

Textual Problems in the Epistle to the Hebrews

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The text of the Epistle to the Hebrews has been transmitted since the early second century as part of the *corpus Paulinum*. The earliest extant copy of the epistle belongs to the earliest extant copy of the corpus, \mathfrak{P}^{46} (ca. A.D. 200), where it appears between Romans and 1 Corinthians. At what point in the second century Hebrews was first included in the corpus cannot be determined. One scholar indeed has argued that it was in the corpus from the beginning (Anderson 1966); Zuntz, however (1953: 15-16), had already shown adequate reason to believe that this cannot have been so, since Christian writers early in the second century who apparently knew the Pauline corpus as such betray no acquaintance with Hebrews. That all surviving copies of Hebrews go back to one archetype, the edition which was originally admitted to the Pauline corpus, is suggested by their having a number of errors in common, including a few primitive corruptions which were taken over into the corpus.

The text of the twelve passages discussed below is taken from UBS³; at the head of each discussion this text is reproduced with its principal witnesses, followed by one or more variant readings with their principal witnesses.

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Hebrews 2:9

ὅπως χάριτι θεοῦ ὑπὲρ παντός γεύσεται θανάτου
χάριτι θεοῦ \mathfrak{P}^{46} \aleph A B C D K P Ψ Byz lat syr cop arm eth
χωρὶς θεοῦ 0121b 424** 1739* lat^{vg.g} syr^{pesh.codd} orig^{pt} Euseb Ambst Ambr *al*

χάριτι θεοῦ is far and away the majority reading, but the variant χωρὶς θεοῦ is attested by an impressive range of witnesses, both East and West, including manuscripts known to Origen, Ambrose, and Jerome, together with the Greek fathers Theodore, Theodoret, Anastasius of Sinai, Ps.-Oecumenius, and Theophylact, and the Latin fathers Fulgentius and Vigilius (in addition to the fathers cited above).

“By the grace of God” makes excellent sense in the context, but “apart from God” is such a striking variant, and so widely attested, that one wonders if the precept *praestat lectio ardua* is not applicable here. It is most improbable that χάριτι θεοῦ should have been corrupted or otherwise changed to χωρὶς θεοῦ. But do the words *in order that he, apart from God, should taste death for everyone* make any sense in the context? Bengel (1734: ad loc.) thought they did: he construed χωρὶς θεοῦ with ὑπὲρ παντός; to yield “Christ tasted death for everyone apart from God.” Zuntz (1953: 34-35, 43-45), who reads δι’ ἑαυτοῦ in Heb 1:3 (following \mathfrak{P}^{46} and 1739) and interprets it to mean that Christ effected purification from sins “by his own virtue and effort, with no assistance from outside” (not even from God), takes χωρὶς θεοῦ in a similar sense: “Textual criticism thus brings out a neglected aspect of the theology of Hebrews.” He agrees with Harnack (1929: 63) that objections to χωρὶς θεοῦ in this sense led to the “dogmatic correction” to χάριτι θεοῦ.

I am disposed to agree that χάριτι θεοῦ was an early correction of χωρὶς θεοῦ but that χωρὶς θεοῦ was not part of the original text of Hebrews. It was first introduced, probably, as a marginal gloss against Heb 2:8, where Ps 8:6 is quoted to the effect that God has subjected everything to the "son of man." The glossator intended "apart from God" to qualify "everything"—"everything, that is to say, apart from God himself." In adding this qualification he followed the precedent of Paul who, quoting the same psalm in 1 Cor 15:27b, points out that the statement *everything has been subjected to him* self-evidently excludes the one who subjected everything to him. In due course the marginal gloss was introduced into the text at a point where the scribe thought it appropriate—in Heb 2:9. If that is so, the original wording of the clause was "in order that he should taste death for everyone." The scribe probably supposed, as Bengel did, that χωρὶς θεοῦ could qualify ὑπὲρ παντὸς, but in that case it would have fol-

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lowed ὑπὲρ παντὸς instead of preceding it. Metzger (1971: 664) suggests that the scribe who incorporated χωρὶς θεοῦ into the text did so because he thought χωρὶς was intended to be a correction of χάριτι. But it seems more likely to me that χάριτι θεοῦ was not originally in the text but was the emendation of a second scribe who could make no sense of χωρὶς θεοῦ in the context.

