

Introduction to Hebrews

Authorship

The letter to the Hebrews is an anonymous work. LDS have generally tended to take the position that Paul was its author, based on the fact that Joseph Smith consistently referred to the author of the epistle as Paul. This assumes, however, that the Prophet specifically considered the question of authorship and received revelatory insight on the matter, yet there is no evidence whatsoever that this is the case. Rather, it appears that Joseph simply assumed Pauline authorship based on Christian tradition and the ascription of the epistle to Paul in the heading of the KJV. In the absence of modern revelation on the subject, LDS need not feel bound by casual ascriptions of the material to Paul in nineteenth century LDS sources. We are therefore not contravening any known modern revelation when we consider the question of authorship afresh.

Many Christians in the east from as early as the second century believed that Paul was the author of the letter. The oldest extant manuscript of the letter (p⁴⁶), which dates to about AD 200, places Hebrews immediately after Paul's letter to the Romans. In the west, however, there was much more uncertainty regarding authorship. Tertullian, for instance, observed that Hebrews was not written in a Pauline style, and Hippolytus and the presbyter Gaius similarly denied Pauline authorship. Eventually, however, Christians in the west who used Hebrews to help combat Arianism in the Trinitarian controversies popularized the idea that it had been written by Paul. Both Rufinus and Ambrose accepted Pauline authorship. Jerome acknowledged the controversy that existed over the question, but ultimately ascribed the epistle to Paul. Augustine in his early writings simply identified Paul as its author. Although in his later writings he refrained from making such an identification, he did include the epistle within the church's authoritative scriptures. Eventually Pauline authorship became a traditional position, although Hebrews was placed at the very end of the Pauline corpus in the New Testament so as to reflect the earlier uncertainty over who had actually written the letter.

Although Pauline authorship was assumed throughout the Middle Ages, the question eventually was reopened, beginning with the writings of Desiderius Erasmus in 1516. Erasmus rejected Pauline authorship, given the letter's anonymity (unlike Paul's authentic letters, in which he always identified himself), its distinctive style, and the concerns that had been raised by early Christian fathers. Martin Luther in his early writings assumed Pauline authorship, but in the preface to his translation of Hebrews he finally rejected it. Luther pointed out that the letter had been written by someone who received the gospel secondhand (Heb. 2:3), which was not true of Paul (Gal. 1:11-12). Luther opined that the letter was written by an able and learned man who had been a disciple of the apostles. The Luther Bible numbered the first 23 books of the NT, but not the last four: Hebrews (which Luther moved to the position fourth from the end, as did William Tyndale), James, Jude and Revelation. Lutheran scholars long debated whether these *antilegomena*, or "disputed" writings, belonged in the canon. The Reformed tradition did not harbor such doubts about the book's canonicity, but it too reflected serious doubts about Pauline authorship. Tyndale declined to say who wrote Hebrews, and John Calvin rejected Pauline authorship outright. Most Roman Catholic scholars of

the period continued to maintain the medieval position of Pauline authorship, although some, such as Cardinal Cajetan (Thomas de Vio) in the early 16th century, vigorously rejected Pauline authorship.

From the mid-18th century to the end of the 19th century (and continuing to the present), modern Bible scholarship conducted a rigorous review of the authorship question, at the end of which not even the most conservative scholars any longer defended the position that Paul had written Hebrews. It is true that there are elements of style, imagery and vocabulary that are shared by Hebrews and Paul. Nevertheless, the arguments against Pauline authorship eventually came to be seen as overwhelming. The most important of these arguments has to do with the Greek style of the letter; Hebrews represents the finest Greek in the New Testament, much more elegant than Paul's simpler style. The epistolary introduction usual in Paul's letters is missing. Scriptures are introduced by different formulae than those used by Paul. Many of Paul's recurrent theological themes find no place in Hebrews, and many of the concepts articulated in Hebrews (such as Christ as high priest) find no place in Paul's letters. The mode of argument in Hebrews seems to be based on Hellenistic models current in Alexandria, Egypt, and is different from the way Paul argued.

LDS scholar Sidney B. Sperry considered this question and the evidence very carefully, and concluded that given "the very great dissimilarity in style or literary form between Hebrews and the uncontested letters of Paul . . . the author cannot honestly believe that Paul was its actual writer and responsible for its literary form." (in *Paul's Life and Letters* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1955], 268-72). Certain LDS leaders, including B. H. Roberts, James Talmage, Hugh B. Brown, Mark E. Peterson, Howard W. Hunter, Jeffrey R. Holland and Thomas S. Monson, have recognized the uncertainty of the authorship of the epistle, and therefore generally have referred obliquely to "the author" or "the writer" rather than "Paul" when referring to the person who wrote it, a practice we shall follow in our notes to this letter.

If Paul did not write Hebrews, then who did? Some, such as Sperry, argued for an *indirect* authorship by Paul. Under this theory, perhaps Paul wrote Hebrews originally in Hebrew, and the text was then translated into Greek by another, such as Luke or Clement. There are serious difficulties with such a theory, however, inasmuch as the text of Hebrews does not give indications of having been translated from a Semitic original. Most believe that if Paul did not write Hebrews, it must have been written by one of his companions. Speculation has centered on Barnabas, Apollos, Silas, Priscilla and Aquilla. Ultimately, however, arguments for or against such individuals are too speculative to be definitive. Most scholars today simply accept the comment of Origen, who, although he often casually referred to Paul as the author of the book (much as Joseph Smith did), when he specifically considered the question concluded that the identity of the author of Hebrews is known to God alone.

Manuscript History

The earliest manuscripts date to the third century. The earliest three manuscripts are as follows:

- P46, or P. Chester Beatty II+University of Michigan inventory 6238 is housed in two collections in Dublin, Ireland and Ann Arbor, Michigan. The papyrus contains portions of many New Testament books. The portions of Hebrews that it contains is Hebrews 1:1-9:16; 9:18-10:20; 10:22-30; 10:32-13:25, and thus is virtually complete. This manuscript has been dated paleographically to the early third century AD.
- P12 or P. Amherst 3b, now housed in the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York as Pap. Gr. 3, contains only Hebrews 1:1, and has been paleographically dated to the third century AD.
- P13, or P. Oxy. 657+PSI 1292 is housed in two collections, the British Library in London (inv. 1532) and in Florence in the Bibliotheca Laurenziana. These fragments contain Hebrews 2:14-5:5; 10:8-22; 10:29-11:13; 11:28-12:17. They have been dated paleographically to the third or fourth centuries AD.

Many other Greek manuscripts have survived, but all date later than these three.

Canon

As described above under the caption “Authorship,” the uncertainty over whether Paul wrote the letter led to a relatively late acceptance of Hebrews into the New Testament canon. The Muratorian canon (c. AD 170-190) accepts the 13 letters that bear Paul’s name, but makes no mention of Hebrews. The gradual acceptance of Pauline authorship of the letter eventually secured the position of Hebrews within the canon, notwithstanding the later reopening of the question whether Hebrews is an authoritative work of scripture in the Lutheran tradition.

Setting

Since Hebrews is quoted in 1 Clement, which dates to about AD 96, it must have been written before that date. Broadly, the letter appears to have been written some time between AD 60 and 90. It is difficult to be more precise than that. The letter mentions “our brother Timothy” (Heb. 13:23), who had apparently been in prison but has now been released and is traveling to meet those addressed in the letter. This reference, together with allusions to the deaths of prior community leaders, suggests that the letter was not written earlier than the 60s. References to earlier persecutions may indicate that the community was in Rome and refer to the edict of Claudius, who in AD 49 expelled Jews and Jewish Christians from the City. References to Levitical sacrifices are given in the present tense, and no mention is made of the destruction of the temple, which may suggest a date prior to AD 70. The letter appears to have been written to a community of Jewish Christians living in Rome (although some would argue for a destination in Palestine), many of whom seem to have been on the verge of forsaking Christianity and returning to their original Jewish faith.

Outline

- I. Introduction (1:1-3)

- II. The Supremacy of Christ
 - A. Jesus is greater than the angels (1:4-2:18)
 - B. Jesus is greater than Moses (3:1-6)
 - C. The superiority of Jesus' word (3:7-4:13)
- III. The High Priesthood of Christ (4:14-7:28)
- IV. The New Covenant (8)
- V. Arrangement and Ritual of the Sanctuary (9)
- VI. Old v. New Sacrifices (10:1-18)
- VII. The Achievements of Faith (10:19-11:40)
- VIII. Exhortations and Warnings (12:1-13:25)

Further Readings

Non-LDS Sources:

Koester, Craig R. *Hebrews: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. New York: Doubleday, 2001.

LDS Sources:

Anderson, Richard Lloyd. *Understanding Paul*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1983. Pp. 195-229.

Matthews, Robert J. "I Have a Question." *Ensign* 17 (Aug. 1987): 21. [Discusses the role of Melchizedek in Hebrews 5.]

Parry, Jay A. and Donald W. Parry. "The Temple in Heaven: Its Description and Significance." In *Temples of the Ancient World*, ed. Donald W. Parry, 515-32. Salt Lake City: Deseret and FARMS, 1994.

Schramm, Clarence F. "Hebrews." *A Symposium on the New Testament*. Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1984. Pp. 54-58.

Taylor, J. Lewis. "New Testament Backgrounds: Hebrews." *Ensign* 6 (Apr. 1976): 56-59.

Welch, John W. "The Melchizedek Material in Alma 13:13-19." In *By Study and Also by Faith*, ed. John M. Lundquist and Stephen D. Ricks. Salt Lake City: Deseret and FARMS, 1990. Pp. 2:238-72.

The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews

Chapter 1

God Has Spoken by His Son

¹ GOD, who at sundry times and in divers manners¹ spake in time past² unto the fathers³ by the prophets,⁴ ² Hath in these last days⁵ spoken unto us by *his* Son,⁶ whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;⁷ ³ Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image⁸ of his person,⁹ and upholding all things by

¹ πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως *polumerōs kai polutropōs* on many occasions and in various ways. Some take the first word as meaning “in various parts,” suggesting that the witness of the prophets was fragmentary or partial, and came only gradually, bit by bit (or line upon line); I follow the AB here, taking the word as referring to the many different times and occasions on which God spoke to his prophets. “In various ways” alludes to the different methods by which prophets received revelation, such as by dreams, visions, through the divine council, and so forth. Note the alliteration in these opening words of the letter.

² IE anciently.

³ IE their ancestors, to whom the prophets spoke; “our forefathers.”

⁴ Many of whom the author will quote in this letter. This reference to OT prophecy establishes a foundation for the substantial quoting of OT scripture in which the author is about to engage.

⁵ In contrast to “times past.” These vv. involve a series of contrasts. God had spoken anciently by the prophets to the fathers; now God has spoken in the last days by a Son to us.

⁶ Note that the KJV italicizes “his,” which is not lit. present in the text. The GR lacks both the definite article and any possessive pronoun here; it literally says “by a Son.”

⁷ IE the Father created the worlds by the Son, as is also expressed in John 1:4. “The worlds” here is the plural form τοὺς αἰῶνας *tous aiōnas*. This word can be understood either spatially (the worlds; IE the universe) or temporally (referring to ages of time).

⁸ χαρακτῆρ *charaktēr* representation. This word is the source of ENG “character.” It refers to an image or representation of something else, much like the image a seal makes (which is a near-exact copy of the signet), or the representation of a person on a coin or with a statue.

⁹ τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ *tēs hupostaseōs autou* his reality. The Greek-derived term hypostasis is the linguistic equivalent of the Latin-derived term “substance,” meaning lit. that which stands under something, its basis. In the Nicene Creed (AD 325) the word was used to mean “being,” but by the Second Council of Chalcedon (AD 553) the word was distinguished from “being” and meant “person.” (The classical dogma of the Trinity posits that God is one being, but three persons.) The KJV use of “person” here reflects this later theological use of the word. In this pre-Nicene scripture, however, the sense of

the word of his power,¹⁰ when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty¹¹ on high;¹² ⁴ Being made so much better¹³ than the angels,¹⁴ as he hath by inheritance¹⁵ obtained a more excellent name than they.

The Son Superior to Angels

⁵ For unto which of the angels¹⁶ said he¹⁷ at any time,

**Thou art my Son,¹⁸
this day¹⁹ have I begotten thee?²⁰**

And again,²¹

**I will be to him a Father,
and he shall be to me a Son?²²**

the expression is “an exact representation of (God’s) real being.” The idea is that while people could not see God the Father, who was in heaven, they could see Jesus Christ, the Son, here on earth, and so were able to experience with their own senses the image and reality of the Father himself.

¹⁰ A Hebraism for “his powerful word.”

¹¹ A circumlocution for God the Father.

¹² IE in heaven. There is an allusion here to Ps. 110:1, which is actually quoted below.

¹³ κρείττων *kreittōn*, “better,” appears 13 times in the letter and is a characteristic of it, as the author repeatedly argues the superiority of Christ over every other religious figure and institution.

¹⁴ This introduces the argument of the next section, that the Son is superior to the angels.

¹⁵ The imagery of inheritance alludes back to “heir of all things” from v. 2.

¹⁶ The author introduces a rhetorical question, the implied answer to which is “none.” In fact, the OT does often refer to heavenly beings, later understood to be angels, that were called the “sons of God,” as in Gen. 6:2, Dt. 32:8-9 (where MT “sons of Israel” originally read “sons of God,” as shown in two DSS fragments and the most important LXX ms. of Dt.; most LXX mss. read there “angels of God”), Job 1:6, Ps. 29:1 and 89:7, but the author either assumes the reader is unfamiliar with such usage, or else distinguishes it on the basis that “sons of God” is idiomatic and does not suggest sonship in the same sense that Jesus Christ is God’s Son.

¹⁷ IE God the Father.

¹⁸ In its original context this passage from the Psalms alluded to the Lord’s anointed king, but it was early given a messianic interpretation, which is its assumed meaning here.

¹⁹ If this “begetting” is to be understood literally, it apparently has reference to the Incarnation. But it could also be taken symbolically, in which event it could refer to the resurrection and exaltation of Christ, to the Transfiguration, or to Jesus’ baptism (since this Psalm is alluded to in connection with each of those events as well).

²⁰ Ps. 2:7.

²¹ “Again” is often used in Hebrews to introduce another OT quotation.

⁶ And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten²³ into the world,²⁴ he saith,

And let all the angels of God worship him.²⁵

⁷ And of²⁶ the angels he saith,

Who maketh his angels spirits,²⁷ and his ministers²⁸ a flame of fire.²⁹

²² 2 Sam. 7:14. In its original context this passage derives from the oracle of the prophet Nathan to David that his throne should be established forever. The DSS at 4QFlor 1:10-11 give 2 Sam. 7:14 a messianic interpretation and link it with Ps. 2, as the author of Hebrews does here. The author assumes that a messianic interpretation of the v. is apparent.

²³ πρωτότοκον *prōtotokon* firstborn. This alludes back to the divine begetting mentioned in v. 5. Also, the firstborn had special rights of inheritance under ancient laws of primogeniture; the word therefore also alludes back to the theme of the Son's divine heirship in vv. 2 and 4.

²⁴ οἰκουμένην *oikoumenēn* can be used as a technical designation for the Roman empire, but here it means the inhabited earth (exclusive of the heavens above and the nether regions below).

²⁵ The quote derives from the LXX of either Dt. 32:43 or Ps. 97:7, or perhaps is a combination of both passages. The KJV of Ps. 97:7 says "worship him, all ye gods," following the MT, but the LXX says "all God's angels worship him." The first half of LXX Dt. 32:43 (not reflected in the KJV, which follows the MT) reads as follows (translation is from AB):

Rejoice, O heavens, along with him, and let all the sons of God bow down before him.

Rejoice, O nations, with his people and let all the angels of God ascribe strength to him.

The Hebrews quote appears to derive from the end of the first line, but substituting "angels of God" for "sons of God." The author may have read from a text of Deuteronomy that has not survived, or he may have simply emended the text on his own to suit his purpose here.

²⁶ Although the GR preposition πρὸς *pros* can mean "concerning," as the KJV takes it here, that word is followed both here and in the next v. by the GR particles μὲν *men* and δὲ *de*, respectively. This suggests that the construction in these two vv. is parallel, and the word should therefore be rendered here as "to." The sense is something like "On the one hand he says to the angels [quote in v. 7], but on the other hand he says to the Son [quote in vv. 8-9]." A contrast is meant between what the Father says to the angels and what he says to the Son.

²⁷ πνεύματα *pneumata* is ambiguous and can mean spirits, winds or breaths (the same ambiguity exists in HEB). In v. 14 it is clear from the context that the word definitely means "spirits," so that is perhaps the best translation here as well.

⁸ But unto the Son *he saith*,

**Thy throne, O God,³⁰ is for ever and ever:
a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.
⁹ Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity;
therefore God, *even thy God*,³¹ hath anointed thee
with the oil of gladness³² above³³ thy fellows.³⁴**

¹⁰ And,

**Thou, Lord,³⁵ in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth;³⁶
and the heavens are the works of thine hands:
¹¹ They shall perish; but thou remainest;
and they all shall wax³⁷ old as doth a garment;
¹² And as a vesture³⁸ shalt thou fold them up,³⁹**

²⁸ λειτουργοὺς *leitourgous* those engaged in (religious) service. This word is the source of ENG “liturgy.”

