲ ἐκλύου]) are intended to call the readers to the proper response to God's discipline. They seem to be insensitive not only to what God says in words,<sup>55</sup> but also to what God says through their sufferings. It seems that they did not reflect on what was the divine purpose in all that they were experiencing. Because they cannot grasp what is God's intention in the midst of sufferings and persecutions, the readers consequently lose heart. So the author is saying that by reflecting and comprehending the intention of God's discipline the readers

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problem of theodicy finds in christology the eschatological beginning of a solution, but no more than a beginning" (Lane 1991b, 419).

<sup>53</sup> Cf. 2 Macc 6:12-17 (note οὐκ ἐγκαταλείπει in 2 Macc 6:16; also οὐ μή σε ἐγκαταλίπω in Heb 13:5); 1 Cor 11:32; 2 Cor 6:9; Eph 6:4; Rev 3:19.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. Thomas (1964-65, 317); McCullough (1979-80, 377-78).

<sup>55</sup> Cf. 2:1; 5:11; 12:25.

should not "lose heart" (ἐκλύομαι).<sup>56</sup>

In colon 6.2 the noun παιδεία is specifically defined by the passive of the verb "rebuke" or "reproach" (ἐλέγχω).<sup>57</sup> And in colon 6.4 once more the verb παιδεύω is defined by another verb, "scourge" or "punish" (μαστιγῶ). In both cases, παιδεία certainly includes unpleasant elements (cf. λύπη in colon 15). But these unpleasant elements are not really negative because they are rather proof of God's love and acceptance.<sup>58</sup> This truth is formally emphasized by the chiastic form of Prov 3:12 in colons 6.3-6.4, as given in Lane (1991b, 421) as follows:

ὃν γὰρ ἀγαπᾷ "the one whom he loves"	κύριος παιδεύει "the Lord disciplines"
μαστιγοῖ δὲ "and scourges"	πάντα υἱὸν ὃν παραδέχεται "every son whom he receives favorably."

The readers were encouraged to persevere in following the examples of faith in chap. 11 because those exemplars of faith received God's attestation (11:2, 39). Here the readers are encouraged to persevere in sufferings and persecutions because these unpleasant elements are the demonstration of God's acknowledgment of them as his sons.

In vv. 7-8 the author explains the implications of the citation. First, he applies the citation directly to the readers. "Endure hardship as discipline" (εἰς παιδείαν

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<sup>56</sup> Cf. v. 3; also vv. 12-13.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. Rev 3:19: "Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline" (ἐγὼ ὅσους ἐὰν φιλῶ ἐλέγχω καὶ παιδεύω).

<sup>58</sup> Cf. ἀγαπάω in colon 6.3 and παραδέχομαι in colon 6.4; Ellingworth notes that "the emphatic παραδέχεται ... relates the quotation to the author's wider purpose of ensuring that the readers will remain faithful to the end, thus be (finally) 'received' by God" (1993, 649).

ὑπομένετε) (colon 7). The purpose ("as" or "for" [εἰς]) of enduring hardship is discipline. By linking παιδεία to ὑπομένω<sup>59</sup> the author effectively relates vv. 1-3 to vv. 4-11. Even though vv. 4-11 is not based on christology, the word ὑπομένω invokes the picture of Jesus' perseverance.<sup>60</sup>

The author continues to explain his application in colons 8-10. If the readers are under discipline, God "is treating" (προσφέρεται) them "as sons" (ὡς υἱοῖς).<sup>61</sup> This is evident from the natural father-son relationship: "For what son is not disciplined by his father?" (colon 9). The phrase οὐ παιδεύει in colon 9 is rephrased as χωρίς παιδείας in colon 10. And τίς in colon 9 is expanded by the clause ἧς μέτοχοι γεγόνασιν πάντες in colon 10. So in its content, colon 10 almost repeats what colon 9 says. But by emphasizing the difference between the true sons and "illegitimate children" (νόθοι),<sup>62</sup> colon 10 underscores the necessity of discipline for the true sons. Colon 10 "not only restates the connection of suffering and sonship but strengthens it by making the former a sine qua non for the latter" (Attridge 1989, 362). For the true son, discipline is an inherent and necessary element of his sonship.

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<sup>59</sup> Cf. Pss. Sol. 10:2; 14:1, where παιδεία and ὑπομονή are also connected to each other.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. ὑπομένω in colons 2 and 4.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. the same phrase in colon 6. The use of plural nouns in colons 6 and 8, which frame the citation, seems to make a general application to the readers of the citation in which the singular noun is used.

<sup>62</sup> Moffatt comments that "the father is not sufficiently interested in them [νόθοι] to inflict on them the discipline" (1924, 202). It is also significant that the illegitimate children do not have inheritance rights.

Therefore, if you are a true son, endure suffering as discipline. "Suffering is not in spite of sonship but because of it.... Sonship is ... developed through discipline" (P. R. Jones 1985, 391-92).