Hebrews 3:6

ἐάν (περ) τὴν παρρησίαν καὶ τὸ καύχημα τῆς ἐλπίδος κατάσχωμεν κατάσχωμεν ρ¹³
ρ⁴⁶ B Ψ cop^{sah} eth^{ro} Lucif Ambr
μέχρι τέλους βεβαίαν κατάσχωμεν ⚭ A C D K P 0121b 33 1739 1881 2495 Byz lat
syr^{hrl pal} cop^{boh} arm eth al

On the face of it there is something strange about the feminine βεβαίαν. We should expect the neuter βεβαίον in agreement with καύχημα. While βεβαίαν might be taken to agree with παρρησίαν, it would be unnatural to have the adjective agreeing with the more remote rather than with the nearer noun. It is almost certain that the words μέχρι τέλους βεβαίαν were imported from the similarly constructed v. 14, ἐάνπερ τὴν ἀρχὴν τῆς ὑποστάσεως μέχρι τέλους βεβαίαν κατάσχωμεν where the feminine adjective is naturally construed with ἀρχήν.

Hebrews 4:2

ἀλλ' οὐκ ὠφέλησεν ὁ λόγος τῆς ἀκοῆς ἐκείνους μὴ συγκεκερασμένους τῇ πίστει τοῖς ἀκούσασιν
συγκεκερασμένους ρ¹³ ρ⁴⁶ A B C D* Ψ 0121b al (with the synonymous
συγκεκερασμένους in D^c K P^{minn.pl})
συγκεκερασμένους ⚭ Eph Cyr^{pt} Theodoret

The author reminds his readers that he and they have had the gospel preached to them, just as the Israelites of the wilderness generation had, "but the word of hearing did not profit them, because they were not united by faith with those who had heard." This is the rendering of the

British Revised Version (1881), following the reading which is now preferred by UBS³. Certainly this is the majority reading, but it is hard to make sense of it. “They” to whom the gospel was preached in the wilderness generation were themselves the hearers: how then could it be said that they were “not united by faith with those who heard”?

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William Manson (1951: 58) took the majority reading to mean that “the Christian Group at Rome whom the author addresses was separating itself in the matter of ‘faith’ from the true believing body of the Church.” This might indeed have been so with the people to whom the letter is addressed; but the author makes the statement with regard to the Israelites of the wilderness generation, and to them this interpretation is inapplicable.

The majority reading is the earliest attested reading; it is, moreover, the reading which best explains the variants. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Zuntz is right in treating those variants as so many “ancient conjectures vainly striving to heal a primitive corruption” (1953: 16).

One variant replaces the active participle ἀκούσασιν with the passive ἀκουσθεῖσιν (attested by Theodore of Mopsuestia): “Because they were not united by faith with the things they heard.” Other witnesses (D* 104 1611 2495 syr^{hcl,mg} Lucif *al*) replace the dative with the genitive τῶν ἀκουσάντων, but this makes sense only if the accusative plural συγκεκερασμένους be replaced by the nominative singular συγκεκερασμένος (in concord with λόγος. The nominative singular is indeed read, as has been said above, by **Σ** and some other witnesses. As it stands in these manuscripts and versions, συγκεκερασμένος is probably a conjectural emendation: if so, the conjecture was a happy one. Whoever first thought of mending the text in this way did not strive so “vainly” as Zuntz suggests: the original text may well have been restored by accident. RSV, like several other modern versions, follows this minority reading in its rendering: “The message which they heard did not benefit them, because it did not meet with faith in the hearers.”