²⁹ Ps. 104:4. “Flame of fire” is a Hebraism for “flaming fire.” The point of the quote is that the angels are servants of God, which implies a lower status than the Son, since the son of a household is always greater than its servants.

³⁰ In its original context these words are addressed to God. Here the speaker is God the Father; note that he addresses the Son as “God.”

³¹ The KJV takes the first “God” as the subject of the verb, and the second as an appositive, more clearly identifying that subject. More likely, the first occurrence should be a vocative, with the second being the subject of the verb: “therefore, O God, thy God hath anointed thee.” On the KJV’s reading both occurrences of “God” refer to the Father; on this other possible reading, the first refers to the Son and the second to the Father.

³² Kings were anointed with oil; the Hebrew-derived title Messiah (of which Christ is the Greek-derived counterpart) means “anointed one.” Since the anointing here is with the oil “of gladness,” the allusion to anointing is metaphorical.

³³ The sense of the GR preposition *παρὰ para* with the accusative here is “beyond,” rather than “to the exclusion of.” Although Jesus received this anointing ahead of his followers, they too may eventually receive it and share in this gladness in the kingdom to come.

³⁴ Ps. 45:6-7.

³⁵ Again, the author takes a text originally addressed to God and puts it on the Father’s lips addressing the Son.

³⁶ This passage again raises the theme of the Son as an agent of creation, as in v. 2.

³⁷ OR grow, become.

³⁸ OR as a garment. Hebrews adds these words to the OT quotation to show that the metaphor of the garment is continued. Some mss. omit the words so as to conform to the OT text.

**and they shall be changed:
but thou art the same,
and thy years shall not fail.⁴⁰**

¹³ But to which of the angels said he at any time,

**Sit on my right hand,⁴¹
until I make thine enemies thy footstool?⁴²**

¹⁴ Are they⁴³ not all ministering spirits,⁴⁴ sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?⁴⁵

Chapter 2

The Great Salvation

¹ THEREFORE we ought to give the more earnest heed⁴⁶ to the things which we have heard,⁴⁷ lest at any time we should let *them* slip.⁴⁸ ² For if the word spoken by angels⁴⁹ was stedfast,⁵⁰ and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward;⁵¹ ³ How shall we escape,⁵² if we neglect⁵³ so great salvation;

³⁹ In this simile, the Lord shall eventually fold up the heavens as a man folds his clothes. There may be an allusion to LXX Isa. 34:4 here, which says that the heavens will be rolled up like a scroll.

⁴⁰ Ps. 102:25-27.

⁴¹ IE the place of honor.

⁴² Ps. 110:1. This passage conceptually repeats the thought of v. 5. The author has already alluded to this Psalm passage in v. 3. On placing your foot on your enemy as a gesture of dominance, see Jos. 10:24.

⁴³ IE the angels.

⁴⁴ Alluding back to v. 7.

⁴⁵ The implied answer to the question is “yes.” Just as earlier (in vv. 2 and 4) Jesus was described as an heir of the Father, so we too may be heirs.

⁴⁶ OR we must pay greater attention.

⁴⁷ And thereby learnt.

⁴⁸ μήποτε παραρῶμεν *mēpote pararuōmen* so that we do not drift away. The image is of a boat without its moorings drifting away from shore. Those to whom this letter was sent were in danger of so drifting off.

⁴⁹ According to Jewish tradition, the Law was mediated to Moses through angels. The argument is *a fortiori*; if the Law, received by angelic mediation, is great, how much greater must be the Gospel preached by the Son (who is greater than the angels)?

⁵⁰ IE firm, immovable, but here with the connotation of legal validity.

⁵¹ “Reward” here is used in an unfavorable sense, and refers to punishment for sin.

⁵² IE the coming judgment.

which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed⁵⁴ unto us by them that heard *him*;⁵⁵ ⁴ God also bearing *them* witness,⁵⁶ both with signs and wonders, and with divers⁵⁷ miracles, and gifts⁵⁸ of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?

The Pioneer of Salvation

⁵ For unto the angels hath he not⁵⁹ put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak. ⁶ But one in a certain place⁶⁰ testified, saying,

What is man, that thou art mindful of him?

or the son of man,⁶¹ that thou visitest him?

⁷ Thou madest him a little lower than the angels;⁶²

⁵³ ἀμελήσαντες *amelēsantes* take no care for, be unconcerned about. This picture of “neglecting” salvation suggests the kind of gradual falling away portrayed by the image of a boat adrift from v. 1.

⁵⁴ ἐβεβαιώθη *ebebaiōthē* was validated; this word is the verbal form of the noun rendered “stedfast” in v. 2.

⁵⁵ The author of the letter appears to include himself with those who were not eyewitnesses of the Savior in the flesh.

⁵⁶ συνεπιμαρτυροῦντος *sunepimartuountos* lit. bearing witness together with. IE God stood as a corroborating witness to the testimony of the first Christians.

⁵⁷ OR various.

⁵⁸ μερισμοῖς *merismois* distributions (derived from the verb μερίζω *merizō* to separate into parts, divide [and distribute the pieces]). The word refers here to a distribution of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

⁵⁹ The position of the negative is first, and therefore emphatic, in GR: “*Not* unto the angels did he subject the world to come.”

⁶⁰ It should not be assumed from the failure of the author to give scriptural citations that he did not know where these passages were located. This author prefers to portray all scripture as coming directly from God as opposed to through the mediation of man.

⁶¹ In its original context, “son of man” was simply a Hebrew idiom meaning “human.” IE to be the “son of” something is to have the qualities or characteristics of that thing. That the terms man//son of man are in a parallel construction shows this. The author of Hebrews applies the passage first to all humanity, as in its original context, but then he gives it a specialized reading applying specifically to Jesus himself. As part of this specialized reading, the expression “son of man” may have the more messianic connotation it developed over time.

⁶² The MT of the Psalm has “you made him a little lower than אֱלֹהִים *elohim*.” The word *elohim* is ambiguous and can mean either “God” or “gods” (IE other divine beings). While the Psalm was meant to show the exalted position of man, eventually such a close relationship between man and God/gods came to be seen as problematic, and so the LXX substituted the word “angels” for “God/gods.” While in the HEB of the MT man is only a little lower (in status) than God/gods, in the GR of the LXX (which is followed in Hebrews) the expression βραχύ τι *brachu ti* should almost certainly be taken temporally; IE “you made him *for a little while* lower than the angels.” That is, this somewhat lower

**thou crownedst him with glory and honour,⁶³
and didst set him over the works of thy hands:⁶⁴
⁸Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet.⁶⁵**

For in that he put all in subjection under him,⁶⁶ he left nothing *that is* not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.⁹ But we see Jesus, **who was made a little lower⁶⁷ than the angels** for the suffering of death, **crowned with glory and honour;**⁶⁸ that he by the grace of God⁶⁹ should taste⁷⁰ death for every man.⁷¹
¹⁰For it became him,⁷² for whom *are* all things, and by whom *are* all things,⁷³ in bringing many sons⁷⁴ unto glory, to make the captain⁷⁵ of their salvation perfect⁷⁶ through

status is only temporary. The KJV here appears to be harking back to the reading of the HEB MT; it is not an accurate representation of the GR of Hebrews/LXX.

⁶³ Again reflecting the exalted position of man.

⁶⁴ The words “and didst set him over the works of thy hands” are missing from a number of important, early witnesses. These words were probably not original to the letter, but were added to make the quotation in Hebrews match the LXX of Ps. 8. The author of Hebrews may have been using a form of the LXX that has not survived or, more likely, he may have simply omitted these words as not being relevant to the point he wished to make here.

⁶⁵ Ps. 8:4-6 (from the LXX).

⁶⁶ IE Jesus. Here we see the author moving from the original context of the Psalm, which speaks of all mankind, to a messianic reading, applying the words specifically to the Savior himself.

⁶⁷ IE lower for a little while; temporarily lower.

⁶⁸ These words derive from and are a reprise of the Psalm just quoted. Jesus is made lower for a little while than the angels in his mortality, so that he may suffer and be crucified, but now is resurrected and exalted on high.

⁶⁹ χάριτι θεοῦ *chariti theou* by the grace of God. Some mss. read χωρὶς θεοῦ *chōris theou* apart from God. Most scholars believe that the text reflected in the KJV is original, and that the variant arose either from a scribal slip or, more likely, from a marginal gloss intended to make it clear that the atonement was not needed by God himself, which then was misunderstood as an actual correction by some scribes and brought directly into the text.

⁷⁰ IE experience.

⁷¹ Thereby effecting the atonement. While the GR ὑπὲρ παντὸς *hyper pantos* is probably to be taken as a masculine (common) gender, “for all people” (as in the KJV), some understand it as a neuter, “for all things,” which envisions redemption not only of mankind but of the whole of creation.

⁷² OR it was fitting for him. The reference here is to the Father.

⁷³ Although earlier (in 1:2) Jesus has been described as the agent of creation, here the Father is described as the ultimate author of creation.

⁷⁴ The masculine gender here is inclusive; therefore the word should be rendered either “children” or “sons and daughters.”

sufferings.¹¹ For both he that sanctifieth⁷⁷ and they who are sanctified⁷⁸ are all of one:⁷⁹ for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,¹² Saying,

**I will declare⁸⁰ thy name unto my brethren,
in the midst of the church⁸¹ will I sing praise⁸² unto thee.⁸³**

¹³ And again,

I will put my trust in him.⁸⁴

And again,

Behold I and the children which God hath given me.⁸⁵

¹⁴ Forasmuch then as the children⁸⁶ are partakers of flesh and blood,⁸⁷ he also himself likewise took part of the same;⁸⁸ that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;⁸⁹¹⁵ And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.⁹⁰¹⁶ For verily he took⁹¹ not on *him the nature of*

⁷⁵ ἀρχηγὸν *archēgon* originator, founder, leader. The word is derived from roots meaning “first” and “to lead”; it therefore has connotations both of originating and leading. AB renders “pioneer,” which is suggestive of both meanings.

⁷⁶ τελειῶσαι *teleiōsai* make complete, finish.

⁷⁷ IE Jesus.

⁷⁸ IE the children of God.

⁷⁹ This could refer to the common humanity of Jesus with us, or it could mean that we are all one, spiritually unified together with the Father (cf. John 17).

⁸⁰ The quotation follows the LXX version, except that this initial verb in Hebrews (“I will declare”) is “I will recount” in the LXX.

⁸¹ ἐκκλησίας *ekklēsias* assembly.

⁸² ὑμνήσω *humnēsō* I will sing praises. ENG “hymn” derives from the nominal form of this word.

⁸³ Ps. 22:22.

⁸⁴ Isa. 8:17; cf. 2 Sam. 22:3 and Isa. 12:2. In Isa., the prophet is the speaker; here, Jesus is the speaker.

⁸⁵ Isa. 8:18 (from the LXX). In its original context, the prophet is speaking of his own children, who had been given symbolic names (see Isa. 8:1-4) as signs to the people.

⁸⁶ IE the children of the kingdom, the children of God—humanity.

⁸⁷ Through their experience of mortality.

⁸⁸ IE Jesus too condescended to experience mortality.

⁸⁹ τὸν διάβολον *ton diabolon* the slanderer, the accuser, the adversary, the devil. This is the source of such ENG words as “diabolical” (as also “devil”). This is the GR word used to render HEB שָׂטָן *satan*.

⁹⁰ OR slavery.

⁹¹ ἐπιλαμβάνεται *epilambanetai* lit. take hold of. The KJV follows an older understanding that the verb means to “take on (the nature of),” which accounts for the

angels; but he took on *him* the seed⁹² of Abraham.¹⁷ Wherefore in all things it behoved him to⁹³ be made like unto *his* brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest⁹⁴ in things *pertaining* to God, to make reconciliation for⁹⁵ the sins of the people.¹⁸ For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.⁹⁶

Chapter 3

Jesus Superior to Moses

¹ WHEREFORE,⁹⁷ holy brethren,⁹⁸ partakers of the heavenly calling,⁹⁹ consider the Apostle¹⁰⁰ and High Priest¹⁰¹ of our profession,¹⁰² Christ Jesus; ² Who was faithful¹⁰³ to him¹⁰⁴ that appointed him,¹⁰⁵ as also Moses *was faithful* in all¹⁰⁶ his house.¹⁰⁷ ³ For this

italicized words in the v. Under this reading, the v. would mean that Christ did not take on the nature of angels, but that of the seed of Abraham. Modern scholarship does not support this understanding of the verb. It appears rather that the word either refers to “grasping” others (here for the purpose of saving them), or else it is used in a weakened sense of being concerned about or interested in (cf. the ENG idiom “to take on” a person or a project).

⁹² IE descendants of.

⁹³ OR he had to.

⁹⁴ The author here introduces the idea of a priestly messiah; Jewish tradition of the time looked to a priestly messiah in addition to a kingly messiah. The author will return to the theme of Jesus as High Priest later in the letter (in chapters 7-10).

⁹⁵ ἱλάσκεσθαι *hilaskesthai* to expiate. The allusion is to the making of an atonement for sin, just as the High Priest did on the Day of Atonement.

⁹⁶ Both occurrences of the word rendered “tempted” in this v. could also be rendered “tried.”

⁹⁷ IE continuing the argument from ch. 2.

⁹⁸ Members of the Christian community (including women).

⁹⁹ This calling both originates from heaven and will lead us to heaven.

¹⁰⁰ τόν ἀπόστολον *ton apostolon* one who has been sent; emissary.

¹⁰¹ That Jesus was a High Priest is a major theme of Hebrews.

¹⁰² Not in an occupational sense, but rather “that which we profess.”

¹⁰³ Both in the sense that he was worthy of trust and he executed the trust placed in him honorably.

¹⁰⁴ IE the Father.

¹⁰⁵ IE the Son.

¹⁰⁶ There is textual uncertainty as to whether the word “all” belongs in the text. It is missing in some witnesses, and may have been added to conform to the wording of the LXX version of Num. 12:7 or to the wording of v. 5 below, where the word is present. But the evidence for and against inclusion of the word is about evenly matched, and so the matter remains uncertain.

¹⁰⁷ This wording alludes to Num. 12:7, 1 Chron. 17:14 and 1 Sam. 2:35.

*man*¹⁰⁸ was counted worthy¹⁰⁹ of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house.¹¹⁰ ⁴ For every house is builded by some *man*,¹¹¹ but he that built¹¹² all things *is* God.⁵ And Moses verily *was* faithful in all his house,¹¹³ as a servant,¹¹⁴ for a testimony¹¹⁵ of those things which were to be spoken after;¹¹⁶ ⁶ But Christ as a son over his own house;¹¹⁷ whose house are we,¹¹⁸ if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.¹¹⁹

A Rest for the People of God

⁷ Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith,¹²⁰

To day if ye will hear his voice,¹²¹

**⁸ Harden not your hearts,¹²² as in the provocation,
in the day of temptation¹²³ in the wilderness:**

⁹ When your fathers tempted me, proved me,¹²⁴

¹⁰⁸ The GR simply says “this one” (note that “man” is italicized in the KJV text). The allusion is to Jesus.

¹⁰⁹ The verb is in the passive voice, which is probably to be taken as a “divine passive,” meaning that it was God himself who deemed Jesus worthy of greater glory than Moses.

¹¹⁰ Possibly an ancient proverb. The AB quotes Menander and others as saying that “the workman is greater than the work” (Justin 1 *Apology* 20).

¹¹¹ IE one can infer from the design and construction of a house that it was built by an artificer, as opposed to simply appearing by happenstance in nature

¹¹² κατασκευάσας *kataskueusas*. This word means both to build, to construct, to bring a structure into being, and to make it ready for some purpose. Note that the metaphor seems particularly inapt to any notion of creation out of nothing (*creatio ex nihilo*).

¹¹³ Alludes to Num. 12:7 (LXX).

¹¹⁴ θεραπῶν *therapōn* one who renders devoted service, especially in a cultic setting. This word would be appropriately used of a temple worker.

¹¹⁵ μαρτύριον *marturion* witness. This word is the source of ENG “martyr.” Note that in casual transliteration, the GR letter *upsilon* is often represented with the ENG letter “y.”

¹¹⁶ The passive voice of the verb suggests that it is God who will do the speaking.

¹¹⁷ The son of a household is greater than a servant of that household.

¹¹⁸ We represent the household of God.

¹¹⁹ This is the concept that is often expressed in LDS discourse as “enduring to the end.”

¹²⁰ Hebrews presents the OT scriptures as pure, divine speech.

¹²¹ Hearing God’s voice implies also obedience; IE actually doing God’s will.

¹²² Hardening one’s heart is metaphoric for refusing to do God’s will.

¹²³ Hebrews, following the LXX, has translated the HEB proper names Massah (“rebellion”; KJV “provocation”) and Meribah (“testing”; KJV “temptation”) used in the Psalm to give the incidents recorded at those locations as a part of the wandering of the children of Israel in the wilderness a more general application. The rebellion described here was precipitated by a lack of water. See Exo. 17:7; cf. Num. 20:13.