"Moreover" (εἶτα) marks a new phase of the argument, but vv. 9-11 are still concerned with the citation of Prov 3:11-12. In v. 9 the author tries to associate himself with the readers by changing from the second person to the first person. V. 9 uses an a fortiori argument to compare<sup>63</sup> the responses to "our human fathers" (τῆς σαρκὸς ἡμῶν πατέρας) and to the "Father of spirits" (πατὴρ τῶν πνευμάτων).<sup>64</sup>

Depending on how we understand the verb ἐνετρεπόμεθα, the point of comparison may become different. If we follow Vanhoye, who translated it as "we took-[it]-as-a-good-TURN" (1989, 105), that is, "we learned discipline," this will be parallel to ζήσομεν in colon 12. But it is also possible to find the point of comparison not in the result of discipline but in the attitude to the "discipliner" (παιδευτῆς). This seems to make better sense. It is, therefore, better to translate the verb as "we respected." So if we respected our human fathers for their discipline, then how much more should we "submit" (ὑποτάσσω) to

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<sup>63</sup> δὲ in colon 11 is put in parentheses because the textual evidence for its inclusion and omission is almost evenly divided. Omission may be favored because here the argument seems to be progressive rather than contrasting. But the element of contrast cannot be totally excluded (cf. μὲν ... δέ in v. 10).

<sup>64</sup> It is uncertain whether the spirits refer to human spirits (cf. 12:23) or angels (cf. 1:7, 14). Ellingworth favors the latter because of "(1) the absence of ἡμῶν and (2) the use of the plural, in contrast with σάρκος in v. 9a" (1993, 653). But the context does not support any reason to bring in angels at this point; cf. "God of spirits" in Num 16:22; 27:16.

the Father of spirits? God requires submission, not to mention respect. Through the emphatic position at the end of the sentence it is stressed that the result of such submission is "life" (ζῶω). This affirmation that sons who are submissive to their father shall live may be derived from wisdom tradition,<sup>65</sup> but it may also have an eschatological connotation. Here as in 10:38-39, life can be considered to be a kind of eschatological reward (note the future tense of ζῶω) for being subject to divine discipline (cf. 12:2). This seems to be confirmed by the fact that the word ὑποτάσσω can also have an eschatological connotation.<sup>66</sup>

In v. 9 Attridge notes the following parallelism in the verbs (1989, 362): εἶχομεν ... καὶ ἐντρεπόμεθα; ὑποταγησόμεθα ... καὶ ζήσομεν. However, this parallelism is purely formal. The seemingly parallel structure in v. 9 is due to the comparison between human fathers (τῆς σαρκὸς ἡμῶν πατέρας) and the heavenly Father (τῷ πατρὶ τῶν πνευμάτων). The last phrase καὶ ζήσομεν is set apart as a separate element for emphasis.

Now in v. 10 the contrast between human fathers and God (μέν ... δέ) focuses on the motivations behind their disciplinary actions. Human fathers discipline us "as they thought best" (κατὰ τὸ δοκοῦν<sup>67</sup> αὐτοῖς). Furthermore, they discipline us "for a little while" (πρὸς ὀλίγας ἡμέρας). Their

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<sup>65</sup> Cf. Prov 6:23: "The way of life is reproof and discipline" (ὁδὸς ζωῆς ἔλεγχος καὶ παιδεία).

<sup>66</sup> Cf. 2:5, 8.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. οὐ δοκεῖ in v. 11; ironically, what seems best to the fathers does not seem to be best (χαρά) to the children at the time of discipline.

discipline is not only based on their subjective judgment, but also is not lasting.<sup>68</sup> But God disciplines us "for our good" (*ἐπὶ τὸ συμφέρον*). That is, God's discipline is objectively good because it is based on what the almighty God sees. More specifically, God disciplines us that "we may share in his holiness" (*εἰς τὸ μεταλαβεῖν*<sup>69</sup> *τῆς ἀγιότητος αὐτοῦ*). This objective and permanent result is the ultimate aim of the divine discipline.

"Holiness" (*ἀγιότης*)<sup>70</sup> stands for the divine character or attribute. This result of sharing God's holiness, which is only possible as a gift from God, may be considered as a further elaboration of *ζήσομεν* in colon 12 and will be further specified in colon 16. Thus as *ζῶω* in colon 12 refers to the eschatological reward, so the sharing of God's holiness refers to the eschatological gift. God disciplines us with the purpose of making us conform to his holy character in the end through persevering faith. "Disciplinary sufferings are the prelude to participation ultimately in the divine life" (Lane 1991b, 425).

V. 11 summarizes what has been said in vv. 4-10 by highlighting the ultimate purpose of divine discipline. The reference to *χαρᾶ* and *λύπη* recalls the example of Jesus (vv. 2-

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<sup>68</sup> This may refer either to the fact that human fathers discipline their sons only during their childhood or to the fact that the life span of human fathers is brief. Michel favors the latter, saying that the phrase *πρὸς ὀλίγας ἡμέρας* is "eine Beschreibung des ganzen irdischen Lebens" (1975a, 444).