Hebrews 6:2

μη̄ πάλιν θεμέλιον καταβαλλόμενοι... βαπτισμῶν διδασχῆς
διδασχῆς **Σ** A C D I K P 0122 Byz lat^{vg} syr^{hcl} arm
διδασχῆν **ϣ**⁴⁶ B lat^d syr^{pesh}

Alexandrian, “Western,” and Byzantine witnesses combine impressively to attest the genitive διδασχῆς. “Let us go on to perfection,” says the author, “not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God....” Does he then continue with “of teaching [διδασχῆς] about ablutions” or with “teaching [διδασχῆν] about ablutions”? If διδασχῆς is read, it is one of a series of genitives all dependent on θεμέλιον and indicating what the foundation consists

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of. If διδασχῆν is read, it is in apposition to θεμέλιον, and the genitives which follow are (like (βαπτισμῶν) dependent on διδασχῆν, not on θελέλιον—“teaching about ablutions and the

imposition of hands, about resurrection of the dead and final judgment.” Although διδαχὴν is so sparsely attested in comparison with διδαχῆς, it has serious claims to be recognized as the original reading. It is difficult to see why διδαχῆς should have been changed to διδαχὴν, while the accusative might easily have been changed to the genitive under the influence of the series of adjacent genitives—μετανοίας and πίστεως preceding it and ἐπιθέσεως, ἀναστάσεως, and κρίματος following it.

Moffatt (1924: 73-75) prefers the accusative διδαχὴν, although he says “it make no difference which reading is chosen.” Zuntz (1953: 93-94) argues strongly for the accusative: the genitive, he submits, is “inadmissible”—not only is it “stylistically bad” but “it makes it impossible to construe the sentence.” The committee which produced UBS³, on the other hand, regarded διδαχὴν as a “stylistic improvement introduced in order to avoid so many genitives” (Metzger 1971: 666). Moffatt and Zuntz are right, though Zuntz overstates his case.

Hebrews 9:11

χριστὸς δὲ παραγενόμενος ἀρχιερεὺς τῶν γενομένων ἀγαθῶν
γενομένων **ϣ**⁴⁶ (γεναμένων) B D* 1739 lat^{d e} syr^{pesh hcl pal} Orig Cyr Chrys al
μελλόντων **Σ** A D^c K P 33 81 Byz lat^{vg} syr^{hcl.mg} cop arm eth Euseb

The evidence is fairly evenly divided between the two readings. Although μελλόντων has majority support, γενομένων has in its favor “the combination of the oldest Greek and Latin with the Syriac evidence,” which, says Zuntz, “is in itself almost irresistible” (1953: 119).

Is Christ “high priest of the good things that are to come” or “high priest of the good things that have come to pass”? Either reading makes sense in the context. But since the law is described in Heb 10:1 as having “a shadow of the good things that are to come [τῶν μελλόντων ἀγαθῶν]” it seems probable that the wording of that passage, about which there is no doubt, has influenced the text of Heb 9:11. The “good things that are to come,” which were foreshadowed in the law, are now, since the advent of Christ, the “good things that have come to pass.”

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Hebrews 9:19

λαβὼν τὸ αἷμα τῶν μόσχων [καὶ τῶν τράγων] ... ἐράντισεν
τῶν μόσχων καὶ τῶν τράγων **Σ*** A C 81 326 629 2464 al lat cop^{sah.codd}
τῶν μόσχων καὶ τράγων Byz Cop^{boh}
τῶν τράγων καὶ τῶν μόσχων D 365 cop^{sah.codd}
τῶν μόσχων **ϣ**⁴⁶ **Σ**² K L Ψ 181 1241 1739 1881 2495 al syr^{pesh} Orig

For this act of sprinkling did Moses take the blood of calves and goats or the blood of calves only? The occasion referred to is the institution of the Sinai covenant, recorded in Exod 24:3-8. The young men who assisted Moses sacrificed calves (LXX μοσχάρια) as a “peace offering” to Yahweh (Exod 24:5); it was the blood of these calves that Moses took and sprinkled. Conformity to the LXX wording (which in this respect follows the MT) would suggest that the shorter text, mentioning one kind of animal only, is to be preferred. In that

