

## INTRODUCTION

### I. GOD HAS A COURSE LAID OUT FOR EACH BELIEVER THAT REQUIRES THE ENGAGEMENT OF THE BELIEVER.

#### A. The saints prior to this dispensation ran a race. Vs. 1

1. "Seeing" is from the verb *echo* and can better be translated, having -- referring back to the examples of the lives lived in chapter 11.
2. The word "compassed" is the Greek word *perikeimai*, literally means ***lying around; is used in Scripture of that which someone is saddled with.*** Cf. Heb. 5:2 (of the Lord with infirmity)<sup>1</sup>
3. "Cloud of witnesses" notes the people who came before as a testimony. Vs. 1
  - a) "Cloud" is used in this context and other similar context of people. Jude 12; 2 Pet. 2:17 (used with reference to men overtaken by the flesh); 1st Thess. 4:17 (of those at the rapture); Rev. 1:7 (of the second coming)<sup>2</sup>
  - b) "Witnesses" describes the cloud -- ***those who testify to the validity of an event either through verbal, non-verbal or the giving of their life.*** Cf. Acts 10:39 (the disciples of the earthly ministry of Christ); 3:15; 5:32 (the disciples of the resurrection); 2 Tim. 2:2 (of Paul's doctrine)

#### B. The testimony of prior saints should motivate believers in this dispensation.

1. Consideration of the prior witnesses would motivate believers to "lay aside" which is the verb *apotitheimi* which literally means to stand from or ***to put off or aside or away*** -- Joseph Thayer<sup>3</sup> cf. Acts 7:58 (of putting of clothing); Eph 4:22 (of the old man)
2. Consideration of prior witnesses should motivate believers to put aside every weight. vs. 1
  - a) "Weight" is the word *ogkos* ***a mass (as bending or bulging by its load), that is, burden (hindrance).*** -- Strong's lexicon. Cf. John 19:39 (used literally of physical weight).
  - b) "Every" is the adjective *pas* which indicates ***every encumbrance that handicaps like doubt, pride, sloth, anything. No trailing garment to hinder or trip one.*** -- A. T. Robertson

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<sup>1</sup> The present m/p participle notes that these witnesses were placed in this position by someone.

<sup>2</sup> "The metaphor refers to the great amphitheatre with the arena for the runners and the tiers upon tiers of seats rising up like a cloud." -- A. T. Robertson

<sup>3</sup> Early Olympic competition in which participants wore no clothing, one purpose being to be unimpeded; The hortatory subjunctive (let us) is used by Paul to implore believer to join him in some activity.

3. It should motivate believers to put aside the besetting sin. vs. 1<sup>4</sup>
  - a) The word “besetting” is euperihistaton which is made up of:
    - (1) Eu -- good
    - (2) Peri -- around
    - (3) Histaton -- standing
  - b) Most commentators agree that that is a sin that the believer is familiar with and has indulged in it before and after salvation.
    - (1) **“Those to which we are particularly exposed by our natural temperament, or disposition. In some this is pride, in others indolence, or gaiety, or levity, or avarice, or ambition, or sensuality; those in which we freely indulged before we became Christians. They will be likely to return with power, and we are far more likely from the laws of association, to fall into them than into any other..”** -- Albert Barnes “Notes On The Whole Bible”
    - (2) **“ The sin of our constitution, the sin of our trade, that in which our worldly honor, secular profit, and sensual gratification are most frequently felt and consulted.”** -- Adam Clarke Commentary

## II. THE MANNER OF THE BELIEVER’S RUNNING THE RACE IS ESSENTIAL.

- A. The laying aside of every weight and the besetting sin allows the believer to run the race God has laid out for him with patience. Vs. 1
  1. The word for race is agona and is used in other places in Scripture to emphasize a fight or a contest.
    - a) It is used of opposition faced in executing the will of God. 1st Thess. 2:2 cf. Acts 16-23 (Paul was beaten and thrown into prison)
    - b) Application of “the faith” is seen as a part of the contest for the believer. 1st Tim. 6:12
    - c) All of the things associated with this contest are seen as good. 1st Tim. 6:12; 2 Tim. 4:7
  2. The personal pronoun with the phrase “set before us” (prokeimenon) indicates a thing that is laid out by another for the purpose communicating or making something known.
    - a) The verb form is used of Sodom and Gomorrha being set forth as an example of judgment to those who live that way. Jude 1:7
    - b) The same verb form is used to contrast that which is set before the believer versus that set before the Lord.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Euperhistaton is in the attributive position -- having the article before it, because it is attributing a certain quality of sin.

<sup>5</sup> Pres. m/p participle -- “keep on running the race that has been placed before us”

- (1) The Lord had a joy set before Him; but first endured the cross. Heb. 12:2
  - (a) He endured a cross (instead of) the joy that was set before Him.
  - (b) He despised, reflectively think against (ill. 1 Tim. 4:12; 6:2) the shame of a cross.
  - (c) He endured the contradiction, to speak against (antilogian ill. Acts 13:45; John 7:14-30) of sinners
- (2) The believer has a race set before him. Heb. 12:1

B. The race of the believer is to be run with “patience”

- 1. Patience. Is the Greek word hupomonees.
  - a) The literal word for hupomonees
    - (1) Hupo -- under
    - (2) Monees remain, abide
  - b) Patience provides believers with characteristics essential to bearing up under a situation.
    - (1) Patience is derived from hope. 1st Thess. 1:3; Rom. 8:25
    - (2) Patience causes a believer to wait for a promise. Rom. 8:25
    - (3) It is seen with faith in persecutions and afflictions. 2 Thess. 1:4
- 2. Patience is the instrument by which the believer is able to keep on running the race. Heb. 12:1<sup>6</sup>

III. EFFECTIVE RUNNING OF THE RACE PREVENTS MENTAL FATIGUE.

- A. “Wearied” is the Greek word kamneete which is used in Scripture of ***fainting in the mind brought on by pressures***. Cf. James 5:15; Rev. 2:3
- B. Weariness causes a fainting (ekloumenoi) in the soul. (ill. Gal. 6:9; Acts 15:24)<sup>7</sup>
  - 1. ***“To be enfeebled, to be tired out (here in soul with locative case).”*** -- A. T. Robertson cf. Gal. 6:9
  - 2. ***“To loose, relax, exhaust.”*** -- Vincent’s Word Studies

IV. CONCLUSION

<sup>6</sup> The use of the dia preposition in the

<sup>7</sup> The Septuagint translates eklouo in several passages to note those who are weary for various reasons. Cf. Deuteronomy 20:3 Israel warned against in battle with enemies); Judges 8:15 (those weary in battle); 1 Samuel 14:28 (brought on by fear of what Saul would do because of Jonathan’s disobedience).