<sup>69</sup> Cf. 6:7.

<sup>70</sup> Cf. 2:11, 10:10, 14, 29; 12:14; 13:12; note that *ἀγιασμός* in 12:14 is one of the connections that link 12:1-13 to 12:14ff, even though v. 14 emphasizes the human efforts for holiness in contrast to the emphasis on the divine bestowal of holiness in v. 10.

3)<sup>71</sup> as well as the past experience of the readers themselves (10:32-34).<sup>72</sup> Also the word γυμνάζω<sup>73</sup> reminds the readers of the athletic metaphor employed in vv. 1-4. As v. 4 was a transitional verse, so v. 11 is a transition from the theme of παιδεία to the concluding exhortation (vv. 12-13), which employs the athletic metaphor again.

As we have already seen, in v. 9 the eschatological life (ζῶω) was emphasized. In v. 10 while contrasting the intentions of human fathers and God the Father, the eschatological gift of holiness was emphasized. Now in v. 11 we find another contrast (μέν ... δέ ...), which is a temporal one. By contrasting the present (πρὸς τὸ παρὸν)<sup>74</sup> difficulty (οὐ χαρᾶς ... ἀλλὰ λύπης<sup>75</sup>) involved in discipline and the future (ὑστερον) glorious result following from discipline,<sup>76</sup> the focus is still on the eschatological gifts of salvation (καρπὸς εἰρηνικὸς ... δικαιοσύνης).

This final result of discipline is expressed by "fruit" or "harvest" (καρπός),<sup>77</sup> using an agricultural metaphor.<sup>78</sup> And

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<sup>71</sup> Specifically, "joy" (χαρά) for the eschatological reward; Ellingworth thinks that χαρά in v 11 "marks an inclusion with 12:2, thus binding together christological and ethical teaching" (1993, 656).

<sup>72</sup> Specifically, "joy" (χαρά) in the midst of painful sufferings.

<sup>73</sup> Cf. 5:14.

<sup>74</sup> Cf. πρὸς ὀλίγας ἡμέρας in colon 13, which also suggests briefness of duration of discipline.

<sup>75</sup> Cf. suffering and persecution in 10:32-34.

<sup>76</sup> Cf. John 16:20-22; 2 Cor 4:17; 7:7-10; 1 Pet 1:6.

<sup>77</sup> Cf. 13:15; Gal 5:22; Eph 5:9; Phil 1:11; Jas 3:18.

this fruit is described by an adjective *εἰρηνικὸς*, which probably replaces a qualitative or descriptive genitive (= fruit of peace), and then by *δικαιοσύνης*, which clearly is a genitive of quality or description reflecting a Semitic background. That is, the quality or contents<sup>79</sup> of the fruit are peace<sup>80</sup> and righteousness,<sup>81</sup> which are "eschatologische Heilsgaben, die den neuen Äon und die zukünftige Vollendung kennzeichnen" (Michel 1975a, 446).

However, these gifts of eschatological salvation can be proleptically enjoyed even now within the new covenant community, which is in a sense an eschatological community (cf. 12:22-24, 28). At the same time, these gifts should be materialized and find a concrete expression in the real life of the community. In view of the fact that *εἰρήνη* or *δικαιοσύνη* can refer to peaceful or right relations within the community and that *καρπὸς* may have a cultic association,<sup>82</sup> it appears that the phrase *καρπὸς εἰρηνικὸς ... δικαιοσύνης* anticipates exhortations to come (12:14 for peace; 13:1-5 for righteousness).

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<sup>78</sup> Cf. 6:7-8.

<sup>79</sup> Michel comments: "*εἰρηνικὸς* vertritt hier offenbar einen Genitiv (Frucht, die im Frieden besteht) ... *καρπὸς δικαιοσύνης* ist die Frucht, die in der Gerechtigkeit besteht" (1975a, 445-46).

<sup>80</sup> Cf. 12:14; 13:20; also the concept of "rest" (*κατάπαυσις*) in 3:7-4:13.

<sup>81</sup> Righteousness is associated with faith in 10:38; 11:7; cf. Jas 3:17-18, where *καρπὸς*, *εἰρηνικὸς*, *εἰρήνη*, and *δικαιοσύνη* appear together.

<sup>82</sup> Cf. 13:15.



## 5.3.2.3 Heb 12:12-13

Heb 12:1-13 concludes with an exhortation again employing the athletic metaphor. The exhortation in v. 12 is specifically based on Isa 35:3 LXX: "Be strong, ye relaxed hands and palsied knees" (*ἰσχύσατε, χεῖρες ἀνειμέναι καὶ γόνατα παραλελυμένα*) (Brent 1851, 869). In the LXX the arms and knees are directly addressed as the subject. But as in the Masoretic text the author of Hebrews exhorts the readers to strengthen their arms and knees. On the other hand, the Masoretic text uses two verbs "strengthen ... and make firm" (*יָצַק ... יָרִיץ*).<sup>83</sup> Because the author normally follows the LXX, it is possible that our author modified the LXX to make it a direct exhortation to his readers or that his Greek version already reflected that modification.