case καὶ [τῶν] τράγων would be an addition made under the influence of Heb 9:12, where “the blood of goats and calves” is mentioned. (It is certainly the influence of Heb 9:12 that is responsible for the variant sequence τῶν τράγων καὶ τῶν μόσχων found in a few witnesses in v. 19.) Zuntz (1953: 55) thinks that the agreement of P^{46} with many later witnesses is a decisive argument for the shorter reading. On the other hand, the agreement of Alexandrian, “Western,” and Byzantine witnesses in favor of the longer reading is impressive. If the longer reading is original, the shorter reading is easily explained by harmonization with the LXX. UBS¹ originally opted for the shorter reading, but the committee responsible for UBS³ decided to add the words καὶ τῶν τράγων, but within square brackets, “in order to indicate a certain doubt that they belong there” (Metzger 1971: 669). The issue remains undecided; on balance (*me iudice*) there is a slight preponderance in favor of the shorter reading.

Hebrews 10:1

σκιὰν γὰρ ἔχων ὁ νόμος τῶν μελλόντων ἀγαθῶν, οὐκ αὐτὴν τὴν εἰκόνα τῶν πραγμάτων
οὐκ αὐτὴν] καὶ P^{46}

The problem here (if problem there be) is not the ascertaining of the original text, which is not in doubt; it lies in the explanation of

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the singular reading καὶ τὴν εἰκόνα instead of οὐκ αὐτὴν τὴν εἰκόνα in P^{46} . (There are a Couple of minor variants—οὐ κατὰ in 69 and οὐκ αὐτῶν in 1908—but these are patent misreadings of οὐκ αὐτὴν and need not detain us.) The true text makes a distinction in sense between σκιά and εἰκὼν—σκιά is a shadow and nothing more, no substitute for the substance, while εἰκὼν is a replica, if not the equivalent, of the reality itself. Zuntz (1953: 22) compares Iamblichus, *De communi mathematica scientia* 6, which advocates a “turning from the shadows to the images and the light”: μεταστροφή ἀπὸ τῶν σκιῶν ἐπὶ τὰ εἶδωλα καὶ τὸ φῶς (εἶδωλον being a synonym of εἰκὼν). Kittel (1964: 393) refers to the legend of Rabbi Bana’ah (Babylonian Talmud *Baba Batra* 58a), who was permitted to inspect Abraham’s tomb, but not Adam’s, because (said God) Abraham was made in “the likeness of my image” [*bidēmūt dē ’iqōnī*]” but Adam in “my image itself” [*bidēyōqānī ’ašmā*],” Hebrew *’iqōn*, or its reverential transformation *deyōqān*, being a loanword from εἰκὼν. Adam, according to Gen 1:26-27, was made “in the image [κατ’ εἰκόνα] of God,” and when Paul speaks of Christ as “the image [εἰκὼν] of God” (2 Cor 4:4), the implication probably is that he is the “image” of God after which Adam was created. Certainly the description of Christ as the image of God does not suggest that he is but a pale reflection of God; rather, he is the invisible God made visible (cf. Col 1:15).

The reading of P^{46} is not an accidental misreading: it is a deliberate change of the text rising from a conviction that “image” and “shadow” are practically synonymous, both being set in contrast with the substance or reality. Clement of Alexandria (*Stromata* 6:7:58:770) evidently shared this view: ὁ νόμος σκιά καὶ εἰκὼν τῆς ἀληθείας ‘the law is a shadow and image of the reality’, in fairly clear allusion to Heb 10:1. But it is not the view of the writer to the Hebrews.

Hebrews 10:38

ὁ δὲ δίκαιός μου ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται

The above reading is supported by \mathfrak{P}^{46} \aleph H* 1739 *al* lat^{vet.pl vg} cop^{sah} arm Clem.Alex
Theodoret

ὁ δὲ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεώς μου ζήσεται D* 1518 1611 lat^{d e} syr^{pesh hcl} Euseb

ὁ δὲ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται \mathfrak{P}^{13} D^c H^c K P Ψ Byz TR syr^{pal} cop^{boh} eth Chrys
Euthal

This is a quotation from Hab 2:4b (LXX), which adds the possessive μου (not found in the MT). The reading of Heb 10:38 without μου,

