


ARAMAIC BIBLE COMPANION

HEBREWS

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This first of 13 chapters of the letter to the Hebrews is full of song. Ten psalms brighten the background. We follow the writer as he defines the Son of God as “above angels”. Though often called the “angel of the Lord” in OT parlance as the “word eternally proceeding” from the Father He is more – He is “Heir of all”

HE SAT DOWN 1-4

**All His work is ended joyfully we sing
Jesus hath ascended Glory to our King**

God communicated with previous generations of Jews through the prophets. Through many “successive persons sharing” the Lord communicated, and as a builder “laying down rows of bricks” in the circle of the prophets. In these last days (*‘Messianic times’ of the Rabbis*) “He has spoken finally in the circle of His Son” – He who, as *Reinecker* says, ‘is by nature God’. *Reinecker* notes that the “Son” expressed grammatically without an article (anarthous) means Jesus is described as “God”. Has been once for all established as “Heir” and it was by the personal agency of Christ that the ages were made. That means that the development of the history of the ages was like a poem – a creation epic. The idea was in the mind of Christ and it will be completed like a glorious oratorio.

The Son is spoken of in five lustrous phrases

- a) He was and is the *απαυγασμα* – **the beaming forth** of the Father – seen from afar. He was foretold and early seen
- b) He is the *χαρακτηρ* – of the **very stamp** or “unique style”(as of a writer) of God in His “reality” *υποστασις*
- c) He continues to **carry φερω** – all things by the flowing word of his ever increasing power. This concept has to do with the “burden” “pain” “production of fruit” “debt payment” “appointing labour” and “taking booty” to glory.
- d) He Himself “created” in the gospel age “washing away of blood guilt & the guilt of sin”
- e) He sat down in the circle of the right hand of **the Majesty μεγαλωσυνη** (*shared with Father & Spirit*) among the highest. This greatness is describable as applying “over a vast space”

His “new state of being” as “God and man” is better than that of angels since he has “finished” His work. They are tirelessly busy-doing God’s will. He is “distinct in species” – He has “differentia”. He has obtained a name not only distinct from that of “angels” but it is a **“plunderer’s name” διαφορωτερον** – for from the fallen angel’s order He brought “sons” to glory. The *Psalms 2.8 and 110.1* are used to declare His fulfilling of David’s ancient statements that the Christ would be “pointed out by the Father” as happened at His baptism – and welcomed to glory as happened at the ascension.

SONGS OF PROPHECY DEVELOPED IN HISTORY 5-14

(a) *Psalm 2.7* “You are my son – this day **I have begotten you again**” No angel ever was dead and lived again. *2Sam.7.14 or 1Chr.17.13* “I will be to him a Father – He to

me a son". A heavenly David to Solomon like eternal affinity and neither nations nor hell can stop His progress toward the heaven sent goal of His Kingdom. Cf. Deut. 32.43 & Psa. 97.7 Moses wrote of Christ's judgement and *Hebrews 1.6* is Advent data – speaking of our Lord's **coming again into the world** *παλιν εις οικουμενη*

(b) "all angels" are to worship when He comes as Lord. The Second Advent sees **their total worship** *Ps 104.4* "To the angels He says, "He makes angels spirits- great public ministers flaming fire." They give largely but they do not offer themselves to death – cf. **leitourgoi** – angels maybe in rotation **undertake great tasks** *Ps 45 6-7* on the other hand of the Son "Your throne is eternal, your kingdom's sceptre openness honesty speed..."

(c) "You loved shared righteousness and hated the lack of law, so God who belongs to you anointed you with the oil of gladness on account of your fellows. Here Christ who imputes righteousness to us is seen rejoicing deeply in us His redeemed. *Psa. 102 25-27* "You laid earth's foundation; the heavens are your handwork. They perish-you remain throughout

(d) As an outer garment they age, and NB "As grave clothes you roll them up" "as an outer garment they will be changed for another – but you remain – your "years" will not fail, suffer eclipse, or be incomplete. They are predicted to run throughout all generations. Cf. the millennium – *Deut. 32.43*

Ps. 110.1 "To which of the angels did He ever say, "**Sit on my right hand till I make your enemies your**

(e) **Footstool** "Are not all the angels an apostolate of dusty feet on behalf of those on the point of or destined **to** or ready to inherit salvation?" i.e. **Travelling to bring home the redeemed at death or in rapture.**

So we have Christ distinguished by resurrection; judge; Lord of church; coming king; intercessor angels by contrast are always worshipping, always rotating like priests, always serving the dust of earth

I will sing of my redeemer and His wondrous love to me
On the cruel cross He suffered from my sin to set me free
Sing O sing of my redeemer and His wondrous love to me
He from death to life hath brought me
Son of God with Him to be.