The author exhorts the readers to "straighten again" or "brace up" (*ἀνορθώω*)<sup>84</sup> their "drooping hands" (*παρειμένας χεῖρας*) and "weak knees" (*παραλελυμένα γόνατα*). This exhortation seems to reveal the real situation among the readers: that they are indeed exhausted in their faith-race. The author exhorts the exhausted readers to persevere in their faith-race.

In v. 13 another scriptural allusion is given to strengthen the exhortation in v. 12. V. 13 is evidently based on Prov 4:25-27, specifically on Prov 4:26 LXX, which reads as follows: "make straight paths for your feet and straighten your ways" (*ὀρθὰς τροχιὰς ποίει σοῖς ποσὶν καὶ τὰς ὁδοὺς σου*

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<sup>83</sup> Cf. Howard, who concludes that the quote as a whole is "non-septuagintal" (1968, 213-14).

<sup>84</sup> Cf. *ὀρθὰς ποιεῖτε* in v. 13.

κατεύθυνε). The word "path" (τροχιᾶ) also reminds us of the racing imagery<sup>85</sup> and, as we have already discussed, it may form "a kind of inclusion" with τρέχω in v. 1.

The reason for making straight paths is given by the ἵνα μὴ clause (cf. v. 3). The author does not want the state of exhaustion, called here "the lame" (τὸ χωλόν), which was expressed by drooping hands and weakened knees in v. 12, to become worse. This lameness must be prevented from becoming "dislocated" (ἐκτρέπω),<sup>86</sup> but rather be "healed" (ἰάομαι).

Lane takes the meaning of "straight" (ὀρθός) as fundamentally ethical and translates v. 13a as "move in a straight direction with your feet" (1991b, 398),<sup>87</sup> which he thinks fits the larger context of Heb 12:1-12. But in light of the Greek it seems better to translate v. 13a as "make level paths for your feet" (NIV). In this case the reason for the exhortation in v. 13a is "to urge the smoothing of the way for those who are weak and spiritually lame, and who might be prevented from continuing their course if they were tripped up and permanently disabled" (Bruce 1990, 348). This interpretation does fit the immediate context as well as the

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<sup>85</sup> P. E. Hughes takes τροχιᾶ to mean a "running-lane" (1977, 535), but it seems too specific.

<sup>86</sup> If we take the usual meaning of "to turn aside," then the point will be that "the addressees are to be careful lest any weak members of the community are turned aside from the way of truth to apostasy" (Attridge 1989, 365). But the technical medical sense of "to be dislocated" (cf. "ausgerenkt werden" [Michel 1975a, 449]) well suits the present context, especially in view of the reference to healing in the next clause.

<sup>87</sup> Michel also prefers the meaning of "schlagt gerade Wege ein (= vermeidet krumme Wege)" to that of "macht die Wege eben (= beseitigt die Unebenheiten)" (1975a, 449).

larger context of Heb 12:1-12. Still, the concern of the author is to make sure that the readers run their course with perseverance without falling away and reach the final goal of their faith-race.

Ellingworth perceives a distinction between two groups in vv. 12-13. He thinks that vv. 12-13 exhort the strong members of the community to help its weak members. He thinks that this distinction reflects the real situation: "All need warning and encouragement; but among the addressees, some are in special need of strengthening by others" (1993, 657). This is possible, but we do not see any specific distinction between these two groups in the text itself. In vv. 12-13 it seems that the whole community is addressed as one group and the exhaustion and lameness reflects the general situation of the whole community. Of course, some members would always be stronger than others. But the author's point in vv. 12-13 is that "sprains and similar injuries must be bound up, so that the whole community may complete the course without loss" (Bruce 1990, 348).

### 5.3.3 Rhetorical devices

In our passage the author uses a hortatory subjunctive only once in v. 1. Afterwards he continually uses imperatives (vv. 3, 7, 12, 13). The hortatory subjunctive *τρέχωμεν* is the main verb of a periodic sentence (vv. 1-2; cf. 1:1-4). Based on what was said in the whole of chap. 11 as well as 10:32-39 (cf. *τοιγαροῦν*) the author encourages the readers to run the faith-race with perseverance by urging "let us run," as an experienced pastor would do. The following imperatives seem to

make more specific exhortations.

In v. 1 an unusual word order is used twice: ΤΟΣΟΥΤΟΥ ἔχοντες περικείμενον and ὄγκον ἀποθέμενοι πάντα. The underlined words must be put together. ΤΟΣΟΥΤΟΥ and ὄγκον are separated and put in front for emphasis. Lane comments: "Vivid, impassioned discourse gives rise to the dislocation of closely related words for rhetorical effect" (1991b, 398). In the exegetical remarks we have already noticed a chiasm in v. 2.