¹²⁴ IE their forefathers in the wilderness tested and tried God.

and saw my works¹²⁵ forty years.¹²⁶
¹⁰ Wherefore I was grieved¹²⁷ with that generation,¹²⁸
and said, They do alway err¹²⁹ in *their* heart;
and they have not known my ways.
¹¹ So I swear¹³⁰ in my wrath,
They shall not enter into my rest.)¹³¹

¹² Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.¹³² ¹³ But exhort one another daily, while it is called **To day**,¹³³ lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. ¹⁴ For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end,¹³⁴ ¹⁵ While it is said,

**To day if ye will hear his voice,
harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.**¹³⁵

¹⁶ For some, when they had heard, did provoke.¹³⁶ howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses.¹³⁷ ¹⁷ But with whom was he **grieved forty years**? *was it* not with them that

¹²⁵ The miracles of the sojourn in the wilderness, such as the appearance of manna.

¹²⁶ The period of the wandering in the wilderness.

¹²⁷ προσώχθισα *prosōchthisa* angry, offended, provoked. The word conveys the sense of being very upset over something someone has done.

¹²⁸ The generation of the wilderness wanderings.

¹²⁹ IE they wander off the path of correct conduct, alluded to as God's "ways" (IE paths) below.

¹³⁰ By a divine oath.

¹³¹ Ps. 95:7-11 (LXX, with minor variations). The last line in GR represents the HEB text of the Psalm and reflects an incomplete oath formula, which lit. says "If they shall enter into my rest..." The curse, which would normally be stated in the second half if the oath formula were it complete, is not stated here. As an example the AB cites a complete oath formula from Ps. 7:4-5: "If I have repaid my ally with harm or plundered my foe without cause, then let the enemy... lay my soul in the dust." So for God to say "If they shall enter into my rest..." is another way of saying "They shall never enter into my rest." The word "rest" here can have various connotations, including the Promised Land to which the wanderers were headed, the sanctuary of the tabernacle/temple as a resting place for the ark of the covenant (representing the presence of God), and the cessation of labor characteristic of the Sabbath day.

¹³² The expression "living God" contrasts the true God with the lifeless idols worshiped by the heathen.

¹³³ Alluding back to the first word quoted from Ps. 95:7 above in v. 7.

¹³⁴ Repeating the language from v. 6 above.

¹³⁵ Ps. 95:7-8, repeated from vv. 7-8 above.

¹³⁶ Alluding to the "provocation" mentioned in the Psalm 95 text.

¹³⁷ Although some take v. 16 as a statement, as in the KJV, it is in reality an interrogative, just as the following two statements are, anticipating a positive answer (the following

had sinned, whose carcasses¹³⁸ fell in the wilderness? ¹⁸ And to whom sware he that **they should not enter into his rest**,¹³⁹ but to them that believed not? ¹⁹ So we see that they could not enter in¹⁴⁰ because of unbelief.

Chapter 4

¹ LET us therefore fear,¹⁴¹ lest, a promise being left us¹⁴² of entering into his rest, any of you should seem¹⁴³ to come short of it.¹⁴⁴ ² For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them:¹⁴⁵ but the word preached did not profit them, not being¹⁴⁶ mixed with faith in them that heard *it*. ³ For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said,

**As I have sworn in my wrath,
if they shall enter into my rest:**¹⁴⁷

although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.¹⁴⁸ ⁴ For he spake in a certain place of the seventh *day*,¹⁴⁹ on this wise,¹⁵⁰ **And God did rest the seventh day**

translation derives from the AB): “Who then heard and rebelled? Was it not all who came out of Egypt through Moses?” This is consistent with Num. 14, where several times it is stated that “all” rebelled against God.

¹³⁸ κῶλα *kōla* corpses, with special reference to dead bodies left out in the desert without burial. In antiquity, not to be buried was considered an especially accursed end.

¹³⁹ Vv. 16-18 contain quotations and allusions to the already quoted Psalm 95 text.

¹⁴⁰ IE to God’s rest, here with particular emphasis on the Promised Land of Canaan.

¹⁴¹ OR be wary. Although we usually think of “fear” in a negative light, it is an emotion that can have a positive influence on our course of action.

¹⁴² καταλειπομένης ἐπαγγελίας *kataleipomenēs epangelias*. This is a genitive absolute construction in GR, and means “while a promise remains (available).”

¹⁴³ δοκῇ *dokē*. While this verb often means “to seem,” as the KJV takes it, here it means “to think.”

¹⁴⁴ ὑστερηκέναι *husterēkenai* to miss, fail to reach. The sense is to miss out on something through one’s own fault. Render something as follows: “Let us therefore fear, lest, while a promise of entering his rest remains available, any of you should think to miss out on it.”

¹⁴⁵ IE those of Moses’ generation who wandered in the wilderness, as described in ch. 3.

¹⁴⁶ There is a textual issue as to whether this participle should be a nominative singular, in which event it modifies the “word,” as the KJV portrays it, or whether it should be an accusative plural, in which event it modifies “them” (IE the Israelites). The weight of evidence favors the latter understanding. The AB renders “but the word that was heard did not benefit them, since they were not joined in faith with those who actually listened.” Those who “actually listened” would have included Joshua and Caleb historically; as applied by the author to the present situation, it would include faithful Christians.

¹⁴⁷ Ps. 95:11, quoted above in Heb. 3. “If they shall enter into my rest” is a lit. rendering of the GR; the expression actually means “they shall never enter into my rest.” On the meaning of this partial oath formula, see the note to 3:11.

from all his works.^{151 5} And in this *place*¹⁵² again, **If they shall enter into my rest.**^{153 6} Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein,¹⁵⁴ and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief.^{155 7} Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David,¹⁵⁶ **To day,**¹⁵⁷ after so long a time,¹⁵⁸ as it is said,

**To day if ye will hear his voice,
harden not your hearts.**¹⁵⁹

⁸ For if Jesus¹⁶⁰ had given them rest, then would he¹⁶¹ not afterward have spoken of another day.^{162 9} There remaineth therefore a rest¹⁶³ to the people of God.¹⁰ For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God *did* from his.^{164 11} Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall¹⁶⁵ after the same example of unbelief.¹⁶⁶

¹⁴⁸ IE prior to resting on the seventh day, as alluded to in v. 4.

¹⁴⁹ IE the Sabbath day.

¹⁵⁰ OR in this way.

¹⁵¹ Gen. 2:2.

¹⁵² IE in the scriptural passage we have been examining, Ps. 95.

¹⁵³ Ps. 95:11. This is a lit. translation; the meaning is “they shall never enter into my rest.” See the note on 3:11 for this oath formula.

¹⁵⁴ IE into God’s rest.

¹⁵⁵ The argument is that God did not make the promise in vain. Surely he intended some to enter into his rest; yet the Israelites of Moses’ generation failed to do so. The promise remains available, however, and is within our grasp.

¹⁵⁶ David was traditionally understood to be the author of the Psalms.

¹⁵⁷ IE the time to act is now.

¹⁵⁸ Several centuries had elapsed from the time of Moses to the time of David, yet God is still extending the promise to his people to enter into his rest.

¹⁵⁹ Ps. 95:7-8, reprising the quote of this material from Heb. 3.

¹⁶⁰ The allusion here is probably not to Jesus, but to Joshua, the son of Nun, who brought the children of Israel into the Promised Land of Canaan. The name Yehoshua (“Yahweh saves”) is transliterated directly into ENG as Joshua in the OT. In the NT, that name, as well as its shortened form, Yeshua, is transliterated into GR as Ἰησοῦς *Iēsous*, which we transliterate and anglicize into ENG as “Jesus.”

¹⁶¹ IE God, speaking through the psalmist David.

¹⁶² IE the “today” of the Psalm quotation.

¹⁶³ σαββατισμός *sabbatismos*, a different GR word for rest than that the author has been using, has special reference to Sabbath observance.

¹⁶⁴ Just as God rested after the work of his creation, so the observant Christian may rest by overcoming in his struggle with sin and returning to the presence of God after the labors of this life.

¹⁶⁵ Like the corpses of those who fell in unbelief in the wilderness.

¹⁶⁶ Alluding to the people of Moses’ day.

¹² For the word¹⁶⁷ of God *is* quick,¹⁶⁸ and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword,¹⁶⁹ piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit,¹⁷⁰ and of the joints and marrow,¹⁷¹ and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.¹⁷² ¹³ Neither is there any creature¹⁷³ that is not manifest in his sight: but all things *are* naked¹⁷⁴ and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.¹⁷⁵

Jesus the Great High Priest

¹⁴ Seeing then that we have a great high priest,¹⁷⁶ that is passed into¹⁷⁷ the heavens,¹⁷⁸ Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* profession.¹⁷⁹ ¹⁵ For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of¹⁸⁰ our infirmities;¹⁸¹ but was in all points tempted like as *we are*,¹⁸² yet without sin. ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace,¹⁸³ that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Chapter 5

¹⁶⁷ λόγος *logos*. The word here probably alludes to the scriptures as the word of God, and not to Jesus as God's Logos (an idea expressed in John 1).

¹⁶⁸ In the archaic sense of "living," not rapidly fast.

¹⁶⁹ Representations of God's speech as a sharp sword are common in the scriptures.

¹⁷⁰ Representing our internal, immaterial, spiritual natures.

¹⁷¹ Representing our physical bodies.

¹⁷² God can see behind outward appearances to the inward motivations of the mind and heart.

¹⁷³ IE created thing.

¹⁷⁴ IE there is nothing we can hide from God.

¹⁷⁵ πρὸς ᾧ ἡμῖν λόγος *pros hon hēmin logos* idiomatic for "to whom we [must render] an account." The allusion is to the reckoning of the judgment.

¹⁷⁶ ἀρχιερέα *archierea* high priest, the same title applied to the Jewish high priest.

¹⁷⁷ The GR is actually διελθούσας *dielēluthotai*, which means "passed through" the heavens, not "passed into" the heavens. Apparently the author understood the heavens as consisting of multiple levels, through which Jesus passed in his ascent, although he does not develop the theme here.

¹⁷⁸ Following his crucifixion, resurrection and ascension.

¹⁷⁹ Not our occupation, but that which we profess.

¹⁸⁰ OR sympathize with. The GR is actually συμπαθεῖσαι *sumpathēsai*, from which ENG "sympathize" derives. The word is derived from roots meaning "to feel" "with" someone else.

¹⁸¹ OR weaknesses.

¹⁸² Render with AB "but one who has been tested in every respect, in these same ways."

¹⁸³ The allusion is to the throne of God. This may be approached through prayer. There are also elements of temple imagery (the throne alluding to the "mercy seat" of the ark of the covenant in the sanctuary of the temple) and royal imagery (just as an earthly king grants mercy from his throne).

¹ FOR every high priest taken¹⁸⁴ from among men¹⁸⁵ is ordained for men in things *pertaining* to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices¹⁸⁶ for¹⁸⁷ sins: ² Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way;¹⁸⁸ for that he himself¹⁸⁹ also is compassed¹⁹⁰ with infirmity.¹⁹¹ ³ And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins.¹⁹² ⁴ And no man taketh¹⁹³ this honour¹⁹⁴ unto himself, but he that is called of God, as *was* Aaron.¹⁹⁵

⁵ So also Christ glorified not himself¹⁹⁶ to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him,

**Thou art my Son,
to day have I begotten thee.**¹⁹⁷

⁶ As he saith also in another *place*,

**Thou *art* a priest for ever
after the order¹⁹⁸ of Melchisedec.**¹⁹⁹

¹⁸⁴ IE chosen and set apart.

¹⁸⁵ OR from human beings. The contrast here is not between males and females, but between mortal humans and the Son of God.

¹⁸⁶ While it is possible that “gifts” here refers to bloodless offerings, it is more likely that “gifts” and “sacrifices” are simply synonymous terms.

¹⁸⁷ IE in expiation of.

¹⁸⁸ OR going astray, erring. A contrast with ignorance is probably meant; sins resulting from ignorance were considered lesser than those that were intentional.

¹⁸⁹ IE the human high priest.

¹⁹⁰ OR clothed, in the metaphoric sense of being subject to, beset by.

¹⁹¹ OR weakness. The idea is that since the human high priest is subject to human weakness, he has compassion on those who in their weakness sin.

¹⁹² Since the high priest is human and therefore a sinner, he needs to offer sacrifices for himself as well as for the people.

¹⁹³ λαμβάνει *lambanei* takes. This is the same verb rendered “taken” (in the passive) in v. 1. Thus, one does not (actively) *take* this honor on one’s own; rather one is (passively) *taken* or chosen by God to receive it.

¹⁹⁴ IE the priesthood.

¹⁹⁵ Both Aaron and his immediate successors were called of God, but eventually the high priesthood passed from father to son, or became a political appointment, even subject to bidding. Harking back to the divine bestowal of the priesthood on Aaron may represent a subtle indictment of these later practices.

¹⁹⁶ IE Christ too was called of God and appointed to his high priesthood; it is not an honor or glory that he derogated to himself.

¹⁹⁷ Ps. 2:7, reprised from Heb. 1:5.

¹⁹⁸ τάξις *taxin* order, arrangement, division, succession (of priests).

¹⁹⁹ Ps. 110:4. מֶלֶךְ־יֶשְׁדֵּק *malki-tsedek* means “My King is Righteousness” (or “King of Righteousness”).

⁷ Who²⁰⁰ in the days of his flesh,²⁰¹ when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears²⁰² unto him that was able to save²⁰³ him from death,²⁰⁴ and was heard in that he feared;²⁰⁵ ⁸ Though he were a Son,²⁰⁶ yet learned²⁰⁷ he obedience by the things which he suffered;²⁰⁸ ⁹ And being made perfect, he became the author²⁰⁹ of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;²¹⁰ ¹⁰ Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.²¹¹

Warning against Apostasy

²⁰⁰ The proper antecedent to the relative is unclear. Since the immediately preceding name is “Melchizedek” at the end of the preceding v., it is natural on first blush to take Melchizedek as the antecedent. Indeed, a marginal note in a JST ms. suggests that vv. 7-8 “are a parenthesis alluding to Melchizedek and not to Christ.” The name “Melchizedek” is, however, part of a scriptural quotation. The subject of the two verbs preceding the quote is God the Father, yet it is clear from the material in vv. 7-8 that the Father could not be the intended referent. Although the JST is grammatically justified in reading the antecedent to the relative as referring to Melchizedek, the sense of vv. 7-8 requires the conclusion that those vv. are referring to Christ. Note that the 1979 LDS edition of the KJV, after reporting this JST marginal comment, goes on to cross reference this material in these vv. to Jesus, not to Melchizedek. This cross referencing is correct. The confusion on this point derives from a grammatical mistake on the part of the author of Hebrews in his use of the relative without showing Jesus as the clear antecedent. Generally, modern translations render the passage in such a way as to avoid rendering the awkward relative clause into English.

²⁰¹ IE when he (Jesus) was yet mortal.

²⁰² The allusion is to the agonies of Gethsemane.

²⁰³ A circumlocution for God the Father.

²⁰⁴ In his mortality, Jesus sought not to die, although he ultimately prayed that God’s will be done. He was not saved *from* death upon the cross, but he was saved *out of* death by virtue of the resurrection.

²⁰⁵ IE he was heard because of his reverence for God (the Father).

²⁰⁶ The sense of the concessive “although” is not entirely clear. The thought appears to be similar to that expressed in the *Testament of Joseph* 105 (as quoted in AB): “Although I was a child, I had the fear of God in my heart.”

²⁰⁷ The verb does not mean to imply that Jesus was previously disobedient and only gradually became obedient. Rather, the sense is that Jesus practiced obedience throughout his life, and over time came to a deeper appreciation of it.

²⁰⁸ There is a word play in the GR between “he learned” ἐμαθεν *emathen* and “he suffered” ἐπαθεν *epathen*.

²⁰⁹ OR source.

²¹⁰ Just as Jesus obeyed the Father, we must obey him.

²¹¹ Alluding back to the quotation of Ps. 110:4 referenced in Heb. 5:6, but replacing “priest” with “high priest.”

¹¹ Of whom²¹² we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered,²¹³ seeing ye are dull of hearing.²¹⁴ ¹² For when for the time ye ought to be teachers,²¹⁵ ye have need that one teach you again²¹⁶ which *be* the first principles²¹⁷ of the oracles²¹⁸ of God; and are become such as have need of milk,²¹⁹ and not of strong meat.²²⁰ ¹³ For every one that useth milk *is* unskilful²²¹ in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. ¹⁴ But strong meat²²² belongeth to them that are of full age,²²³ *even* those who by reason of use²²⁴ have their senses exercised²²⁵ to discern both good and evil.

Chapter 6

¹ THEREFORE leaving²²⁶ the principles of the doctrine of Christ,²²⁷ let us go on unto perfection;²²⁸ not laying again the foundation²²⁹ of repentance from dead works,²³⁰ and of faith toward God, ² Of the doctrine of baptisms,²³¹ and of laying on of hands²³², and of

²¹² The KJV takes the pronoun as a masculine, referring to Melchizedek, but most take it as a neuter (the forms are identical in GR): “concerning this subject.”

²¹³ OR difficult to explain; IE hard to put into words.

²¹⁴ IE slow to understand.

²¹⁵ The participle is concessive, not temporal as the KJV mistakenly takes it. Render: “For though by this time you ought to be teachers....”

²¹⁶ Those to whom the letter was addressed should now be teaching others, but instead they themselves are in need of remedial instruction.

²¹⁷ Lit. the elements of the beginning. The allusion is to the most basic matters.

²¹⁸ λογίων *logiōn* (prophetic) utterances, including those recorded in scripture.