CHAPTER 2

THE DANGER OF NEGLECT 1-3a

It is essential for us to listen more than sufficiently "on this account (because of the angelic remit and ministry)" or throughout the time of the ministry of God's angels – i.e. lifelong. **The "ten" references**, for example, which we have to the psalms in Chapter 1 are timely reminders from David's experience of God who will chastise and yet retain mercy-so long as our heart is towards Him (cf. *2Sam. 7.14*,

1Chron. 17.13 with Deut. 32.43) cf. *1Chronicles 21.15* where God sent an angel to destroy Jerusalem but ceased at the threshing floor – that was to be the temple.

Clearly the "more than extraordinary attention" relates to the knife-edge situation currently under the Romans and this has a most instructive comparison with the days of David. The eternal dimension is the first consideration in Chapter One. Don't let the past peril of Jerusalem slip from memory like water under the bridge. **The word through many angels – at Sinai is historic** – confirmed as resolute steadfast – and guaranteeing that every transgression and disobedience receives its right reward i.e.

angels are appointed executives of the law as the local constabulary are of our legislation. The writer then asks how the Jews will escape “*Judea capta*” on neglecting a “**so great**” **τελικαυτης** salvation. [*The Greek term applies to “so old” or “so young”; the fairest interpretation here is “so recent” as in David’s case*]. It was within living memory-really and personally understood – but neglected. The Hebrew writer refers to Christ’s death as recent as James also speaks to those “who have seen the end of the Lord”.

SALVATION FIRST ANNOUNCED ITSELF 3b

When first received salvation was presented “**in His words**” **λαλεισθαι** by no less a person than the Saviour Himself. As the angels were present with the Lord at Sinai so the disciples were present when Christ said “Repent and believe the gospel”; “Follow me”; “Take up your cross”; “You must be born again”; “Come unto me”. The gospel was “**jointly ratified**” **συνεπιμαρτυρουντος** by God by signs and wonders and embroidery of **powers** (**δυναμεις** *is often used of healings*) shared under Gods will by the Holy Spirit.

WE HAVE SEEN JESUS CROWNED WITH GLORY AND HONOUR 6-8

God did not order the inhabited world of which Christians speak i.e. the future age – to be set under the administration of angels. God’s witness in *Psalms* 8 5-7 is that “**man**” **ανθρωπος** as re-created under the question “What is man?” and under the gracious remembrance of God. What is the “heir of man” that you should watch over him as shepherd, that you have caused him to throb & pulse with life somewhat humbler than the angels that you have crowned him with glory and honour and all the works of your hands in his administration and have placed everything under his feet – no created thing excepted.

REALITY NOW AND IN HEAVEN 8-15

We don’t see this yet. But we do see Jesus – having caused Himself to throb with life humbler than angels “through the sufferings of death” crowning Himself with glory and honour – **in such a manner** **οπως** “tasting death for everyone.” This answers the question “What is man?” He is capable of sacrifice. Angels are not called to sacrifice like this. It was totally in keeping that He who was creator of all and by whose purpose they are should unite many heirs to Himself to perfect the author of their salvation by suffering. For He who sanctifies and those who sanctify themselves – to “die daily” – are from One. For this reason He calls them “brothers” (cf. *Psalms* 22.3, *Isaiah* 8.16, 17) in our glorious meeting with God. He **gives Praise** to the Father **υμναω** *again & again* in the future, having already shown *the confidence of a long wait* BC, and He enthuses about his servants for all eternity. It is three-dimensional. How *we* should rejoice in our Saviour!

HE TOOK OUR NATURE 16-18

When Jesus **shared fully alongside us** **παραλλησιως μετεσχει** in flesh and blood it was that He might (a) render unemployed the one with the power of death (i.e. hell – making death), the devil, and (b) pay the ransom to free those who were liable guilty and bound in slavery to death lifelong. “For **I presume** you know” says the writer, “that He did not take angelic form but that of the seed of Abraham (*or*) “he did not lay hold on and claim angels but the seed of Abraham” – from which He ought in everything to be like His brothers – a merciful high-priest in the things of God – to atone (*as lamb*) for the peoples’ sins. Having Himself suffered in temptation, He is

able to help those who put themselves **under trial** *πειραζιμενοις*. Thus we are encouraged to face temptation with prayer and the word as did Christ – not with a passion to be lax or corrupted.

CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter there are 10 allusions to the OT – 7 from the Law and 3 from the Psalms. The speeches of Moses 116-118 in Numbers ally with Psalm 95 to show that one of the heaviest burdens the Lord ever bore was the disobedience of millions of hard hearted Jews living in unbelief in the wilderness. Yet God was faithful – and Moses His equerry was faithful and how exquisitely faithful was Christ – so let us be faithful and avoid apostasy and rebellion and exasperating our God.