In vv. 2-3 the author graphically portrays Jesus' death on the cross, which is the gist of the gospel the readers heard (2:3-4), and reminds them of the pattern set by him, that is, the pattern of "cross and then crown." The example of Jesus may be one of the more "odd examples"<sup>88</sup> as seen from outside of Christianity, but the author appeals to what they heard when they became Christians to encourage the readers to follow the pattern set by Christ.

Isaacs (1992, 47) correctly comments:

Our author seems at home in the general cultural milieu of the Graeco-Roman world, as can be seen in his view of the role of education in the Christian life. In depicting this he uses metaphors drawn from agriculture (6:7) and athletics (5:14; 10:32; 12:1, 11).

In v. 11 he again uses imagery taken from agriculture (cf. 13:15).<sup>89</sup> In vv. 1-4, 11-13 the author uses an athletic metaphor which he began to use in 10:32-33. The imagery of racing (extended to boxing or wrestling in v. 4) is used to remind the readers of the fact that they are involved in an

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<sup>88</sup> Cf. Mack (1990, 41).

<sup>89</sup> Cf. Prov 3:9; 10:16; 11:30; 12:14; also Matt 3:10; 7:19; John 15:2; Gal 5:22; 2 Tim 2:6; Jas 3:17, 18.

ἀγών which inevitably requires perseverance.<sup>90</sup>

The abruptness of the transition from vv. 1-3 to v. 4 is enhanced by the use of alliteration (αἵματος ... ἀντικατέστητε ... ἁμαρτίαν ... ἀνταγωνιζόμενοι) as well as the change in metaphor. V. 5 can be construed either as a question or as an assertion. Lane favors the former option in the light of the "stylistically rhetorical character of the statement" (1991b, 401). By asking a question the author may express surprise and mild rebuke if the readers really forgot the word of encouragement, or can remind them of the word of exhortation if they do remember it.

In vv. 5-6 the author uses the quotation of Prov 3:11-12, which is the only use of that text in the New Testament, as a stepping board to encourage<sup>91</sup> the readers to persevere through hardship as discipline (v. 7). In this case the application of the theme of παιδεία to the readers is simple and direct.<sup>92</sup>

This application of the OT citation is confirmed by the use of analogy<sup>93</sup> from a general human relationship between a father and sons (also illegitimate sons). The persuasive force in the author's exhortation to persevere is significantly

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<sup>90</sup> Thompson (1982, 38) also agrees that this feature "furnishes evidence of our author's debt to Greek paideia." This concept of παιδεία is further developed in vv. 5-11.

<sup>91</sup> Cf. παράκλησις in v. 5; also 13:22.

<sup>92</sup> Attridge correctly comments: "This is hardly an example of a 'pesher' style of interpretation" (1989, 361).

<sup>93</sup> Mack comments that analogy is "taken ... from the worlds of nature and normal social practice" and thus it captures "a customary observation about types of people, normal events, and regular natural processes" (1990, 40). He continues: "If true of the analogy, then it would be true for the proposition as well" (1990, 46).

increased by using both a Scripture citation and an analogy which could be understood without an elaborate argument. These may be called "nontechnical proofs"<sup>94</sup> because they are based on the commonly shared respect for the Old Testament and a basic human relationship.

In the exegetical remarks we have already pointed out a chiasm in v. 6 which has the function of emphasizing the fact that discipline is an inevitable element in the life of those whom God loves and receives. In v. 9 Attridge notes a "chiasm ... in the nominal expressions: τῆς σαρκὸς ἡμῶν πατέρας and τῷ πατρὶ τῶν πνευμάτων" (1989, 362). This is a chiasm only between two nominal phrases, but even that enhances the contrast between earthly fathers and the heavenly Father.

In vv. 7-11, as mentioned above, the author well adapts the well-known Greek notion of παιδεία for his purpose. While the purpose of Greek παιδεία was progress in virtues, here the purpose of divine παιδεία is life (ζῶω in v. 9; cf. 10:38-39). Here we may discern the process which Mack mentions: "Thus the challenge for early Christians was to (mis)use conventional modes of conviction in the attempt to articulate a new and distinctive ethos" (Mack 1990, 38).

In v. 9, by comparing the heavenly Father with earthly fathers<sup>95</sup> using an a fortiori argument<sup>96</sup> (from lesser to

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<sup>94</sup> Mack comments: "In early Christian circles ... 'nontechnical proofs' were highly prized" (1990, 39).

<sup>95</sup> For an argument from earthly fathers to the heavenly, cf. Matt 7:9-11; Luke 11:11-13.