²¹⁹ IE babes.

²²⁰ OR solid food. To distinguish beginners from the more advanced with this metaphor contrasting babes who need milk with adults who eat solid food was a commonplace.

²²¹ IE in need of training.

²²² OR solid food. “Meat” in the KJV does not mean animal flesh, but food more generally.

²²³ OR mature.

²²⁴ IE by training the spiritually mature have honed their faculties.

²²⁵ OR faculties trained.

²²⁶ The JST adds the word “not” before “leaving,” which corrects a misimpression given by the KJV. The sense is not one of “abandoning” the basics of the gospel, but of taking them as an established, given foundation and moving ahead and building on them.

²²⁷ Lit. the word of the beginning of Christ. The allusion is to elementary Christian principles.

²²⁸ OR spiritual maturity.

²²⁹ The elementary principles constituting the foundation are stated here to include repentance, faith, baptism, the laying on of hands, the resurrection and the judgment. Note that the first four items are stated in Article of Faith 4.

²³⁰ IE one’s sinful deeds.

²³¹ It is uncertain why the plural is used here.

²³² Although Christians laid hands on others for various purposes, such as healing the sick and setting one apart for special service, since the expression here follows baptism and

resurrection of the dead,²³³ and of eternal judgment.³ And this²³⁴ will we do, if God permit.²³⁵ ⁴ For *it is* impossible²³⁶ for those who were once²³⁷ enlightened, and have tasted²³⁸ of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of²³⁹ the Holy Ghost,⁵ And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world²⁴⁰ to come,⁶ If they shall fall away,²⁴¹ to renew²⁴² them again unto repentance,²⁴³ seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh,²⁴⁴ and put *him* to an open shame.²⁴⁵ ⁷ For the earth²⁴⁶ which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft²⁴⁷ upon it, and bringeth forth herbs²⁴⁸ meet²⁴⁹ for them by whom it is dressed,²⁵⁰ receiveth blessing from God:⁸ But that²⁵¹ which beareth thorns and briers²⁵² *is* rejected, and *is* nigh unto cursing;²⁵³ whose end *is* to be burned.²⁵⁴

⁹ But, beloved,²⁵⁵ we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation,²⁵⁶ though we thus speak.²⁵⁷ ¹⁰ For God *is* not unrighteous²⁵⁸ to

precedes mention in the next v. of the gift of the Holy Ghost, it almost certainly alludes to the laying on of hands that follows baptism and confers that gift.

²³³ The word “dead” here is plural and refers to the resurrection of mankind, not just that of Christ.

²³⁴ The allusion is to going on from the basics of the faith to perfection.

²³⁵ OR God willing.

²³⁶ The word “impossible” is connected with the infinitive “to renew [OR restore]” in v. 6. The idea expressed here seems inconsistent with the dogma of “eternal security,” to the effect that it is impossible to fall from grace.

²³⁷ The allusion here is probably not to a single number of times, but to the completeness of the enlightenment.

²³⁸ γευσάμενους *geusamenous* tasted (in the sense of experienced, enjoyed).

²³⁹ IE those who share in.

²⁴⁰ αἰῶνος *aiōnos*, here probably in a temporal sense, “age.”

²⁴¹ IE lapse into apostasy.

²⁴² OR restore.

²⁴³ μετάνοιαν *metanoian*, lit. a change of mind.

²⁴⁴ Although the verb ἀνασταυρόω *anastauroō* simply means “to crucify” (the compound *ana-* not conveying the sense of “recrucify”), here the context seems to require that the verb means “to crucify again,” as the KJV takes it.

²⁴⁵ παραδειγματίζοντας *paradeigmatizontas* hold (him) up to contempt. The word refers to making someone a public example by punishment, and is the source for ENG “paradigm.”

²⁴⁶ OR ground.

²⁴⁷ OR repeatedly, frequently.

²⁴⁸ OR vegetation.

²⁴⁹ IE useful, beneficial.

²⁵⁰ OR cultivated.

²⁵¹ IE ground.

²⁵² OR thistles.

²⁵³ IE near to being cursed.

²⁵⁴ The burning of weeds by farmers was a common image of the judgment.

²⁵⁵ The word is plural and is directed to those for whom the letter was written.

forget your work and labour of love,²⁵⁹ which ye have shewed toward his name,²⁶⁰ in that ye have ministered²⁶¹ to the saints, and do minister.¹¹ And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence²⁶² to the full assurance of hope unto the end:¹² That ye be not slothful,²⁶³ but followers²⁶⁴ of them who through faith and patience²⁶⁵ inherit the promises.²⁶⁶

God's Sure Promise

¹³ For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, **he swore by himself,**²⁶⁷ ¹⁴ Saying, **Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.**²⁶⁸ ¹⁵ And so, after he²⁶⁹ had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.²⁷⁰ ¹⁶ For men verily swear by the greater:²⁷¹ and an oath for confirmation *is* to them an end of all strife.²⁷² ¹⁷ Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew²⁷³ unto the heirs of promise²⁷⁴ the immutability²⁷⁵ of his counsel,²⁷⁶ confirmed *it* by an oath:¹⁸ That by two immutable things,²⁷⁷ in which *it was* impossible for God to lie,

²⁵⁶ IE pertaining to your salvation.

²⁵⁷ Despite the harsh reproof we have given you, we remain confident that you will achieve salvation.

²⁵⁸ OR unjust.

²⁵⁹ Love here is not a feeling, but a commitment that entails good works.

²⁶⁰ A Hebraism; the "name" stands for God himself.

²⁶¹ OR served.

²⁶² σπουδῇν *spoudēn* eagerness, willingness, zeal. The concept is the opposite of sluggishness or laziness.

²⁶³ The opposite of the "diligence" of the previous v.

²⁶⁴ OR imitators.

²⁶⁵ OR perseverance. The concept is active, not passive.

²⁶⁶ Such as the promises made to Abraham, as described in v. 13.

²⁶⁷ Several times in the OT God swears an oath by himself (as in Gen. 22:16). Swearing an oath by God was the greatest oath one could make. (The concept of "swearing" here does not involve our modern use of the term to refer to profanity.)

²⁶⁸ Gen. 22:16-17. The repetitions in the sentence reflect in GR form the HEB infinitive absolutes in the passage, which intensify its ideas.

²⁶⁹ IE Abraham.

²⁷⁰ That which was promised in the Abrahamic covenant.

²⁷¹ IE something greater than themselves. It was common to swear oaths by God, heaven, the temple, the gold of the temple, and so forth.

²⁷² In disputed cases, where the facts were not in evidence, an oath would often settle the matter, it being understood that God would reward the just party and punish the unjust.

²⁷³ OR more clearly to demonstrate.

²⁷⁴ IE Abraham's descendants.

²⁷⁵ OR unchangeable nature.

²⁷⁶ OR purpose, intention.

²⁷⁷ The two unchangeable things are God's promise and the oath by which he guarantees that promise.

we might have a strong consolation,²⁷⁸ who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:¹⁹ Which *hope* we have as an anchor²⁷⁹ of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which²⁸⁰ entereth into that within the veil,²⁸¹ ²⁰ Whither²⁸² the forerunner²⁸³ is for us entered, *even* Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.²⁸⁴

Chapter 7

The Priestly Order of Melchizedek

¹ FOR this Melchisedec,²⁸⁵ king of Salem,²⁸⁶ priest of the most high God,²⁸⁷ who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings,²⁸⁸ and blessed him; ² To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part²⁸⁹ of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness,²⁹⁰ and after that also King of Salem,²⁹¹ which is, King of peace;²⁹² ³

²⁷⁸ OR encouragement.

²⁷⁹ A boat's anchor provided an image of security.

²⁸⁰ The antecedent to the relative is the hope we have in Christ, not the anchor or the soul. As in Heb. 5:7, the antecedent is not clearly stated.

²⁸¹ The inner curtain separating the holy place from the holy of holies in the Tabernacle (and Temple). The High Priest passed this curtain once a year on the Day of Atonement to make an atonement for the people.

²⁸² OR where; IE behind the veil.

²⁸³ πρόδρομος *prodromos* a precursor, one who goes before; the allusion is to Jesus.

²⁸⁴ The allusion is once again to Ps. 110:4, reprising the quote of that Ps. from Heb. 5:6 and 10.

²⁸⁵ Rabbinic sources often equate Melchizedek with Shem, the son of Noah, and this sometimes gets picked up in LDS sources. This may have been due to a tendency to exalt Shem (father of the Semites), or to the information from Gen. 11:10 that Shem lived for 500 years after the birth of his son, which means that he outlived Abraham by 35 years. Any such equation is completely within the realm of speculation and cannot be confirmed. The Dead Sea Scrolls (11QMelch) portray Melchizedek as an agent of divine judgment, as one of the gods (*elohim*) of Ps. 82:1.

²⁸⁶ Usually associated with Jerusalem, of which -salem is an element.

²⁸⁷ The "most high" God is an allusion to El Elyon, "God Most High."

²⁸⁸ The allusion is to the four kings from the east who invaded Canaan and whom Abraham defeated. See Gen. 14:1-16.

²⁸⁹ IE a tithe.

²⁹⁰ The first part of the name, *malki*, is the Hebrew word *melek* "king" with the first person pronominal suffix, or "my king." The second part, *tsedek*, is a Hebrew word meaning "righteousness." The name therefore probably means "My King is Righteousness." There is an ambiguity here, however, as the *-i* ending could be an archaic genitive and indicate a genitive relationship between the words, as it is taken here, "King of Righteousness."

²⁹¹ The quotations and allusions are to LXX Gen. 14:17-20.

Without father, without mother,²⁹³ without descent,²⁹⁴ having neither beginning of days,²⁹⁵ nor end of life;²⁹⁶ but made like unto the Son of God;²⁹⁷ abideth a priest continually.²⁹⁸

⁴ Now consider how great this man *was*,²⁹⁹ unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth³⁰⁰ of the spoils.³⁰¹ ⁵ And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood,³⁰² have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law,³⁰³ that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham.³⁰⁴ ⁶ But he whose descent is not counted from them³⁰⁵ received tithes of

²⁹² Shalem was a place name (rendered here as Salem, as GR lacks a letter to represent the "sh" sound of HEB); here, it is associated with the HEB word for peace, *shalom*.

²⁹³ These words could mean that he was orphaned, or that his genealogy was simply unknown and unrecorded, or that Melchizedek had no earthly parents at all. The JST implicitly accepts the second interpretation and objects to the third interpretation, making it the priesthood itself, rather than Melchizedek, to have been without a beginning. The point is that Melchizedek appears in the Genesis text springing from nowhere, with no indication of his genealogy. Therefore, genealogy (in the sense of having to prove one's Levitical descent, as the priests in ancient Israel had to do) cannot be the defining characteristic of the priesthood.

²⁹⁴ ἀγενεαλόγητος *agenealogētos* without genealogy. The initial *a-* is called an *alpha privative* and works like the prefix *un-* in ENG. The author seems to have coined this word; Melchizedek was, as it were, "ungenealogied."

²⁹⁵ Like Jesus, to whom he was a precursor, Melchizedek preexisted his mortal birth (just as, in LDS thought, we all do).

²⁹⁶ His existence continued after his death, again, just as will ours.

²⁹⁷ So as to foreshadow him.

²⁹⁸ OR he remains a priest forever.

²⁹⁹ Abraham was perhaps the greatest patriarch of Israel's past. Yet, if Abraham was great in his own right, then, *a fortiori*, how much greater must Melchizedek be, since Abraham paid tithes to him and Melchizedek is the one who pronounced a blessing on Abraham?

³⁰⁰ OR tithe.

³⁰¹ IE the spoils of Abraham's defeat of the four kings invading Canaan, as described in Gen. 14. Tithing the spoils of a defeat of one's enemy to the god was a common practice in antiquity.

³⁰² In ancient Israel, all priests were Levites (IE they were descended from Levi), but not all Levites were priests. Those who were not descended from Aaron, and therefore not priests, but nevertheless were descended from Levi, and thus were Levites, were eligible to perform lesser priesthood duties at the temple.

³⁰³ Both the Levites and the priests collected tithes of the people in accordance with various provisions of the Law, such as Dt. 14:22-23, Lev. 27:30-32; Num. 18:21-24, 28.

³⁰⁴ IE there is little difference between the Levites and those from whom they collect tithes, all of whom spring from a common progenitor.

³⁰⁵ IE Melchizedek, who as Abraham's contemporary was manifestly not Abraham's descendant.

Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises.^{306 7} And without all contradiction³⁰⁷ the less is blessed of the better.^{308 8} And here men that die³⁰⁹ receive tithes; but there³¹⁰ he *receiveth them*,³¹¹ of whom it is witnessed that he liveth.^{312 9} And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham.¹⁰ For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him.³¹³

¹¹ If therefore perfection were³¹⁴ by the Levitical priesthood, (for under³¹⁵ it the people received the law,) what further need *was there* that another³¹⁶ priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? ¹² For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.¹³ For he of whom these things are spoken³¹⁷ pertaineth to another tribe,³¹⁸ of which no man gave attendance at the altar.^{319 14} For *it is* evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.^{320 15} And it is yet far more evident:³²¹

³⁰⁶ IE Abraham; the allusion is to the Abrahamic covenant.

³⁰⁷ IE unquestionably.

³⁰⁸ The argument is that since Melchizedek blessed Abraham, he must have been greater than Abraham. The portion of the argument that relates to receiving tithes is more compelling, as certainly there are cases where the lesser blesses the greater, as when a servant blesses his master.

³⁰⁹ IE the Levites.

³¹⁰ The ENG "here" and "there" is misleading. The GR is simply contrasting two situations; better would be "in the one case" and "in the other."

³¹¹ The GR construction is elliptical; the sense has been supplied in ENG by the italicized words.

³¹² The scripture records no death of Melchizedek. The presumption therefore here is that he still lived even then, perhaps as a translated being, much like Enoch.

³¹³ The argument is that the ancestor of the Levites, Levi, was seminally present in the loins of his ancestor Abraham when he paid tithes to Melchizedek. In a sense, then, the Levites, who collected tithes from the Jews, paid tithes and therefore were subordinate to Melchizedek. This argument seems rather bizarre by modern sensibilities, and it is possible that it was intended in a humorous vein.

³¹⁴ The GR reflects a contrary-to-fact condition. The point is that perfection does *not* come by the Levitical priesthood.

³¹⁵ The preposition would be better understood as meaning "concerning." That is, the Law deals extensively with matters relating to the Levitical priesthood.

³¹⁶ Not *another* priest of the same order, but a *different* priest of a different order.

³¹⁷ IE Jesus.

³¹⁸ Jesus was of the tribe of Judah. Melchizedek was not of any Israelite tribe.

³¹⁹ "Serving at the altar" refers to priestly duties, and to be a priest one had to be a descendant of Aaron and therefore of the tribe of Levi. The author's statement here is not, however, strictly speaking correct, because both David and Solomon (both Judahites, like Jesus) offered sacrifices at the altar, although neither was considered a priest.

³²⁰ The allusion is to the blessings of Moses from Dt. 33. Moses blessed Levi with the rights of priesthood.

³²¹ OR obvious.

for that after the similitude³²² of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest,^{323 16} Who is made, not after the law of a carnal³²⁴ commandment, but after the power of an endless life.^{325 17} For he testifieth,

**Thou *art* a priest for ever
after the order of Melchisedec.**³²⁶

¹⁸ For there is verily a disannulling³²⁷ of the commandment going before³²⁸ for the weakness and unprofitableness³²⁹ thereof. ¹⁹ For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope³³⁰ *did*; by the which we draw nigh³³¹ unto God.

²⁰ And inasmuch as not without³³² an oath *he was made priest*. ²¹ (For those priests were made without an oath;³³³ but this³³⁴ with an oath by him that said unto him,

**The Lord sware³³⁵
and will not repent,
Thou *art* a priest for ever
after the order of Melchisedec.)**³³⁶

²² By so much was Jesus made a surety³³⁷ of a better testament.^{338 23} And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered³³⁹ to continue by reason of death.^{340 24} But

³²² OR likeness.

³²³ IE Jesus.

³²⁴ σαρκίνης *sarkinēs* relating to the flesh, physical. ENG "carnal" derives from the Latin word for "flesh," as in the Latin-derived carnivore, "meat eater." Here the allusion is to the rules of physical, genealogical descent in order to be a priest, although there may also be a secondary sense of weakness (fleshly as opposed to spiritual).

³²⁵ Of course, Jesus too died, but he did not remain subject to death, but was resurrected and now sits at God's right hand.

³²⁶ Ps. 110:4.

³²⁷ OR abrogation.

³²⁸ IE the provisions of the Law requiring lineal descent from Levi.

³²⁹ OR uselessness.

³³⁰ Probably to be understood as the object of our hope; IE Jesus.

³³¹ OR near.

³³² This is a rhetorical device known as litotes. "Not without" an oath, by the negation of the contrary, is a gentle way of saying "with an oath."

³³³ Consecration for priestly service involved washings, donning sacred garments, being anointed and the offering of special sacrifices, but not the swearing of an oath. See Exo. 29 and Lev. 8.

³³⁴ OR he. The allusion is to Jesus.

³³⁵ Thus the oath by which Jesus was made a priest.

³³⁶ Ps. 110:4.