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early and well attested as it is (\mathfrak{P}^{13} belongs to the 3d or 4th century), may safely be left out of the reckoning: it represents most probably an assimilation to the two Pauline instances of the quotation (Gal 3:11, Rom 1:17). The variation in the position of μου is a feature of the LXX text as well as of Heb 10:38. LXX^B reads μου after ἐκ πίστεως, LXX^A reads μου before ἐκ πίστεώς (although Codex A itself reads μου in both positions in Hab 2:4b—manifestly a secondary development). While ἐκ πίστεώς μου must mean ‘by my faith’ (possibly with the force ‘by faith in me’) or ‘by my faithfulness’, μου ἐκ πίστεως may have the same sense with greater emphasis on μου or μου may be attached to ὁ δίκαιος ‘my righteous one’. It seems likely that μου in the LXX arises from reading Hebrew *’emûnātô* ‘his faith(fulness)’, as *’emûnātî* ‘my faith(fulness)’. Most LXX editors regard ἐκ πίστεως μου as the original text; some indeed regard μου ἐκ πίστεώς; in the A group as an assimilation of the LXX text to that of Heb 10:38. Most NT editors and exegetes opt for ὁ δὲ δίκαιός μου ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται in Heb 10:38 (see Zuntz 1953: 173; Metzger 1971: 670-71). T. W. Manson (1945: 124) argues for this as the true LXX reading also: “my righteous one” is the person of God’s choice, the Messiah, in other words—the one who will not only live by faithfulness but also “will surely come and not delay.” In the context of Heb 10:38, however, each of the readers may qualify as God’s “righteous one” and confirm this qualification by pressing on to salvation instead of drawing back to perdition.

Hebrews 11:11

πίστει—καὶ αὐτὴ Σάρρα στεῖρα—δύναμιν εἰς καταβολὴν σπέρματος ἔλαβεν καὶ παρὰ καιρὸν ἡλικίας

αὐτὴ Σάρρα στεῖρα \mathfrak{P}^{46} D* Ψ lat *om* στεῖρα \mathfrak{P}^{13} vid \aleph A D^c 33 614 Byz

αὐτὴ Σάρρα ἢ στεῖρα D¹ 6 81 1241 1739 1881 *pc*

αὐτὴ Σάρρα στεῖρα οὔσα P 104 365 2495 *pc*

ἔλαβεν] ἔλαβεν εἰς τὸ τεκνῶσαι D* \mathfrak{P} 81 2495 *pc* lat^{b vg.cod} (syr^{hcl})

ἡλικίας] ἡλικίας ἔτεκεν \aleph^2 D² Byz lat^b syr

The textual question here is bound up with the exegesis of the sentence. Whose faith, according to the author, led to Sarah’s pregnancy? The nominative αὐτὴ Σάρρα might suggest that it was Sarah’s; the phrase εἰς καταβολὴν σπέρματος shows that it was Abraham’s. For

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καταβολήν σπέρματος 'the deposition of seed' refers to the father's role in the act of generation. It does not matter how often εἰς καταβολήν σπέρματος is translated 'for the conception of seed' as though it referred to the mother's role; that is not what καταβολή means.

Tasker (1955: 183) asks if we "know enough about Greek usage at the time to say definitely that an active noun of this kind could not also carry a passive sense"; he mentions the reference in Moulton and Milligan (1930: 324) to a first-century papyrus attestation of καταβολαῖος in the sense of 'store-place'—but καταβολαῖος (sc. τόπος) used thus is "a place where one deposits [καταβάλλει] things." All that we know of the usage of καταβολή makes it most improbable that it could be employed in the sense of conception. "For the conception of seed" would be expressed by εἰς σύλληψιν σπέρματος, and that is not what the author says. A writer so sensitive to Hellenistic usage knew what he intended to say, and knew how to say it.