<sup>96</sup> Cf. Barr's simple definition of a fortiori: "If the lesser is true, then how much more true is the greater." (1987, 306); Similarly, G. H. Guthrie's: "What applies in a less

greater), the author emphasizes that it is beyond dispute that the readers, who are subject to the discipline of their earthly fathers, must be subject to the heavenly Father. As Lindars points out, "the a fortiori argument ... is not a strictly logical argument, but it is much more a mark of rhetorical style" (1989, 399). This argument, which was also called  $\lambda\gamma \lambda\gamma\lambda\lambda$  ("the light and the heavy"), was one of Hillel's seven rules for interpretation. Also in v. 9 we note a parallel structure along with assonance:  $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\chi\omicron\mu\epsilon\nu \dots \kappa\alpha\iota \acute{\epsilon}\nu\tau\rho\epsilon\pi\acute{\omicron}\mu\epsilon\theta\alpha \dots \acute{\upsilon}\pi\omicron\tau\alpha\gamma\eta\sigma\acute{\omicron}\mu\epsilon\theta\alpha \dots \kappa\alpha\iota \zeta\acute{\eta}\sigma\omicron\mu\epsilon\nu$ . The position of  $\zeta\acute{\eta}\sigma\omicron\mu\epsilon\nu$  at the end of the question, which expects an answer, "yes," is emphatic. The contrast between earthly fathers and the heavenly Father expressed by a fortiori argument in v. 9 is expressed by  $\omicron\iota \mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu \dots \acute{\omicron} \delta\grave{\epsilon}$  in v. 10. Note the alliteration in v. 11:  $\pi\acute{\alpha}\sigma\alpha \delta\grave{\epsilon} \pi\alpha\iota\delta\epsilon\acute{\iota}\alpha \pi\rho\delta\varsigma \mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu \tau\acute{\omicron} \pi\alpha\rho\delta\acute{\omicron}\nu$ .

Mack (1990, 37) comments: "If a given proposition can be shown to be (such and such), the argument will hold." The items which may go into (such and such) include "advantageous" (*sympheron*), "pleasant" (*hēdus*). The use of phrases like  $\acute{\epsilon}\pi\grave{\iota} \tau\acute{\omicron} \sigma\upsilon\mu\phi\acute{\epsilon}\rho\omicron\nu$  (v. 10) and  $\omicron\upsilon \delta\omicron\kappa\epsilon\acute{\iota} \chi\alpha\rho\acute{\alpha}\varsigma \acute{\epsilon}\acute{\iota}\nu\alpha\iota \acute{\alpha}\lambda\lambda\grave{\alpha} \lambda\acute{\upsilon}\pi\eta\varsigma$  (v. 11) suggests that the author follows such a course of argument. Especially in v. 11 the author appeals to the notion that temporary suffering in relation to discipline would eventually yield a long-lasting good result. This is a well-known concept in both Jewish<sup>97</sup> and Greek<sup>98</sup> sources.

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important situation certainly applies in a more important situation" (1991, 97-98); also see Longenecker (1975, 34-35).

<sup>97</sup> For example, Prov 23:13-14; Wis 3:5; Philo Congr. 160, 175.

As we noted already, exhortations (vv. 1-3 and vv. 12-13) frame the central section on παιδεία. Each exhortation ends with a ἵνα μή clause forming a kind of inclusio. Our passage is saturated with ὑπομονή and its related terms as well as παιδεία and its related terms. These repeated terms as well as the athletic metaphor give a cohesiveness to this section.

The rare and unusual words used in this section continually grip the attention of the readers. Some words, such as σταυρός, διαλέγομαι, εἶτα, ἐντρέπω, συμφέρον and λύπη, are rare, at least in Hebrews. Other words (νέφος, εὐπερίστατος, τελειωτής, ἀναλογίζομαι, ἀνταγωνίζομαι, ἐκλανθάνομαι, ὀλιγωρέω, νόθος, παιδευτής, ἀγιδότης, εἰρηνικός, ἀνορθώω, παρήγημι, παραλύω and τροχιά) and a phrase (πρὸς τὸ παρόν) are rare in the New Testament and sometimes even in the whole Greek Bible. Some words such as προσφέρω ("treat" or "deal with") and ἀποδίδωμι ("yield" [fruit]) are used in a rare sense.

#### 5.3.4 Conclusions regarding perseverance in Heb 12:1-13

1. Jesus is presented as a supreme example of perseverance and faithfulness to emulate. His example is the climax of all the examples given previously (the readers' former example in 10:32-34 and all the examples in chap. 11). Not only is Jesus a supreme exemplar of πίστις, but he is the ἀρχηγός and τελειωτής

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<sup>98</sup> Attridge (1989, 364) cites "a saying attributed to Aristotle in Diogenes Laertius Vit. Phil. 5.1.18: τῆς παιδείας ἔφη τὰς μὲν ῥίζας εἶναι πικράς, τὸν δὲ καρπὸν γλυκύν, 'The roots of education, he said, are bitter, but the fruit is sweet.'" Mack (1990, 44-47) also gives an example from Hermogenes in which the same saying is attributed to Isocrates. In view of these examples, "a bitter root" in 12:15 seems to come from the same agricultural metaphor.



of πίστις. As Minear comments, the readers must have "a vision of Jesus 'seated at the right hand of the throne of God' [and a] memory of a specific story in which the cross and the joy were the central components" (1981, 145). The readers must fix their eyes on Jesus and consider him who is now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death and will also bring them to glory.