³³⁷ OR guarantor, like one who cosigns a loan.

³³⁸ OR covenant. Thus, unlike the Levitical priesthood, the Melchizedek priesthood is accompanied by an oath and a covenant. Cf. D&C 84.

this *man*,³⁴¹ because he continueth ever,³⁴² hath an unchangeable³⁴³ priesthood.²⁵ Wherefore³⁴⁴ he is able also to save them to the uttermost³⁴⁵ that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.³⁴⁶

²⁶ For such an high priest became³⁴⁷ us, *who is* holy, harmless,³⁴⁸ undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;³⁴⁹ ²⁷ Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's.³⁵⁰ for this he did once,³⁵¹ when he offered up himself.³⁵² ²⁸ For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity;³⁵³ but the word of the oath,³⁵⁴ which was since³⁵⁵ the law, *maketh* the Son, who is consecrated³⁵⁶ for evermore.

Chapter 8

The High Priest of a New and Better Covenant

³³⁹ OR allowed.

³⁴⁰ Over the generations there have been many, many priests; there had to be many, because they kept dying, which of course interfered with their ability to serve.

³⁴¹ IE Jesus.

³⁴² OR remains forever.

³⁴³ ἀπαράβατον *aparabaton*. This word has sometimes been misconstrued as meaning nontransferable, inalienable, or, as the marginal note to the old Cambridge missionary Bibles put it, "which passeth not from one to another." This meaning is otherwise unattested and is incorrect. The sense, as determined from a wide variety of GR attestations, is rather "permanent, unchangeable."

³⁴⁴ IE for this reason.

³⁴⁵ IE completely, totally.

³⁴⁶ OR to intercede [with God] on their behalf.

³⁴⁷ OR was fitting for.

³⁴⁸ OR blameless.

³⁴⁹ That Jesus was exalted above the heavens is hyperbolic; elsewhere Jesus is described as being in the heavens, sitting at God's right hand.

³⁵⁰ The author seems to be thinking of the sacrifices on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), which were only performed once a year. He apparently has conflated those sacrifices with the daily offerings.

³⁵¹ Unlike the priestly offerings, the offering of the Savior was complete and need not be repeated.

³⁵² Here we see a substitutional conception of the Atonement, as if the death of Jesus were a temple sacrifice.

³⁵³ They have weaknesses; notably, they are subject to both sin and death.

³⁵⁴ By which the Father made Jesus a priest, as described above in this chapter.

³⁵⁵ In a temporal sense; "after."

³⁵⁶ τετελειωμένον *teteleiōmenon* perfect, complete.

¹ NOW of the things which we have spoken *this is* the sum.³⁵⁷ We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand³⁵⁸ of the throne of the Majesty³⁵⁹ in the heavens; ² A minister³⁶⁰ of the sanctuary,³⁶¹ and of the true³⁶² tabernacle,³⁶³ which the Lord pitched,³⁶⁴ and not man. ³ For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore *it is* of necessity that this man³⁶⁵ have somewhat³⁶⁶ also to offer. ⁴ For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest,³⁶⁷ seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: ⁵ Who³⁶⁸ serve³⁶⁹ unto the example³⁷⁰ and shadow of heavenly things,³⁷¹ as Moses was admonished of God³⁷² when he was about to make the tabernacle:³⁷³ for, **See**, saith he, ***that thou make all things according to the pattern³⁷⁴ shewed to thee in the mount.***³⁷⁵ ⁶ But now hath he³⁷⁶ obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant,³⁷⁷ which was established³⁷⁸ upon better promises.

³⁵⁷ κεφάλαιον *kephalion*, which is related to the GR word for "head," here means "point" (as in the crown of the head).

³⁵⁸ The position of favor.

³⁵⁹ A circumlocution for God.

³⁶⁰ λειτουργός *leitourgos* refers to one who serves in the temple sanctuary. This GR word is the source for ENG "liturgy."

³⁶¹ τῶν ἁγίων *tōn hagiōn* is a neuter plural, lit. meaning "of the holy things," but the expression as used in Hebrews clearly refers to the sanctuary of the Tabernacle or Temple, as correctly rendered in the KJV.

³⁶² IE the heavenly temple, as opposed to the earthly one made after its pattern.

³⁶³ σκηνῆς *skēnēs* lit. tent. ENG "scene" derives from this word, from the GR dramatic practice of painting scenes on a tent.

³⁶⁴ Men "pitched," or set up, the earthly Tabernacle, but the Lord himself pitched the heavenly prototype, which the Lord showed to Moses in vision and which served as the model for the earthly Tabernacle.

³⁶⁵ IE Jesus.

³⁶⁶ OR something [in the singular]. That which Jesus offers is himself in effecting the atonement.

³⁶⁷ The GR is a contrary to fact condition; Jesus is in fact not on earth and is in fact a priest.

³⁶⁸ IE the earthly priests.

³⁶⁹ The GR verb λατρεύουσιν *latreuousin* has particular reference to serving in the temple.

³⁷⁰ OR as a representation.

³⁷¹ In particular, the heavenly sanctuary or temple.

³⁷² κεχηρημάτισται *kechrēmatistai* divinely admonished by an oracle.

³⁷³ Although God gave the command to Moses, Bezalel actually constructed the Tabernacle (Exo. 31:2, 35:30, 36:1-2, 38:22).

³⁷⁴ τύπον *tupon* whence ENG "type." God showed Moses the heavenly temple as a spiritual pattern for the construction of the earthly Tabernacle.

³⁷⁵ Exo. 25:40.

³⁷⁶ IE Jesus.

³⁷⁷ Moses was the mediator of the first covenant; Jesus is the mediator of the second.

⁷ For if that first *covenant*³⁷⁹ had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. ⁸ For finding fault with them,³⁸⁰ he saith,

**Behold, the days come,³⁸¹ saith the Lord,
when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel
and with the house of Judah:**

⁹ **Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers³⁸²
in the day when I took them by the hand³⁸³ to lead them out of the land of
Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant,
and I regarded them not,³⁸⁴ saith the Lord.**

¹⁰ **For this³⁸⁵ is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel
after those days, saith the Lord;**

**I will put my laws into their mind,
and write them in their hearts:³⁸⁶**

**and I will be to them a God,
and they shall be to me a people:³⁸⁷**

¹¹ **And they shall not teach every man his neighbour,
and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord:
for all shall know me,³⁸⁸
from the least to the greatest.³⁸⁹**

¹² **For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness,
and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.³⁹⁰**

¹³ In that he saith, A new *covenant*, he hath made the first old.³⁹¹ Now that³⁹² which decayeth and waxeth³⁹³ old *is* ready to vanish away.³⁹⁴

³⁷⁸ This is a divine passive and suggests that God was the one who established the new covenant.

³⁷⁹ The GR text is elliptical; the KJV supplies "covenant" in italics to provide the full sense.

³⁸⁰ The plural pronoun alludes not to the first covenant itself, but to those who broke it.

³⁸¹ A common expression in Jeremiah. Hebrews takes those days as having already arrived.

³⁸² IE ancestors.

³⁸³ Showing God's compassion.

³⁸⁴ OR I paid no attention to them [because they were not responsive to me].

³⁸⁵ IE that which Jeremiah is about to describe.

³⁸⁶ So that, rather than being represented by external tablets, the law will be internalized by the people and obeyed completely.

³⁸⁷ This is the heart of the traditional covenant relationship between God and his people.

³⁸⁸ IE there will be no need to teach others to know the Lord, for all already shall know him.

³⁸⁹ IE irrespective of class.

³⁹⁰ Jer. 31:31-34.

³⁹¹ Since God had made the first covenant, he legally had the power to alter or annul it and make a new covenant with man.

Chapter 9

The Earthly and Heavenly Sanctuaries

¹ THEN verily the first *covenant*³⁹⁵ had also ordinances³⁹⁶ of divine service,³⁹⁷ and a worldly³⁹⁸ sanctuary. ² For there was a tabernacle made; the first,³⁹⁹ wherein *was* the candlestick,⁴⁰⁰ and the table, and the shewbread;⁴⁰¹ which is called the sanctuary. ³ And after the second veil,⁴⁰² the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all;⁴⁰³ ⁴ Which had the golden censer,⁴⁰⁴ and the ark of the covenant⁴⁰⁵ overlaid round about with gold,⁴⁰⁶ wherein *was* the golden pot that had manna,⁴⁰⁷ and Aaron's rod that budded,⁴⁰⁸ and the

³⁹² IE the old covenant.

³⁹³ OR grows.

³⁹⁴ The old order still exists, but it has grown weak and impotent, and is about to pass away.

³⁹⁵ Note that the word "covenant" is not explicitly in the GR, and thus is italicized in the KJV. The word "first" here is the feminine form, so it is likely harking back to the feminine form of "first" used in 8:13, which was modifying the noun "covenant." Therefore, the KJV interpretation here appears to be correct.

³⁹⁶ δικαιώματα *dikaiōmata* lit. righteous deeds, but here meaning regulations for worship.

³⁹⁷ IE temple service.

³⁹⁸ OR earthly (because it was on earth), in contrast with the true and heavenly sanctuary in 8:1-5.

³⁹⁹ The Tabernacle (and Temple) had two main rooms. The "first" here refers to the holy place, the first room as you entered it, in contrast to the room behind the veil, the holy of holies.

⁴⁰⁰ OR lampstand. The lampstand had six branches rising from a common post, thus supporting seven oil lamps. The Tabernacle and the second temple each had one lampstand, but the first temple had ten. (1 Ki. 7:49)

⁴⁰¹ Twelve loaves of bread (the bread of the presence or "shewbread") were placed on the table in the holy place each week; the priests would then consume the old loaves.

⁴⁰² The first veil was the entrance to the holy place; the second veil was the veil that separated the holy place from the holy of holies.

⁴⁰³ HEB holy of holies is a substitute for a superlative (since HEB adjectives lack degree). Thus, the holy of holies is the most holy place, the holiest place of all.

⁴⁰⁴ IE the incense altar, on which incense was burned both morning and evening. Contrary to what Hebrews says, this altar was positioned in the holy place, not behind the veil of the holy of holies.

⁴⁰⁵ A chest that was the sole furnishing of the holy of holies. It was almost four feet long and a little over two feet both wide and deep. It was apparently lost in connection with the Babylonian Exile; the second temple had no ark in it. (Josephus, *Jewish War*, 5.219)

⁴⁰⁶ Although the ark was made of acacia wood, it was overlaid with gold, as were the other temple implements.

⁴⁰⁷ Manna was the food that appeared on the ground every day during the wilderness wanderings. About two quarts were preserved in a jar and kept near the ark, although

tables of the covenant;⁴⁰⁹ ⁵ And over it the cherubims⁴¹⁰ of glory shadowing the mercyseat;⁴¹¹ of which we cannot now speak particularly.⁴¹²

⁶ Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always⁴¹³ into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service *of God*.⁷ But into the second⁴¹⁴ *went* the high priest alone once every year,⁴¹⁵ not without⁴¹⁶ blood, which he offered for himself, and *for* the errors of the people:⁴¹⁷ ⁸ The Holy Ghost this signifying,⁴¹⁸ that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest,⁴¹⁹ while as the first tabernacle was yet standing:⁹ Which *was* a figure for the time then present,⁴²⁰ in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the

Hebrews has the pot as being inside the ark. There seems to have been a tradition that the additional items were actually included within the ark itself.

⁴⁰⁸ For this miracle see Num. 17:1-11.

⁴⁰⁹ IE the tablets of the law received by Moses, which were placed inside the ark.

⁴¹⁰ On top of the ark were two winged figures facing each other, whose wings touched each other at the top. The *-im* in *cherubim* is the HEB plural ending; adding the ENG *-s* to the word is therefore redundant.

⁴¹¹ ἱλαστήριον *hilastērion* the place of atonement, propitiation. This was the lid to the chest, under the cherubim. On the Day of Atonement the High Priest sprinkled blood either on or in front of the mercy seat to effect an atonement for the temple itself and for the people.

⁴¹² The author's reticence may have to do with the holiness of the subject, or this may be a rhetorical touch known as *praeteritio* or *paraleipsis*, where an author feigns to omit speaking of a topic but thereby mentions it anyway (as in our ENG expression "not to mention X").

⁴¹³ OR continually. The point being made here is that the priests continually entered the first part of the sanctuary to perform their daily service, such as tending to the lamps, burning incense and changing the bread on the table.

⁴¹⁴ IE the holy of holies, behind the veil.

⁴¹⁵ On the Day of Atonement, or Yom Kippur.

⁴¹⁶ This double negative construction is a rhetorical device called *litotes*. It is a gentle way of saying "with blood."

⁴¹⁷ The high priest first sprinkled bull's blood for the sins of himself and his house, and then goat's blood for the sins of all the people.

⁴¹⁸ OR by this the Holy Ghost indicates.

⁴¹⁹ The way to the forgiveness offered by the sanctuary was not open to any but the high priest.

⁴²⁰ The Tabernacle and the rites of atonement therein were symbolic of the true atonement to be effected by Christ.

conscience;^{421 10} *Which stood* only in meats and drinks,⁴²² and divers washings,⁴²³ and carnal⁴²⁴ ordinances, imposed *on them* until the time of reformation.⁴²⁵

¹¹ But Christ being come an high priest of good things⁴²⁶ to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle,⁴²⁷ not made with hands,⁴²⁸ that is to say, not of this building⁴²⁹; ¹² Neither by the blood of goats and calves,⁴³⁰ but by his own blood⁴³¹ he entered in once⁴³² into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption *for us*.¹³ For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean,⁴³³ sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: ¹⁴ How much more⁴³⁴ shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot⁴³⁵ to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

¹⁵ And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament,⁴³⁶ that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* under the first testament,⁴³⁷ they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.^{438 16} For where a testament⁴³⁹ *is*, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.^{440 17} For a

⁴²¹ The basic meaning of the word simply has to do with being conscious, but here it is clearly used in a moral sense.

⁴²² An allusion both to sacrificial practices and laws of ritual purity in food (known today by the concept of keeping kosher).

⁴²³ Ceremonial water ablutions.

⁴²⁴ The allusion is both to meat for sacrifices as also to the earthly nature of these ordinances, as opposed to heavenly.

⁴²⁵ The allusion is to making something straight or putting something right. When a statute was deemed to be defective, it was annulled and a new one was enacted in its place.

⁴²⁶ In particular salvation.

⁴²⁷ IE the heavenly Tabernacle.

⁴²⁸ The heavenly tent was set up by God, not man.

⁴²⁹ IE not of ordinary building, in the sense that man is familiar with it.

⁴³⁰ The plurals indicate that these actions had to be taken over and over again, and therefore ultimately were ineffective.

⁴³¹ Jesus' own blood which he shed in effecting the atonement.

⁴³² Once only for all time, as opposed to repeated annual entrances for the high priest.

⁴³³ One who became ritually impure by contact with a corpse was cleansed by the sprinkled ashes of a heifer and water. (Num. 19:9)

⁴³⁴ The argument is *a fortiori*. If the blood of animals can have a sanctifying effect, how much greater will be the effect of the blood of Christ?

⁴³⁵ Just as sacrificial animals had to be without blemish. (Dt. 17:1)

⁴³⁶ OR covenant (as correctly reflected in the JST).

⁴³⁷ OR covenant (as correctly reflected in the JST).

⁴³⁸ Alluding to the heavenly city to come, which God promised Abraham (see 11:8). The mention of an "inheritance" leads into the discussion of the workings of a will in the following text.

⁴³⁹ διαθήκη *diathēkē* can mean either a "covenant," as earlier in the verse, or a "will" (thus the KJV "testament"), as here.

⁴⁴⁰ A will is only effective upon the death of the one who makes it.

testament *is* of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth.^{441 18} Whereupon neither the first *testament* was dedicated without⁴⁴² blood.¹⁹ For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law,⁴⁴³ he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop,⁴⁴⁴ and sprinkled both the book,⁴⁴⁵ and all the people,²⁰ Saying, **This is the blood of the testament⁴⁴⁶ which God hath enjoined unto you.**^{447 21} Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry.^{448 22} And almost⁴⁴⁹ all things are by the law purged⁴⁵⁰ with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.⁴⁵¹

Sin Put Away by Christ's Sacrifice

²³ *It was* therefore necessary that the patterns⁴⁵² of things in the heavens should be purified with these,⁴⁵³ but the heavenly things themselves⁴⁵⁴ with better sacrifices than these.²⁴ For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands,⁴⁵⁵ *which are* the figures of the true;⁴⁵⁶ but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:^{457 25} Nor yet that he should offer himself often,⁴⁵⁸ as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others;^{459 26} For then⁴⁶⁰ must he often have suffered

⁴⁴¹ So if John puts Susan in his will, she has no valid claim upon his estate until he dies.

⁴⁴² "Neither...without" is *litotes*, and is a gentle way of saying "with."

⁴⁴³ This ceremony formalizing Israel's promise to keep God's commands is described in Exo. 24:3-8.

⁴⁴⁴ The author appears to have conflated details from various rituals with the ceremony he is describing. These elements were used for purifying lepers and those who had come in contact with a corpse, and hyssop was used to put blood on the door posts at Passover.

⁴⁴⁵ Presumably the book of the law. In Exo. 24 Moses sprinkles the blood on the altar.

⁴⁴⁶ OR covenant.