The situation, however, is complicated on the one hand by the fact that στεῖρα is omitted in the majority of texts, and on the other hand that ἔτεκεν is added after ἡλικίας by the majority text (to the same effect a few other witnesses insert εἰς τὸ τεκνῶσαι before παρὰ καιρὸν ἡλικίας). If ἔτεκεν 'she gave birth' or εἰς τὸ τεκνῶσαι 'with a view to bearing a child' were original, then Sarah would have perforce to be the subject of the clause, but both additions are based on the assumption that this is so, and represent attempts to make this sense more explicit; they are what Zuntz (1953: 170) calls *Schlimmbesserungen* (false improvements). Without these additions Abraham is as clearly the subject of v. 11 as of vv. 10 and 12: "By faith also he received strength for the deposition of seed when he was past the age for it."

But what of Sarah, who receives honorable mention in the text as it stands? If στεῖρα be accepted, then καὶ αὐτὴ Σάρρα στεῖρα is best treated, as in UBS³, as a circumstantial clause: "Sarah herself being barren" (cf. Black 1967: 83-89). If στεῖρα, on the other hand, is no part of the original text, then αὐτὴ Σάρρα is best construed in the dative (αὐτῇ Σάρρα), the dative of accompaniment: "By faith also, together with Sarah, he received strength..." (cf. Riggensbach 1922: 356ff.; Michel 1949: 262).

More drastic is the attempt to reject αὐτὴ Σάρρα from the text as a gloss (Field 1899: 232; Windisch 1931: 101; Zuntz 1953: 16): "καὶ αὐτὴ makes a poor connexion (it is typical of 'Scholiasten Griechisch'): 'likewise' is the only admissible translation. This makes nonsense of the context: who else is said to have received, through faith, δύναμιν εἰς καταβολήν σπέρματος?" These objections of Zuntz to

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the genuineness of αὐτὴ Σάρρα are met if we are dealing here with a circumstantial clause (καὶ αὐτὴ Σάρρα στεῖρα) or with a dative of accompaniment (αὐτῇ Σάρρα).

Hebrews 11:37

ἐλιθάσθησαν, ἐπίσθησαν, ἐν φόνῳ μαχαίρης ἀπέθανον
ἐλιθάσθησαν, ἐπίσθησαν \mathfrak{P}^{46} 1241 1981 *pc* syr^{pesh} eth^{ro} pp Orig^{gr} 2/7, lat Euseb Eph
Hier *al*
ἐπίσθησαν ἐλιθάσθησαν *cop*^{sah}
ἐλιθάσθησαν ἐπειράσθησαν lat^{vg.cod} Clem.Alex
ἐλιθάσθησαν ἐπιράσθησαν ἐπιράσθησαν D*
ἐλιθάσθησαν ἐπίσθησαν ἐπειρίσθησαν \mathfrak{P}^{13} vid A D² K 88 Byz lat^{vet} vg (syr^{pal})
cop^{boh} arm Orig Eph Ambr Chrys Theodoret Joh.Dam
ἐλιθάσθησαν ἐπρήσθησαν ἐπειράσθησαν Ψ ^{vid} 1923
ἐλιθάσθησαν ἐπειράσθησαν ἐπίσθησαν \aleph L P 048 (ἐπιρ- for ἐπειρ-) 33 81 326
2495 *pc* syr^{pesh hcl} *cop*^{boh.cod} Euthal

The sequence in \mathfrak{P}^{46} and other witnesses, "they were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword (beheaded)," lists various kinds of capital punishment (stoning, as in 2 Chr 24:21, and beheading, as in Jer 26:23, are attested in the OT, while the sawing in two is perhaps a reference to the legend of Isaiah's martyrdom). The insertion of ἐπειράσθησαν 'they were exposed to trial' in this list is unnatural. A comparative examination of the witnesses suggests strongly that ἐπίσθησαν without ἐπειράσθησαν is the original reading, ἐπειράσθησαν being a "corrupt dittography" (Zuntz 1953: 47). So already Erasmus and Calvin.

The fact that ἐπειράσθησαν appears in several witnesses before and not after ἐπίσθησαν is a further indication of its secondary character. The form ἐπιράσθησαν (curiously duplicated) in D* is an itacistic spelling of ἐπειράσθησαν. The reading of Ψ ^{vid} and 1923, ἐπρήσθησαν, is an itacistic spelling of ἐπίσθησαν, but as spelled it happens to make good sense ('they were burnt'). Various attempts to emend ἐπειράσθησαν to a form deemed more appropriate in the context (for a list see Metzger 1971: 674) have been as unsuccessful as they are unnecessary.