2. The readers are urged to persevere as athletes persevere in their games (racing, boxing or wrestling). As in athletic games, there are many impediments in the race of πίστις. As runners fix their eyes on the goal, the readers must fix their eyes on Jesus to overcome impediments and persevere in their race. They must run or fight faithfully even if death would be the result.

3. The imagery of a race (ἀγών) in the arena in 12:1 and the imagery of boxing or wrestling (ἀντικαθίστημι and ἀνταγωνίζομαι) in 12:4 seem to imply current hardship. The same applies to the statement that training (γυμνάζω) does not seem pleasant "at the time." To set Christ's death on the cross as an example to follow also may imply that the current persecution<sup>99</sup> may reach its climax in requiring martyrdom (cf. 12:4). All these may be directly related to persecution if the readers are living under any Roman emperor who used the arena for persecuting Christians.

4. The readers need to endure hardship as discipline. They

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<sup>99</sup> Cf. 10:34, where the readers are said to have sympathized with those in prison in the past; the admonition to remember those in prison in 13:3 (cf. 13:23) seems to suggest current persecution.

have to submit willingly to discipline by the Father because it proves that they are his sons. Only those who submit to the discipline and are trained by it will persevere in their race, produce a harvest of righteousness and peace, and ultimately share in God's holiness.

#### 5.3.5 Excursus: Faith of Jesus.

Sometimes it is argued that in Hebrews there is no explicit reference to Jesus as the object of faith.<sup>100</sup> In fact, the phrase *πίστις εἰς Χριστόν* is not used in Hebrews, but as Attridge says, it is also true that "Hebrews' understanding of faith is clearly developed within a christological framework," that is, "the faith to which the addressees are called is both made possible and exemplified by the 'perfecter of faith' (12:2), at whose exaltation hopes have begun to be realized and things unseen proved" (1989, 314).<sup>101</sup>

The reference to Jesus as *ἀρχηγὸς καὶ τελειωτῆς τῆς*

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<sup>100</sup> For example, Gräßer says that "der spezifisch christliche ('christologische') Glaube findet im Hb keine Fortsetzung" (1965, 79). He concludes his section on "das Glaubensverständnis des Hebräerbriefes" as follows: "[Pistis] signalisiert im Hb nicht soteriologisch-personale Bezüge (*πίστις εἰς Χριστόν*)" (1965, 63); cf. MacRae who says that faith in Hebrews "is never Christocentric but theocentric" (1987, 104).

<sup>101</sup> M. R. Miller says that "faith in Hebrews is pointedly Christological" by pointing to "the call to 'look to Jesus'" in 12:2 and "the development of the teaching on the High Priestly ministry of Christ and the strong exhortation ... on the basis of that ministry" (1987, 133); cf. Lindars' comments: "Faith in Hebrews is a moral quality of firmness, fidelity, and reliability" (1991a, 109). But he later acknowledges that it is christologically based when he says that faith is "a matter of living in the present in the light of the future, because the completion of God's plan of salvation has already been reached in the person of Jesus, though it still waits to be completed in us at the parousia" (1991a, 115).

πίστεως in v. 2 is the only text which directly relates Jesus to faith. Can we prove from this text that the concept of faith in Hebrews is indeed christological? As we have already noted, the example of Jesus' faith can be considered as the climax of the examples of faith presented in chap. 11. And the parallel structure of 12:1-2 around the name Jesus makes apparent that above all the readers are exhorted to follow the example of Jesus. So it cannot be disputed that "Jesus selbst als Glaubender angesprochen wird" (Söding 1991, 229). Then what constitutes the faith of Jesus? The answer is that "[Glaube Jesu] besteht vor allem in seinem gehorsamen Vertrauen auf Gott" (Söding 1991, 230). This answer can only be substantiated from what the author says in other parts of the epistle.

First, Jesus' faith was expressed in his humiliation. He "was made a little lower than the angels" (2:9). He "suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone" (2:9). He "too shared in their humanity" (2:14) and was "made like his brothers in every way" (2:17). He "himself suffered when he was tempted" (2:18; cf. 4:15). In this context, the words of Isa 8:17 put into the mouth of Jesus in 2:13 have a special significance.<sup>102</sup> "I will 'put my trust' (πεποιθώς) in him [God]" (2:13).<sup>103</sup> These words may be considered to characterize "Jesus' disposition during 'the days

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<sup>102</sup> According to Swetnam (1981, 131), 2:13 is at the center of the chiasm which he finds in vv. 10-18.