⁴⁴⁷ Exo. 24:8.

⁴⁴⁸ Which the author has already described in 9:1-5.

⁴⁴⁹ But not all, water and fire being other examples of purifying agents required by the law.

⁴⁵⁰ OR cleansed.

⁴⁵¹ OR forgiveness.

⁴⁵² The physical, earthly representations of heavenly realities.

⁴⁵³ IE blood and priestly service.

⁴⁵⁴ The heavenly realities on which the earthly representations are based.

⁴⁵⁵ The earthly sanctuary.

⁴⁵⁶ The true sanctuary was not on earth, but in heaven.

⁴⁵⁷ IE to intercede with God on our behalf.

⁴⁵⁸ Jesus made his offering once for all; it does not require frequent repetition.

⁴⁵⁹ The priest uses animal blood, not his own, whereas Christ effects an atonement with his own blood.

⁴⁶⁰ IE in that case.

since the foundation of the world:⁴⁶¹ but now once in the end of the world⁴⁶² hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.²⁷ And as it is appointed unto men once to die,⁴⁶³ but after this the judgment:²⁸ So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many;⁴⁶⁴ and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

Chapter 10

¹ FOR the law having a shadow⁴⁶⁵ of good things to come,⁴⁶⁶ *and* not the very image⁴⁶⁷ of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually⁴⁶⁸ make the comers thereunto perfect. ² For then would they not have ceased to be offered?⁴⁶⁹ because that the worshippers once purged⁴⁷⁰ should have had no more conscience of sins. ³ But in those *sacrifices there is* a remembrance again *made* of sins every year.⁴⁷¹ ⁴ For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

⁵ Wherefore when he⁴⁷² cometh into the world,⁴⁷³ he saith,⁴⁷⁴

**Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not,
but a body hast thou prepared me:⁴⁷⁵**

⁶ **In burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin
thou hast had no pleasure.**

⁷ **Then said I,
Lo, I come**

⁴⁶¹ Note the presumption that Jesus preexisted and was present at the creation of the world.

⁴⁶² OR age.

⁴⁶³ This sentiment was so common it was almost proverbial.

⁴⁶⁴ Rather than being sacrificed many times Jesus was sacrificed one time for many.

⁴⁶⁵ OR the law contains a foreshadowing.

⁴⁶⁶ Including atonement, sanctification and the salvation that derives therefrom.

⁴⁶⁷ While a shadow has the same shape of and suggests an object, it is less than a physical image, which represents the object more completely (as in the case of a statue).

⁴⁶⁸ The author continues his theme that the ongoing multiplicity of offerings suggests they are ultimately ineffectual.

⁴⁶⁹ The presumed answer to this rhetorical question is yes, if the levitical administrations were able to make those who draw near to them perfect, there would have been no further need for them.

⁴⁷⁰ OR cleansed.

⁴⁷¹ The argument is that far from perfecting people, the sacrifices actually reminded the people of sin and kept sin in their consciousness.

⁴⁷² IE Jesus.

⁴⁷³ A Jewish expression for birth; in the case of Jesus, it refers to the Incarnation.

⁴⁷⁴ The wording of the Psalm is ascribed to Jesus as the one who revealed it to the human prophet.

⁴⁷⁵ An allusion to preexistence.

**(in the volume⁴⁷⁶ of the book it is written of me,
to do thy will, O God.⁴⁷⁷**

⁸ Above when he said, **Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure *therein*,**⁴⁷⁸ which are offered by the law;⁹ Then said he, **Lo, I come to do thy will, O God.**⁴⁷⁹ He taketh away the first,⁴⁸⁰ that he may establish the second.⁴⁸¹ ¹⁰ By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*.⁴⁸²

¹¹ And every priest standeth⁴⁸³ daily ministering and offering oftentimes⁴⁸⁴ the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:¹² But this man,⁴⁸⁵ after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;¹³ From henceforth expecting⁴⁸⁶ till his enemies be made his footstool.⁴⁸⁷ ¹⁴ For by one offering⁴⁸⁸ he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

¹⁵ *Whereof* the Holy Ghost⁴⁸⁹ also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before,

**¹⁶ This is the covenant that I will make with them
after those days, saith the Lord,
I will put my laws into their hearts,
and in their minds will I write them;
¹⁷ And their sins and iniquities
will I remember no more.⁴⁹⁰**

¹⁸ Now where remission⁴⁹¹ of these *is, there is* no more offering for sin.

⁴⁷⁶ κεφαλίδι *kephalidi* lit. little head. The allusion apparently is to the knob at the top of the rod around which a scroll was rolled and unrolled; by synechdoche the little head stands for the scroll itself. A reader originally would have understood this to be a single book in scroll form.

⁴⁷⁷ Ps. 40:6-8, following the LXX form of the text.

⁴⁷⁸ Ps. 40:6.

⁴⁷⁹ Ps. 40:7.

⁴⁸⁰ IE animal sacrifice.

⁴⁸¹ IE obedience to the will of God.

⁴⁸² Again the author emphasizes that the offering of Jesus was a one-time occurrence.

⁴⁸³ Ministering in the temple usually involved actions requiring standing, such as slaughtering animals and offering the sacrifices at the altar.

⁴⁸⁴ OR repeatedly.

⁴⁸⁵ IE Jesus.

⁴⁸⁶ OR waiting.

⁴⁸⁷ An image for being humbled before him.

⁴⁸⁸ Again contrasting the single offering of Jesus with the multiplicity of offerings by the priests.

⁴⁸⁹ Speaking through the prophet Jeremiah.

⁴⁹⁰ A paraphrase of Jer. 31:33-34. The author has already quoted this oracle in full, in 8:7-12.

Exhortation and Warning

¹⁹ Having therefore, brethren, boldness⁴⁹² to enter⁴⁹³ into the holiest⁴⁹⁴ by the blood of Jesus,⁴⁹⁵ ²⁰ By a new and living way,⁴⁹⁶ which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil,⁴⁹⁷ that is to say, his flesh;⁴⁹⁸ ²¹ And *having* an high priest over the house of God;⁴⁹⁹ ²² Let us draw near⁵⁰⁰ with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled⁵⁰¹ from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.⁵⁰² ²³ Let us hold fast the profession⁵⁰³ of *our* faith without wavering,⁵⁰⁴ (for he⁵⁰⁵ *is* faithful that promised;)²⁴ And let us consider one another to provoke⁵⁰⁶ unto love and to good works:²⁵ Not forsaking⁵⁰⁷ the assembling of ourselves together,⁵⁰⁸ as the manner of some *is*;⁵⁰⁹ but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day⁵¹⁰ approaching.
²⁶ For if we sin wilfully⁵¹¹ after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,⁵¹² ²⁷ But a certain fearful looking for of

⁴⁹¹ OR forgiveness.

⁴⁹² OR confidence.

⁴⁹³ IE a means of entry has now been provided that did not before exist.

⁴⁹⁴ The inner sanctuary, where God dwells.

⁴⁹⁵ As opposed to the blood of animal sacrifices.

⁴⁹⁶ OR path (into the sanctuary). This way or path of access is "living," because it is the risen Jesus.

⁴⁹⁷ The veil separating the holy place from the inner sanctum, the holy of holies.

⁴⁹⁸ The entrance through the veil and into the inner sanctum for purposes of the making of an atonement once and for all is through the sacrificial death of Jesus.

⁴⁹⁹ In one sense "house of God" could refer to the temple; in another, it could refer to Christians themselves.

⁵⁰⁰ To "draw near" or approach the mercy seat reflects priestly imagery from the Day of Atonement.

⁵⁰¹ The metaphor of sprinkling again alludes to the sprinkling of blood to effect atonement under the sacrificial cultus.

⁵⁰² There is probably an allusion here both to priestly washings and to the Christian rite of baptism.

⁵⁰³ IE the act of professing or confessing one's faith, not to be confused with use of the term "profession" in modern ENG for referring to one's occupation.

⁵⁰⁴ ἀκλινῇ *aklinē* unbending, unwavering (with *alpha* privative, like ENG "-un").

⁵⁰⁵ IE God.

⁵⁰⁶ OR let us consider how to provoke one another.

⁵⁰⁷ OR abandoning.

⁵⁰⁸ IE in meetings.

⁵⁰⁹ Some apparently spurned the gathering together of the Saints in assemblies; the author views such actions as impious.

⁵¹⁰ IE the day of the Lord, the day of judgment.

⁵¹¹ As opposed to unwitting, involuntary or ignorant sins. This distinction in types of sins was a part of the levitical sacrificial system.

judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.^{513 28} He that despised⁵¹⁴ Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses.^{515 29} Of how much sorer punishment,⁵¹⁶ suppose ye,⁵¹⁷ shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot⁵¹⁸ the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant,⁵¹⁹ wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing,⁵²⁰ and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? ³⁰ For we know him that hath said,⁵²¹ **Vengeance *belongeth* unto me, I will recompense,** saith the Lord. And again, **The Lord shall judge his people.**^{522 31} *It is* a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.⁵²³

³² But call to remembrance the former days,⁵²⁴ in which, after ye were illuminated,⁵²⁵ ye endured a great fight⁵²⁶ of afflictions; ³³ Partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock⁵²⁷ both by reproaches and afflictions;⁵²⁸ and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used.^{529 34} For ye had compassion of me in my bonds,⁵³⁰ and took joyfully the spoiling⁵³¹ of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in

⁵¹² Wilful sin is tantamount to a rejection of the atonement of Christ; there is then no more remedy for such sin.

⁵¹³ IE those who stand in opposition to God.

⁵¹⁴ OR flouted.

⁵¹⁵ The allusion is to the law of witnesses in capital cases; see Dt. 17:2-6.

⁵¹⁶ The argument is *a fortiori*.

⁵¹⁷ The author thus introduces a rhetorical question.

⁵¹⁸ IE trampled upon, and thus showing contempt for.

⁵¹⁹ Meaning the blood spilt by Jesus in effecting the atonement.

⁵²⁰ κοινὸν *koinon* lit. common; here profane. The Latin-derived "profane" lit. means "outside the temple," and is the opposite of "sacred."

⁵²¹ A circumlocution for God, the presumed speaker of the scriptural passage the author is about to quote.

⁵²² Dt. 32:35-36, in a form not corresponding to the MT or LXX, but rather to the ARAM targums.

⁵²³ IE to come under God's terrifying power in the judgment.

⁵²⁴ The author calls to memory the community's past.

⁵²⁵ IE converted to Christian faith.

⁵²⁶ OR contest; IE they wrestled with their sufferings. The metaphor relates to athletic contests.

⁵²⁷ θεατριζόμενοι *theatrizomenoi*. In the active, the verb refers to appearing in a theater, and thus "to act"; in the passive, as here, it means to be publicly exposed, to be made a public spectacle.

⁵²⁸ IE they had endured persecution for the sake of their new faith.

⁵²⁹ IE they showed solidarity with their similarly afflicted Christian brothers and sisters.

⁵³⁰ δεσμίους *desmiois* for the prisoners. A *iota* dropped out of some texts, making the word appear to be δεσμοῖς *desmois* "bonds, chains," and then scribes added different pronouns to different texts so as to try to make sense of the word, such as the "of me" in the KJV.

⁵³¹ OR seizure, either by public officials or privately by antagonists.

heaven a better and an enduring substance.^{532 35} Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward.³⁶ For ye have need of patience,⁵³³ that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.⁵³⁴

³⁷ For yet a little while,
and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.⁵³⁵
³⁸ Now the just⁵³⁶ shall live by faith:
but if *any man* draw back,⁵³⁷
my soul shall have no pleasure in him.⁵³⁸

³⁹ But we⁵³⁹ are not of them who draw back unto perdition;⁵⁴⁰ but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.

Chapter 11

Faith

¹ NOW faith is the substance⁵⁴¹ of things hoped for, the evidence⁵⁴² of things not seen.^{543 2} For by it the elders⁵⁴⁴ obtained a good report.⁵⁴⁵

⁵³² Their heavenly reward is more important than their fleeting material goods here on earth.

⁵³³ OR endurance.

⁵³⁴ Not the mere promise itself, but the substance of what God has promised.

⁵³⁵ Understood from a Christian perspective as referring to the second coming.

⁵³⁶ OR the upright one, the righteous one.

⁵³⁷ The opposite of drawing near to God; to shrink back.

⁵³⁸ Hab. 2:3-4; Isa. 26:20.

⁵³⁹ The pronoun is emphatic, both by appearing first in the GR word order and by being expressed at all, when it is not required in the GR.

⁵⁴⁰ ἀπόλειαν *apōleian* destruction.

⁵⁴¹ ὑπόστασις *hupostasis* lit. that which stands under something. KJV "substance" is the Latin-derived equivalent, and comes from the Vulgate's *sperandarum substantia rerum* substance of things hoped for. In classical GR, ὑπόστασις *hupostasis* is used concretely for that which stands beneath something, thus forming its basis. So, for example, the ground under water on which one can get a foothold is ὑπόστασις *hupostasis*. From this basic conception the word came to have a wide variety of meanings, from the value of property (IE its economic basis) to the sidereal hour of one's birth (life's starting point). From here the word came to have reference to concrete reality, that which is permanently constituted. Therefore, *thought* and *appearance* were thought to have *existence*, but not reality (ὑπόστασις *hupostasis*). In the LXX the word was used about 20 times to render a wide variety of HEB terms, such as *maamad* (ground under water on which one can stand, Ps. 68:3), *yequm* (living being, Dt. 11:6), *cheled* (duration of life, Ps. 38:6, 88:48), *michyah* (food, sustenance, Judg. 6:4), *kenaah* (load, pack, Jer. 10:17), *matstsab* (outpost, 1 Sam. 14:4), *matstsebah* (pillar, Ez. 26:11), *tekunah* (arrangement Ez. 43:11), *sod* (council, group of intimates, Jer. 23:22), *massa* (burden, Dt. 1:12), *tochelet* (expectation,

³ Through faith⁵⁴⁶ we understand that the worlds⁵⁴⁷ were framed by the word of God,⁵⁴⁸ so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.⁵⁴⁹

hope, Ps. 38:3), *tiqwah* (hope, Ez. 19:5). There is a fundamental split among scholars as to whether the word should be understood in an objective or subjective sense in this passage. The objective sense is that represented by the KJV, and understands the word as it was used by GR philosophers, as the ground of reality: "Faith gives substance to our hopes, and makes us certain of realities we do not see" (NEB); "In faith things hoped for become realized, or things hoped for take on reality" (BDAG). The subjective sense ("sure confidence") was favored by Luther and Tyndale, based on some of the LXX usages for HEB terms meaning "hope," and is reflected in the RSV's "assurance": "Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see" (NIV); "Human faith doesn't create the reality of things hoped for; unseen realities have independent and objective validity. Faith gives *us* assurance, evidence, etc." (Interpreter's Bible). In other words, is faith the reality of things hoped for/not seen (as in Plato's world of ideas), or is faith a sure confidence we have in things hoped for/not seen (which have their own, objective reality)? The JST changes "substance" to "assurance," as does the RSV, which may suggest that the subjective interpretation is the preferable one. In any event, the definition is not meant to be comprehensive, but to advance the author's argument.

⁵⁴² ἐλεγχος *elenchos* proof. The word originally referred to a cross-examination or testing for purposes of disproof or refutation. It was often applied to Socratic dialogue. Over time, the word moved from being specifically a disproof of a proposition to being a proof (in a positive as well as a negative sense), or evidence, or internal conviction.

⁵⁴³ Just as "proof" parallels "substance/assurance," "things not seen" parallels "things hoped for."

⁵⁴⁴ A term of respect referring to the ancestors of the Jews.

⁵⁴⁵ ἐμαρτυρήθησαν *emarturēthēsan* lit. they were testified to, they were attested. Being favorably attested usually had to do with gaining public honors. The meaning is that they gained approval of God.

⁵⁴⁶ πίστει *pistei* by faith. This is a causal dative, and means "because of faith." Many of the remaining verses in the chapter begin with this word. Rhetorical repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of successive passages is called *anaphora*.

⁵⁴⁷ The word is plural and could suggest multiple worlds, but it is referred to later in the v. (in GR) with a singular pronoun, so the meaning is probably the entire universe.

⁵⁴⁸ As portrayed in Gen. 1 God effected the creation by the word of his power.

⁵⁴⁹ On the surface some have read this as alluding to *creatio ex nihilo*, "creation out of nothing." This is probably a mistaken reading. First, we should note that invisibility is not necessarily the same as nonexistence. Second, some read the passage as reflecting the platonic notion that the physical world derives from a transcendent realm that cannot be seen, much like the earthly tabernacle was patterned after an unseen heavenly one in 8:1-5 (which LDS would understand by the concept that everything is created spiritually first, and physically second). But even this is probably not the correct way to read the passage. As the AB suggests, to properly comprehend the significance of the passage, we must view it in its chiasmic structure (which exists in Greek but is lost in the ENG translation of the KJV):

⁴ By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain,⁵⁵⁰ by which he obtained witness that he was righteous,⁵⁵¹ God testifying of his gifts:⁵⁵² and by it he being dead yet speaketh.⁵⁵³ ⁵ By faith Enoch was translated⁵⁵⁴ that he should not see death;⁵⁵⁵ and **was not found, because God had translated him:**⁵⁵⁶ for before his translation he had this testimony, that **he pleased God.**⁵⁵⁷ ⁶ But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he⁵⁵⁸ is,⁵⁵⁹ and *that* he is a rewarder⁵⁶⁰ of them that diligently seek him. ⁷ By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet,⁵⁶¹ moved with fear,⁵⁶² prepared an ark to the saving of his house;⁵⁶³ by the which⁵⁶⁴ he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness⁵⁶⁵ which is by faith.