Hebrews 12:1

ὄγκον ἀποθέμενοι πάντα καὶ τὴν εὐπερίστατον ἀμαρτίαν
εὐπερίστατον \mathfrak{P}^{13} \aleph A D K P Ψ Byz lat syr *cop* cett
εὐπερίσπαστον \mathfrak{P}^{46} 1739

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The attestation of εὐπερίστατον 'easily entangling' is so preponderant that the only reason for giving serious consideration to the variant εὐπερίσπαστον 'easily distracting' is its appearance in the oldest extant witness (\mathfrak{P}^{46}). For the sense of εὐπερίστατος we may compare ἀπερισπάστως 'without distraction' in 1 Cor 7:35. Zuntz (1953: 2529) argues in favor of εὐπερίσπαστον in Heb 12:1: "the meanings which can be attached to the rival reading [εὐπερίστατον] are so far inferior to this," he says, "as to make it justifiable, nay necessary, to regard the reading of \mathfrak{P}^{46} as original." He adds that εὐπερίστατον could only mean "surrounded by many", primarily in admiration." But the aptness of εὐπερίστατον to the context is defended by Simpson (1946: 26-27): he notes the converse term ἀπεριστατος 'unencumbered' used of Diogenes by Epictetus (*Dissertationes* 4:1:159) and suggests "sin so prone to hamper or trammel" as the sense of Heb 12:1. According to Metzger (1971: 675),

“εὐπερίσπαστον is either a paleographical error or a deliberate modification of εὐπερίστατον.”

Hebrews 12:3

ἀναλογίσασθε γὰρ τὸν τοιαύτην ὑπομεμενηκότα ὑπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτωλῶν εἰς ἑαυτὸν ἀντιλογίαν

εἰς ἑαυτὸν / εἰς αὐτόν A D^c K P Ψ* 88 104 181 326 614 1241 1739^c 1877 1881 2495
Chrys Joh.Dam

εἰς ἑαυτούς / εἰς αὐτούς ρ¹³ ρ⁴⁶ ρ^{*b} D* Ψ² 048 33 81 451 1739* 2127 2492 Orig Eph
al

The plural pronoun has earliest and strongest attestation. But what is the sense in this context of “the opposition of sinners against them(selves)”? It is pointless to draw attention to Num 16:38 (17:3 MT, LXX), “sinners against themselves” (τῶν ἁμαρτωλῶν τούτων ἐν ταῖς ψυχαῖς αὐτῶν), as do Westcott and Hort (1881: 612): apart from anything else, the construction of Heb 12:3 would require εἰς ἑαυτούς (if that were the reading) to be taken with ἀντιλογίαν, not with ἁμαρτωλῶν. Attempts to make sense of the plural, like those of Inge (1933: 14)—“He, whom we so often ‘contradict,’ is our true self”—are unsuccessful. Riggensbach (1922: 391) does not exaggerate in saying that the plural reading is “very strongly attested, but absolutely meaningless.” Zuntz (1953: 120) rightly discerns in the plural reading “one more instance of that ‘primitive corruption’ which Westcott and Hort [1882: 129] recognized in this epistle,” a corruption which was corrected by a happy conjecture which must approximate closely to the original text.

[p.38]

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An amateur in textual criticism might well feel some trepidation in offering an exercise like this to Dr. Greenlee. His pioneer work on Codex Zacynthius and the gospel text of Cyril of Jerusalem, together with his *Introduction to New Testament Textual Criticism* have long since vindicated his standing as an authority in the text-critical field. An exegete welcomes the textual critic’s aid in establishing a reliable text as an indispensable prerequisite for his own studies. If one conclusion emerges from the examination of these textual problems in Hebrews, it is the inevitable interrelation between text and exegesis, with the corollary that textual criticism must always be “rational”—must always do justice to the sense intended by the author. In friendship and admiration, then, I gladly make this contribution to the volume in honor of Dr. Greenlee.

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