<sup>103</sup> Hamm notes: "2:13 is spoken by Jesus as the Son who is brother of the παιδία (children) of God. This sets up the basis for an important parallel between the suffering of Jesus and the παιδεία (discipline) of the Christian children to be expressed in Heb 12:3-11" (1990, 281).

of his flesh'" (Hamm 1990, 281). By this trust in God throughout the process of humiliation (including incarnation) Jesus became the "author" (ἀρχηγός) of many sons' salvation (2:10). As ἀρχηγός Jesus can bring many sons to glory (2:10). He is the one who makes possible the faith of the Christians.

Another characteristic of Jesus' faith can be found in 5:7-8. "During the days of Jesus' life on earth ... he was heard because of his 'reverent submission' (εὐλάβεια)" (5:7). "Although he was a son, he learned 'obedience' (ὕπακοή) from what he suffered" (5:8). This reverent submission and obedience of Jesus was made possible only through his faith (or trust as in 2:13) in God. This relationship is further strengthened by the use of εὐλάβεια in 11:7<sup>104</sup> and 12:28<sup>105</sup> where εὐλάβεια is intimately connected to faithful obedience. Furthermore, 5:9 shows that εὐλάβεια is another expression for Jesus' obedience, which becomes the model to be imitated by the readers. "[Jesus] learned obedience from what he suffered and ... he became the 'source' (αἴτιος) of eternal salvation for all who 'obey' (ὕπακούω) him" (5:9). Jesus' obedience to God not only models, but also enables the readers' obedience to Jesus. Because Jesus obeyed God, now the readers can obey Jesus. Jesus became the source of eternal salvation because the readers can obtain eternal salvation by obeying him.

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<sup>104</sup> Note that here Noah is presented as an exemplar of πίστις.

<sup>105</sup> Hamm comments that "the context of 12:18-28 makes it clear that εὐλάβεια does not mean a craven fear or anxiety, for that attitude is precisely that to which authentic Christian worship is contrasted in 12:18-21, the anxious response of Moses and the people at Sinai" (1990, 283).

Furthermore, in both in 2:10 and 5:9 Christ's perfection is related to his being ἀρχηγός τῆς σωτηρίας and αἴτιος σωτηρίας to the believers. Du Plessis rightly points out: "On such evidence there is every justification for correlating the τελείωσις of Christ with this τελειωτής... by His achievement He secured the τελείωσις for all who believe in and obey Him" (1959, 224).<sup>106</sup> The above statement is corroborated by 11:39-40, which mentions the perfection of all the saints of both old and new covenants at the consummation.

Later in 10:5-18 Jesus' self-sacrifice of his body is described as an act of doing God's will. Jesus said, "Here I am, I have come to do your will" (10:9). By this one act of self-sacrifice in obedience to God's will "he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy" (10:14; cf. 10:1, 10). Here the perfection means the effective cleansing of consciences (10:2) following from the fact that sins are really removed through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. This perfection is the benefit of the new covenant Jesus implemented by his self-sacrifice. By this one act of obedience, Jesus opened "a new and living way" (10:20) through which we "can draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith" (10:22). "Christ's death as an act of obedience [has] consequences for believers" (Ellingworth 1993, 642). Jesus makes our faith possible.

Jesus' obedience to God's will is also the model to be followed by the readers. The author exhorts the readers that "you need to persevere so that when you have done the will of

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<sup>106</sup> Also see D. G. Peterson (1982, 171-73).

God, you will receive what he has promised" (10:36). Here the close relation between perseverance, obedience to the will of God and the promise comes to the surface.

This relation becomes explicit in 12:2. Here Jesus establishes himself to be the supreme model of faith because he has done the will of God in the self-sacrifice of his body and thus has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. As we have already seen in the previous analysis, in view of the chiasmic structure of 12:2b (colons 2-3), "the joy set before him" for which Jesus endured the cross is thought to be his session at the right hand of the throne of God. "In dieser Ausrichtung auf das Vorausliegende ist der Glaube Jesu zuversichtliche Geduld (12.2,3: ὑπομένειν), die Standfestigkeit verleiht: Im Glauben erträgt Jesus die Schmach des Kreuzes und hält den Widerspruch des Sünder aus (12.2f.)" (Söding 1991, 230). Not only is Jesus' faith, expressed in perseverance, a model for our faith, but it makes our faith possible by proving that God is faithful in keeping his promises. By trusting in God the readers can be sure that they also would receive the promises when they have done the will of God as Jesus did.

Therefore, Jesus' faith is not only the model or example for the readers to follow and imitate, but also the source of the readers' faith. The life and death of Jesus, which were characterized by trust in God, reverent submission, and obedience to the will of God, make possible the faith response of the readers. So even if there may not be an expression such as "faith-in-Jesus" in Hebrews, the concept of faith is christologically developed starting from the faith of Jesus.

"We are called not only to believe in the risen Christ but also to believe like the earthly Jesus... To find in Jesus the supreme exemplar for the life of faith in no way excludes believing in him as the risen Lord of our lives" (O'Collins 1992, 423).