A was fashioned
 B the universe
 C by the word of God
 C' by what cannot be seen
 B' that which can be seen
 A' came into being

So, taking this parallelism into account, the universe is that which can be seen; that which cannot be seen is the word of God, the invisible power by which God created the worlds.

⁵⁵⁰ This incident is recounted in Gen. 4.

⁵⁵¹ OR by which [sacrifice] he was attested as being righteous.

⁵⁵² God himself testified concerning the superiority of Abel's sacrificial gifts.

⁵⁵³ The participle is concessive; render "and through it [his sacrifice], although he is dead, he is still speaking." In Gen. 4:10, Abel's blood is represented as crying from the ground even after his death.

⁵⁵⁴ μετετέθη *metetethē* removed from one place to another. ENG "translated" derives from a passive form of LAT *transfere*, lit. "to carry across."

⁵⁵⁵ Gen. 5:24 does not specifically state what it meant for God to "take" Enoch, but it was generally understood to mean that Enoch did not die. See, for instance, Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 1.85.

⁵⁵⁶ The quote derives from the LXX of Gen. 5:24b.

⁵⁵⁷ Gen. 5:24. Where the MT says Enoch "walked with God," the LXX says that he "pleased God."

⁵⁵⁸ IE God.

⁵⁵⁹ It would be difficult for one in the ancient world to dispute this statement. Even most philosophers believed that there was a God.

⁵⁶⁰ IE one who rewards.

⁵⁶¹ The divine warning to Noah is recounted in Gen. 6.

⁵⁶² IE reverence for God, as opposed to fear of the coming flood.

⁵⁶³ OR for the salvation of his household (as opposed to the saving of a physical house).

⁵⁶⁴ The relative pronoun in GR is feminine, and appears to refer back to "faith."

⁵⁶⁵ Here standing for the blessings the righteous receive through faith.

⁸ By faith Abraham, when he was called⁵⁶⁶ to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance,⁵⁶⁷ obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.⁵⁶⁸ ⁹ By faith he sojourned⁵⁶⁹ in the land of promise,⁵⁷⁰ as *in* a strange⁵⁷¹ country, dwelling in tabernacles⁵⁷² with Isaac and Jacob,⁵⁷³ the heirs with him of the same promise.¹⁰ For he looked for⁵⁷⁴ a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.⁵⁷⁵ ¹¹ Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed,⁵⁷⁶ and was delivered of a child when she⁵⁷⁷ was past age, because she⁵⁷⁸ judged him faithful who had promised.¹² Therefore sprang there even of one,⁵⁷⁹ and him as good as dead,⁵⁸⁰ *so many* as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable.⁵⁸¹

¹³ These all died in faith, not having received the promises,⁵⁸² but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of *them*, and embraced *them*, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.⁵⁸³ ¹⁴ For they that say such things declare

⁵⁶⁶ God's call of Abraham is set out in Gen. 12.

⁵⁶⁷ In an earthly sense the land of Canaan; in a spiritual, heaven.

⁵⁶⁸ It takes faith to head out somewhere when one does not know where one is going.

⁵⁶⁹ The verb παρώκησεν *parōkēsen* alludes to coming to live temporarily alongside others as a resident alien.

⁵⁷⁰ A Hebraic construction for "promised land."

⁵⁷¹ OR belonging to another, not one's own.

⁵⁷² OR tents.

⁵⁷³ Abraham's son and grandson. The OT recounts Abraham's death before it does Jacob's birth, so a superficial reading would suggest they never lived together. Nevertheless, Isaac was born when Abraham was 100 years old; Jacob was born 40 years later; and Abraham lived to be 175. (See Gen. 21 and 25.) Therefore, Abraham's life overlapped that of Jacob by some 25 years.

⁵⁷⁴ OR looked forward to, expected.

⁵⁷⁵ The allusion is to the heavenly city.

⁵⁷⁶ The subject of the verb should probably be Abraham, not Sarah, since to "deposit seed" as the GR has it is usually used of the male's role in begetting rather than the female's role in conceiving, and Abraham is clearly the subject of the next verse. Render with a HEB circumstantial clause: "By faith—and Sarah herself being barren—he received power to father children."

⁵⁷⁷ This feminine pronoun is not present in the GR; the expression could refer either to Abraham or Sarah.

⁵⁷⁸ One cannot determine the gender of the subject from the GR verb. If the verse begins with Abraham as subject rather than Sarah, as suggested above, then Abraham would also be the subject here and the pronoun should be the masculine "he."

⁵⁷⁹ The gender of the GR word is masculine and refers to Abraham.

⁵⁸⁰ IE as it relates to begetting children, given Abraham's advanced years.

⁵⁸¹ Cf. Gen. 22:17.

⁵⁸² Although the birth of Isaac marked the beginning of the promises, they did not live to see their ultimate fulfillment.

⁵⁸³ Their true home being the heavenly Jerusalem, the heavenly city.

plainly that they seek a country.^{584 15} And truly, if they had been mindful of that *country* from whence they came out,⁵⁸⁵ they might have had opportunity to have returned.¹⁶ But now they desire a better *country*, that is, an heavenly:⁵⁸⁶ wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.⁵⁸⁷

¹⁷ By faith Abraham, when he was tried,⁵⁸⁸ offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten⁵⁸⁹ *son*,¹⁸ Of whom it was said, **That in Isaac shall thy seed be called**.^{590 19} Accounting that God *was* able to raise *him* up, even from the dead;⁵⁹¹ from whence also he received him in a figure.^{592 20} By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.^{593 21} By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both⁵⁹⁴ the sons of Joseph; and **worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff**.^{595 22} By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of⁵⁹⁶ the departing⁵⁹⁷ of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.⁵⁹⁸

²³ By faith Moses,⁵⁹⁹ when he was born, was hid three months of his parents,⁶⁰⁰ because they saw *he was* a proper⁶⁰¹ child; and they were not afraid of the king's

⁵⁸⁴ OR homeland.

⁵⁸⁵ First Ur and then Haran, to neither of which did Abraham and Sarah return to live on a permanent basis.

⁵⁸⁶ Hebrews portrays the object of Abraham's hope not as Canaan, but as heaven.

⁵⁸⁷ IE the heavenly Jerusalem.

⁵⁸⁸ OR tested. The binding of Isaac is recounted in Gen. 22.

⁵⁸⁹ μονογενῆ *monogenē* only, unique. Abraham had previously begotten Ishmael of Hagar, but Isaac was traditionally considered Abraham's "only son" in the fullest sense.

⁵⁹⁰ LXX Gen. 21:12.

⁵⁹¹ Although there were some traditions to the effect that Abraham actually killed Isaac and God resurrected him, the meaning seems here to be that Abraham received Isaac back as it were from the dead, for without the angel's intervention Abraham surely would have killed him.

⁵⁹² OR symbol (of the resurrection of Christ, and thereafter of all men).

⁵⁹³ Isaac's blessings of his sons are recounted in Gen. 27.

⁵⁹⁴ The GR says "each of," but as Joseph had two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, "both" is an appropriate rendering.

⁵⁹⁵ Gen. 47:31. The HEB consonants of the word in that v. are *mth*, which the MT took as *mittah* "bed," but the LXX took as *matteh* "staff." As usual, Hebrews follows the LXX reading.

⁵⁹⁶ τελευτῶν *teleutōn* remembered. It is rather unusual to say that Joseph remembered the Exodus, since that event occurred long after his death. What is meant is that Joseph remembered the promise of the Exodus (Gen. 15:13-14).

⁵⁹⁷ IE the Exodus.

⁵⁹⁸ Joseph did not want his bones to be left in Egypt (Gen. 50:24-25), so the departing Israelites took Joseph's bones with them (Exo. 13:19) and buried them at Shechem (Jos. 24:32).

⁵⁹⁹ The faith described in this v. is actually that of Moses' parents.

⁶⁰⁰ The GR πατέρων *paterōn* includes both parents. The MT of Exo. 2:2 has Moses' mother concealing him, but the LXX says "*they* concealed him," meaning both mother and father; Hebrews thus follows the LXX tradition.

commandment.^{602 24} By faith Moses, when he was come to years,⁶⁰³ refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter,^{604 25} Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God,⁶⁰⁵ than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;^{606 26} Esteeming the reproach⁶⁰⁷ of Christ greater riches than the treasures⁶⁰⁸ in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.^{609 27} By faith he forsook⁶¹⁰ Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.^{611 28} Through faith he kept the passover,⁶¹² and the sprinkling of blood,⁶¹³ lest he that destroyed⁶¹⁴ the firstborn should touch them.^{615 29} By faith they passed through the Red sea⁶¹⁶ as by dry *land*: which the Egyptians assaying⁶¹⁷ to do were drowned.³⁰ By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about⁶¹⁸ seven days.^{619 31} By faith the harlot⁶²⁰ Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.⁶²¹
³² And what shall I more say?⁶²² for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon,⁶²³ and of Barak,⁶²⁴ and of Samson,⁶²⁵ and of Jephthae,⁶²⁶ of David⁶²⁷ also, and Samuel,⁶²⁸

⁶⁰¹ ἀστεῖον *asteion* beautiful, fine; here the word probably alludes to the good character of Moses.

⁶⁰² For the Pharaoh's edict, see Exo. 1.

⁶⁰³ OR grown up.

⁶⁰⁴ On her adoption of Moses, see Exo. 2:10.

⁶⁰⁵ In their heavy forced labor as Egyptian slaves.

⁶⁰⁶ Which would have been readily available to Moses as a participant in Pharaohs' court.

⁶⁰⁷ IE verbal denunciation, insult. Here the reproach is both like that endured by Christ and for the sake of Christ.

⁶⁰⁸ θησαυρῶν *thēsaurōn* may contain an allusion to the vast grain storehouses of Egypt, which fed much of the Roman empire.

⁶⁰⁹ OR he looked forward to his reward.

⁶¹⁰ OR left.

⁶¹¹ ἀόρατον *aoraton* unseen, invisible, with alpha privative, alluding to God. If Moses saw God, though, he cannot be absolutely invisible, but rather not normally seen by men.

⁶¹² See Exo. 12.

⁶¹³ On the doorposts and lintels of their houses. This required faith, as there was no reason to think that merely spreading blood in this fashion would be efficacious.

⁶¹⁴ Either God or a destroying angel acting as his agent.

⁶¹⁵ The allusion is to the last of the Ten Plagues.

⁶¹⁶ The MT of Exo. 15:4 calls it the *yam suph*, or sea of reeds, but the LXX calls it the Red Sea, and Hebrews follows the LXX tradition.

⁶¹⁷ OR trying, attempting.

⁶¹⁸ OR encircled, gone around.

⁶¹⁹ See Joshua 6.

⁶²⁰ OR prostitute.

⁶²¹ Rahab concealed Joshua's spies from the king. See Jos. 2 and 6.

⁶²² The question is rhetorical.

⁶²³ With a band of just 300 men, Gideon defeated the Midianites. See Judg. 7.

⁶²⁴ Deborah and Barak prevailed over the Canaanites. See Judg. 4-5.

⁶²⁵ A great hero under a Nazirite vow who delivered Israel from the Philistines. See Judg. 13-15.

and of the prophets.^{629 33} Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought⁶³⁰ righteousness, obtained promises,⁶³¹ stopped the mouths of lions,^{632 34} Quenched the violence of fire,⁶³³ escaped the edge⁶³⁴ of the sword,⁶³⁵ out of weakness were made strong, waxed⁶³⁶ valiant in fight,⁶³⁷ turned to flight⁶³⁸ the armies of the aliens.^{639 35} Women received their dead raised to life again.⁶⁴⁰ and others were tortured,⁶⁴¹ not accepting deliverance;⁶⁴² that they might obtain a better resurrection.^{643 36} And others had trial of *cruel* mockings⁶⁴⁴ and scourgings,⁶⁴⁵ yea, moreover of bonds⁶⁴⁶ and imprisonment:³⁷ They were stoned,⁶⁴⁷ they were sawn asunder,⁶⁴⁸ were tempted,⁶⁴⁹ were slain with the sword:⁶⁵⁰ they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute,

⁶²⁶ Jephthah foolishly vowed that if God gave him victory over the Ammonites, he would sacrifice the first living thing he saw when he returned home, which happened to be his own daughter. See Judg. 11.

⁶²⁷ Traditionally considered Israel's greatest king.

⁶²⁸ The last of Israel's judges, who anointed Saul as the first king of the united monarchy.

⁶²⁹ The following verses seem to allude to Daniel, Elijah, Elisha and Isaiah.

⁶³⁰ OR worked.

⁶³¹ IE those things promised by God.

⁶³² Most likely an allusion to Daniel in the lion's den. See Dan. 6.

⁶³³ The allusion is to Daniel's three young friends who survived the fiery furnace. See Dan.3.

⁶³⁴ στόματα *stomata* lit. mouths. When used of a sword, the word is figurative for that which devours, and means the edge. The word is plural here because a sword has two edges.

⁶³⁵ This could allude to many different prophetic experiences.

⁶³⁶ OR grew, became.

⁶³⁷ OR battle.

⁶³⁸ OR routed.

⁶³⁹ OR foreigners.

⁶⁴⁰ The allusions are to resuscitations effected by Elijah and Elisha (1 Ki. 17 and 2 Ki. 4).

⁶⁴¹ Probably an allusion to Maccabean martyrs, as in 2 Macc. 6.

⁶⁴² The tortured prisoners were usually offered their freedom if they would commit an unlawful act, such as eating pork.

⁶⁴³ Being raised to eternal life is a superior resurrection to the mere human resuscitation (still being subject to eventual death) alluded to previously.

⁶⁴⁴ OR ridicule.

⁶⁴⁵ IE beatings with a scourge. A scourge had multiple lashes attached to a wooden handle, with pieces of metal or bone tied into the ends of the lashes to make them more painful.

⁶⁴⁶ OR chains.

⁶⁴⁷ Stoning was both an official form of capital punishment and an unofficial punishment inflicted by mobs.

⁶⁴⁸ Tradition held that Isaiah was sawn in two.

⁶⁴⁹ OR tested. There is textual uncertainty as to whether this word was originally a part of the text.

⁶⁵⁰ Such as the prophet Uriah. See Jer. 26.

afflicted, tormented;³⁸ (Of whom the world was not worthy:)⁶⁵¹ they wandered in deserts, and *in* mountains, and *in* dens and caves of the earth.⁶⁵²

³⁹ And these all, having obtained a good report⁶⁵³ through faith, received not the promise:⁶⁵⁴ ⁴⁰ God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.⁶⁵⁵

Chapter 12

The Discipline of the Lord

¹ WHEREFORE seeing we⁶⁵⁶ also are compassed about⁶⁵⁷ with so great a cloud⁶⁵⁸ of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight,⁶⁵⁹ and the sin which doth so easily⁶⁶⁰ beset *us*, and let us run with patience⁶⁶¹ the race⁶⁶² that is set before us, ² Looking unto Jesus the author⁶⁶³ and finisher⁶⁶⁴ of *our* faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross,⁶⁶⁵ despising the shame,⁶⁶⁶ and is set down at the right hand⁶⁶⁷ of the throne of God.⁶⁶⁸ ³ For consider him that endured such contradiction⁶⁶⁹ of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint⁶⁷⁰ in your minds.

⁶⁵¹ This comment is a parenthetical observation, as the KJV correctly punctuates it.

⁶⁵² Attire and actions that were traditionally ascribed to prophets generally.

⁶⁵³ OR being testified to, attested.

⁶⁵⁴ They had received provisional promises, but not yet the ultimate promise of resurrection and eternal life.

⁶⁵⁵ OR complete, finished.

⁶⁵⁶ Note the shift from the third person to the first person plural.

⁶⁵⁷ OR surrounded.

⁶⁵⁸ Metaphoric for a multitude.

⁶⁵⁹ Metaphoric for unnecessary burdens, sin.

⁶⁶⁰ OR readily.

⁶⁶¹ OR endurance. The focus is not on speed but on staying the course throughout the race.

⁶⁶² The metaphor relates to athletic contests.

⁶⁶³ OR founder, inspirer, pioneer.

⁶⁶⁴ ΤΕΛΕΙΩΤΗΝ *teleiōtēn* one who brings something to completion; perfecter.

⁶⁶⁵ The GR lacks the definite article; Jesus endured "a cross."

⁶⁶⁶ IE Jesus thought nothing of the disgrace of being crucified, a punishment that usually was accompanied by jeering from passersby.

⁶⁶⁷ The place of honor.

⁶⁶⁸ "Throne of God" is a circumlocution for God. The expression is a means of not speaking too directly of God himself.

⁶⁶⁹ OR opposition.

⁶⁷⁰ The athletic metaphor is continued here. Being wearied is the opposite of enduring with strength.

⁴ Ye have not yet resisted unto blood,⁶⁷¹ striving against sin. ⁵ And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children,⁶⁷²

**My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord,
nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:**

**⁶ For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth,
and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.**⁶⁷³

⁷ If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?⁶⁷⁴ ⁸ But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.⁶⁷⁵ ⁹ Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh⁶⁷⁶ which corrected *us*, and we gave *them* reverence:⁶⁷⁷ shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?⁶⁷⁸ ¹⁰ For they verily for a few days⁶⁷⁹ chastened *us* after their own pleasure;⁶⁸⁰ but he for *our* profit,⁶⁸¹ that *we* might be partakers of⁶⁸² his holiness. ¹¹ Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous:⁶⁸³ nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised⁶⁸⁴ thereby.⁶⁸⁵

⁶⁷¹ OR to the point of bloodshed. IE they have not yet done there utmost, and they have not suffered martyrdom.

⁶⁷² Pr. 3:11 uses the singular "son," but Hebrews extends the exhortation to all God's sons and daughters.

⁶⁷³ LXX Pr. 3:11-12. Note that the LXX for the last line, which Hebrews follows, differs from the MT. The MT took the HEB letters *k'b* as *ke'ab*, "as a father" (thus KJV "even as a father the son in whom he delighted"), but the LXX took those letters as a form of the verb *ka'eb*, which has to do with inflicting pain.

⁶⁷⁴ The argument is that, just as human fathers chasten their sons, God too is our father and chastens us for our own instruction.

⁶⁷⁵ Under Roman law, illegitimate children were not subject to their father's control, but neither did they have a claim on him for their education or for an inheritance. If one is unwilling to endure educative chastening at the hands of the Father, one does not have the rights of a true son.

⁶⁷⁶ IE human fathers.

⁶⁷⁷ We give our human fathers respect, notwithstanding that they train us by discipline and instruction, which we may not fully appreciate at the time.

⁶⁷⁸ The argument is *a fortiori*; if we give our human fathers such respect, should we not all the more give respect to our heavenly Father?

⁶⁷⁹ IE for a short time, when we were children.

⁶⁸⁰ OR as seemed good to them.

⁶⁸¹ OR benefit.

⁶⁸² OR share in.

⁶⁸³ IE no one enjoys being chastened while it is happening.

⁶⁸⁴ OR trained (continuing the athletic metaphor).

⁶⁸⁵ The metaphor here relates to the orchard; the education chastisement brings afterwards yields a harvest of righteousness.

¹² Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees,⁶⁸⁶ ¹³ And make straight paths⁶⁸⁷ for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.⁶⁸⁸

Warning against Rejecting God's Grace

¹⁴ Follow⁶⁸⁹ peace with all *men*, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:⁶⁹⁰ ¹⁵ Looking⁶⁹¹ diligently lest any man fail of⁶⁹² the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness⁶⁹³ springing up trouble *you*, and thereby many be defiled; ¹⁶ Lest there *be* any fornicator,⁶⁹⁴ or profane person,⁶⁹⁵ as Esau, who for one morsel of meat⁶⁹⁶ sold his birthright.⁶⁹⁷ ¹⁷ For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing,⁶⁹⁸ he was rejected: for he found no place⁶⁹⁹ of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.⁷⁰⁰

¹⁸ For ye are not come unto the mount⁷⁰¹ that might be touched,⁷⁰² and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest,⁷⁰³ ¹⁹ And the sound of a trumpet,⁷⁰⁴ and the voice of words; which *voice* they that heard intreated⁷⁰⁵ that the word

⁶⁸⁶ The athletic metaphor continues. From your weariness and dejection, renew your strength.

⁶⁸⁷ The most direct path to the goal.

⁶⁸⁸ If you are running and have a sore leg or foot, take care not to make matters worse and twist or sprain it, and thus have to drop out of the race altogether.

⁶⁸⁹ OR pursue.

⁶⁹⁰ The implication being that with holiness, men can see God.

⁶⁹¹ OR watching.

⁶⁹² ὕστερον *husterōn* come late for, and therefore miss out on.

⁶⁹³ The allusion is to the LXX version of Dt. 29:18 (numbered 29:17 in LXX). "Root of bitterness" is a Hebraism for a "bitter root."

⁶⁹⁴ πόρνος *pornos* usually refers to sexual immorality (cf. ENG "pornography"); here it refers generally to one who lives an immoral life.

⁶⁹⁵ βέβηλος *bebēlos* worldly; lacking an interest in divine things.

⁶⁹⁶ The lentil stew cooked by Jacob, as recounted in Gen. 25:29-34.

⁶⁹⁷ IE rights to which Esau was entitled as firstborn.

⁶⁹⁸ Later Esau wanted to receive the special blessing a father gave his firstborn, but it was not forthcoming.

⁶⁹⁹ OR occasion.

⁷⁰⁰ Esau wept when he learned that Isaac had given the birthright blessing to Jacob; see Gen. 27:38.

⁷⁰¹ Textual evidence suggests that the word "mountain" was not originally in this v., but was added to parallel the appearance of that word in v. 22.

⁷⁰² IE tangible, material.

⁷⁰³ The allusion is to the description of Mount Sinai in LXX Dt. 4:11.

⁷⁰⁴ Cf. Exo. 19:16.

⁷⁰⁵ OR begged.

should not be spoken to them any more:^{706 20} (For they could not endure that which was commanded, **And if so much as a beast⁷⁰⁷ touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart.^{708 21} And so terrible was the sight,⁷⁰⁹ *that* Moses said, **I exceedingly fear⁷¹⁰** and quake:)²² But ye are come unto mount Sion,⁷¹¹ and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company⁷¹² of angels,²³ To the general assembly and church of the firstborn,⁷¹³ which are written⁷¹⁴ in heaven,⁷¹⁵ and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,^{716 24} And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling,⁷¹⁷ that speaketh better things⁷¹⁸ than *that of Abel*.⁷¹⁹**

²⁵ See that ye refuse not him that speaketh.⁷²⁰ For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth,⁷²¹ much more *shall not* we *escape*, if we turn away from him that *speaketh* from heaven:^{722 26} Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, **Yet once more I shake not the earth** only, but also **heaven.**^{723 27} And this *word*, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.^{724 28} Wherefore we

⁷⁰⁶ The allusion is to Exo. 20:19. The words "or thrust through with a dart" are lacking in the earliest mss.

⁷⁰⁷ OR animal.

⁷⁰⁸ Exo. 19:12-13.

⁷⁰⁹ IE of God upon his mountain.

⁷¹⁰ Dt. 9:19.

⁷¹¹ Specifically referring to the hill in Jerusalem where the temple stood, and by extension to the City of Jerusalem as a whole.

⁷¹² μυριάσιν *uriasin* myriads, tens of thousands. Angels attended God in the divine council.

⁷¹³ Esau lost his rights as a firstborn son, but Christians receive special blessings analogous to those who are firstborn sons.

⁷¹⁴ OR recorded, enrolled.

⁷¹⁵ IE their names are inscribed in a heavenly book.

⁷¹⁶ OR complete; receiving all that was promised.

⁷¹⁷ A Hebraism for "sprinkled blood." The allusion is to the practice of sprinkling blood on or before the mercy seat on the Day of Atonement.

⁷¹⁸ IE is to greater purpose.

⁷¹⁹ Which cried out for vengeance for his murder.

⁷²⁰ Just as God once spoke from Sinai, he now speaks from heaven.

⁷²¹ The allusion is to the generation of Moses, who refused to obey and thus died in the wilderness.

⁷²² The argument is *a fortiori*; if the people of Moses were judged for failing to heed God, we who hear God from heaven will be judged even more severely.

⁷²³ Exo. 19:18; cf. Hag. 2:6.

⁷²⁴ God's shaking has a purging effect, like a refiner's fire. Only the tried and true will remain.

receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved,⁷²⁵ let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:²⁹ For our God *is* a consuming fire.⁷²⁶

Chapter 13

Service Well-Pleasing to God

¹ LET brotherly love⁷²⁷ continue.⁷²⁸ ² Be not forgetful⁷²⁹ to entertain strangers.⁷³⁰ for thereby⁷³¹ some have entertained angels unawares.⁷³² ³ Remember them that are in bonds,⁷³³ as bound with them;⁷³⁴ *and* them which suffer adversity,⁷³⁵ as being yourselves also in the body.⁷³⁶ ⁴ Marriage *is* honourable⁷³⁷ in all,⁷³⁸ and the bed undefiled:⁷³⁹ but whoremongers⁷⁴⁰ and adulterers God will judge.⁵ *Let your* conversation⁷⁴¹ *be* without

⁷²⁵ IE by God's shaking.

⁷²⁶ Cf. Dt. 4:24.

⁷²⁷ φιλαδελφία *philadelphia*; thus the city in Pennsylvania of that name is the City of Brotherly Love. Brotherly love refers to the same kind of bond that exists between brothers and sisters, for we are all brothers and sisters in the gospel.

⁷²⁸ OR abide, last.

⁷²⁹ OR do not neglect.

⁷³⁰ φιλοξενίας *philoxenias*. This word derives from roots meaning *love* and *foreigner*, *stranger*; it refers to hospitality for those unknown to you.

⁷³¹ OR by this means, in this way.

⁷³² IE without knowing it. There may be an allusion here to Gen. 18, where Abraham and Sarah provided for three strangers who turned out to be messengers from God. Encountering a divine messenger in disguise was also a common theme in Greek and Roman literature.

⁷³³ IE prisoners.

⁷³⁴ IE as if you were in prison with them; as if you were their fellowprisoner.

⁷³⁵ OR mistreatment.

⁷³⁶ The sense is captured by the rendering of the AB: "as though you yourselves were in [their] body." The passage is calling for empathy; imagine how you would feel if you were experiencing that same mistreatment.

⁷³⁷ The verb is not explicitly present; note that the KJV puts *is* in italics. The sense of the passage is not indicative, as the KJV takes it, but rather jussive. Therefore render: "Let marriage be honoured/precious."

⁷³⁸ ἐν παντί *en pasin*. This expression is ambiguous, as the GR form could be either masculine or neuter. If it is masculine it means "among all people" or possibly "at all times." If it is neuter it means "in every way." We might take advantage of the ambiguity and read the passage in all of these senses simultaneously.

⁷³⁹ Again, the expression is not a statement but a command: Let the marriage bed be undefiled [by sexual relationships outside of marriage].

⁷⁴⁰ IE those who are immoral in a sexual way.

⁷⁴¹ In the archaic ENG sense, meaning "conduct."

covetousness;⁷⁴² *and be content with such things as ye have:*⁷⁴³ for he hath said, **I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.**⁷⁴⁴ ⁶ So that we may boldly say,

**The Lord is my helper,
and I will not fear
what man shall do unto me.**⁷⁴⁵

⁷ Remember them which have the rule over you,⁷⁴⁶ who have spoken unto you the word of God:⁷⁴⁷ whose faith follow,⁷⁴⁸ considering the end of *their* conversation.⁷⁴⁹ ⁸ Jesus Christ⁷⁵⁰ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever. ⁹ Be not carried about with divers⁷⁵¹ and strange doctrines.⁷⁵² For *it is* a good thing that the heart be established⁷⁵³ with grace; not with meats,⁷⁵⁴ which have not profited them that have been occupied therein.⁷⁵⁵ ¹⁰ We have an altar,⁷⁵⁶ whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle.⁷⁵⁷ ¹¹ For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin,⁷⁵⁸ are burned without⁷⁵⁹ the camp. ¹² Wherefore Jesus also, that

⁷⁴² KJV covetousness is too narrow a translation. The GR is ἀφιλάργυρος *aphilarguros*, where the *a-* is a privative (like ENG "un-"), *phil* is a root meaning love and *arguros* means money [lit. silver]. The word therefore means "free from the love of money; without avarice."

⁷⁴³ Keeping the marriage bed undefiled and not being overly concerned with material things are two ways to encourage a strong marriage.

⁷⁴⁴ Dt. 31:6.

⁷⁴⁵ Ps. 118:6.

⁷⁴⁶ IE your leaders.

⁷⁴⁷ This could refer either to past leaders who converted them by missionary work, or to present leaders of the congregation, or to both.

⁷⁴⁸ Use your leaders' faithfulness as an example to follow.

⁷⁴⁹ OR the result of their way of life; the outcome of their conduct. Hebrews is encouraging people to follow the example of their leaders.

⁷⁵⁰ The KJV presents this as an ENG sentence fragment, neglecting to supply an ENG verb (no verb is explicitly stated in GR). Insert "is" here.

⁷⁵¹ OR various.

⁷⁵² OR teachings.

⁷⁵³ OR confirmed, strengthened.

⁷⁵⁴ OR foods.

⁷⁵⁵ Hebrews metaphorically compares strange doctrines to unbeneficial foods that are bad for the body.

⁷⁵⁶ Apparently an allusion by metonymy to the atonement of Jesus.

⁷⁵⁷ Although this passage is somewhat obscure, the meaning seems to be that, while the priests were able to eat meat from certain of the sacrifices (as well as the bread of the presence in the temple), one must be a Christian to partake of the offering for sin made by Jesus through his atonement.

⁷⁵⁸ On the Day of Atonement.

⁷⁵⁹ OR outside. See Exo. 29:14.

he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.^{760 13} Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp,⁷⁶¹ bearing his reproach.^{762 14} For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.^{763 15} By him⁷⁶⁴ therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise⁷⁶⁵ to God continually, that is, the fruit of *our* lips⁷⁶⁶ giving thanks to his name.^{767 16} But to do good and to communicate forget not:⁷⁶⁸ for with such sacrifices⁷⁶⁹ God is well pleased.

¹⁷ Obey them that have the rule over you,⁷⁷⁰ and submit⁷⁷¹ yourselves: for they watch⁷⁷² for your souls, as they that must give account,⁷⁷³ that they may do it⁷⁷⁴ with joy, and not with grief: for that *is* unprofitable for you.⁷⁷⁵

¹⁸ Pray for us:⁷⁷⁶ for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly.¹⁹ But I beseech *you* the rather to do this,⁷⁷⁷ that I may be restored⁷⁷⁸ to you the sooner.

Benediction and Final Greetings

²⁰ Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep,⁷⁷⁹ through the blood of the everlasting covenant, ²¹ Make

⁷⁶⁰ As was customary, Jesus was executed outside the city.

⁷⁶¹ Jesus' crucifixion outside the city is here compared to the sacrificial bodies that were burned outside the camp.

⁷⁶² Bearing denunciation for and in the name of Christ.

⁷⁶³ Although Rome was called the "eternal city," the only truly eternal city is the heavenly one.

⁷⁶⁴ IE Jesus.

⁷⁶⁵ The genitive is epexegetic: a sacrifice consisting of praise.

⁷⁶⁶ So not a burnt offering or the sacrifice of the fruit of our fields, but a sacrifice of the fruit of our lips (a powerful image) in praise and thanksgiving.

⁷⁶⁷ A circumlocution for God.

⁷⁶⁸ Render with AB "do not forget acts of kindness and fellowship."

⁷⁶⁹ In contrast to animal sacrifices.

⁷⁷⁰ OR heed your leaders.

⁷⁷¹ OR defer, yield.

⁷⁷² As a guard keeps watch.

⁷⁷³ Leaders have a special responsibility for those they lead and one day will have to give an accounting of their actions in leading.

⁷⁷⁴ The pronoun refers either to keeping watch or giving an account.

⁷⁷⁵ If your leaders are compelled to give a negative account of your actions, this would not be a good thing for you.

⁷⁷⁶ Since the author usually speaks in the first person, as in v. 19, the plural here may allude to other Christians in his company.

⁷⁷⁷ IE pray.

⁷⁷⁸ This implies that the author had previously been with the community to which the letter is addressed.

⁷⁷⁹ The shepherd imagery here is in apposition with Jesus and refers to him.

you perfect⁷⁸⁰ in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight,⁷⁸¹ through Jesus Christ; to whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.

²² And I beseech⁷⁸² you, brethren, suffer⁷⁸³ the word of exhortation: for I have written a letter unto you in few words.⁷⁸⁴ ²³ Know ye that *our* brother Timothy⁷⁸⁵ is set at liberty;⁷⁸⁶ with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you.⁷⁸⁷

²⁴ Salute⁷⁸⁸ all them that have the rule over you,⁷⁸⁹ and all the saints. They of Italy⁷⁹⁰ salute you. ²⁵ Grace *be* with you all. Amen.

*Written to the Hebrews from Italy by Timothy.*⁷⁹¹

⁷⁸⁰ καταρτίσαι *katartisai* may you be put into proper order (lit. fit together).

⁷⁸¹ A HEB idiom.

⁷⁸² OR urge.

⁷⁸³ OR endure, bear with.

⁷⁸⁴ OR briefly. The brevity of the letter is only relative, as it is longer than many NT epistles.

⁷⁸⁵ Paul's coworker, for whom one of the pastoral epistles is named.

⁷⁸⁶ IE has been released from prison.

⁷⁸⁷ The author anticipates a future visit to the congregation.

⁷⁸⁸ OR greet.

⁷⁸⁹ OR your leaders.

⁷⁹⁰ Τῆς πρεποσιτιλὸν ἀπὸ *apo* could refer to those who were living then in Italy, but it more likely refers to those who were from Italy but were now living elsewhere. This reading supports the predominant view that the congregation to which this letter was sent was in Italy.

⁷⁹¹ This is only one of many different forms of the concluding colophon that have been preserved in different mss.