CONSIDER JESUS 1-4

“Put your mind to” Jesus, says the Hebrew writer. Jesus is worthy of the honour of the meditation of every mind and the best of minds. Brothers who share in Jesus and the household of faith share especial benefits. It is the apostle of God, Jesus who alone has seen the Father and whose mission of redemption on earth accomplished at the cross founded the church. Jesus is the king and priest of the unique Melchizadekian Order – crowned King of our lives – we are “conquered by his work and sacrifice”. He is **the builder** (*κατασκευασας*) of the permanent house. This word contrasts with a *παρασκευασας* – who *erects temporary homes*

MOSES THE SERVANT 5-9

Moses is described not as a “**bondservant**” (*DOULOS*) nor as an **efficient servant** (*DRASTES*) but as an **equerry** (*THERAPON*)

Moses is a person of especial moment still – he has a testimony as was affirmed on the Mount of Transfiguration. His testimony to the things “which will have been spoken” – those 150 and more words which as equerry he received and wrote down in the Torah alongside the Genesis history are foundational and many relate directly to the coming Messiah – for God spoke with him not by vision but “mouth to mouth” (*Numbers 12.8*). The wilderness apostasy is cited by the Holy Ghost as a reason why Hebrews alive in the generation of favour when the Saviour came and led the great liberation from Sheol when He had purchased redemption should open their hearts to Christ. In a curious repeat of history over a million Jews died in the 40 years after Calvary during the Roman siege just as several million died in the wilderness.

MERIBAH & ITS SEQUEL 10-11 & 16-19

In the “rebellion” the desert dwelling Israelites tempted and tried the Lord. They “aggravated” Him or became a burden and also “acted to bring out a suited response by hurting the Lord” The Lord knew that they were acting inexorably and would be “continuously errant” in heart. These “certain” apostates **rebelled** (*PEIRAZO & DOKIMAZO*) [*IZO or AZO verbal terminations speak of “sudden action” of testing*]. These “certain” burdened Him to exhaustion for 40 years – these certain under oath could not enter Canaan or eternal rest, in a word “these” were unbelieving! Anyone can see why they erred. It was through unbelief that they erred and thus they had no “increasing power” by the new life of faith that overcomes so they might enter the land of promise. In v11 we read that the Israelites did not know “the way the Lord was going”.

TODAY 7&15

The Hebrew writer pulls together the Meribah context and the commentary of David in Psalm 95 some hundreds of years later – maybe 450 years later. He urges that God still spoke and there is grace in the word “Today”.

In a very well designed lesson the writer speaks of the need to hold fast to **the ends** (*TELOUS*) of our confidence or **free-spoken confession** and its object – Christ the one of whom we boast.

(a) v6 “until” **the ends** (*MECHRI*) [*throughout life to the beginnings of eternity*] of the achieved purposes of God in our lives.

(b) v13 “to the very bottom” (*ACHRI*) [*penetrating to end of what it is called ‘today’ – we could render “till there is no ‘today’*].

(c) v14 We have become partners of Christ if we hold to the “subsistence of God in Christ” or the “foundation of the temple” or house of God **to the end(s)** (*MECHRI throughout life*).

In the case of (a) & (b) we have “ends” (TELOUS) – though it is ~~A LATER KOINE USAGE~~ it is preferable to see it as in the case of Israel in Canaan so the ends of the confession would be (a) the home call of the church and (b) the establishment of Gods promises to the Hebrews – which Moses attested long ago in Deuteronomy 28 et alii.

PSALM 95 (Used by the Hebrew writer)

God here calls for the love of His people. O come let us **worship** (*SHAHAH – speak of His worth*) and bow down (*CARA – submit at His feet*) and kneel (*BARACH – bow low for blessing*) – we are the people he leads and feeds and the flock of His hand.

The Psalmist further adds “your fathers “tempted me” (*NASAL – -from which we get nasal – literally “testing by the nose”*) and “tried me” (*BEHAN – by their hands*) – yet through the voice of prophecy (*RAAH*) they saw my “excellent exertions” (*The Hebrew is a POEL with the meaning “constant exertions”*).

ENCOURAGEMENT 13

The Hebrew writer “**put heart into**” the Christians. Like David who “kept encouraging himself in God” (*1 Sam30.6*) we are to speak to others to console them daily. The Hebrew word for encouragement is *HAZAK (to strengthen)* and the Greek *PARAKLESIS (to draw alongside to help)*. A good N.T. example of encouragement is Barnabas who in *Acts 4.36* was a source of joy to the newly converted Paul. A rather curious case is that of Job who “comforts “his comforters in *Job21.3* and prays for them in *Job 42*. The danger of a “heart of unbelief” where the emotions understanding and decisions are all misplaced because the “desire intellect and will” is not committed to Christ is ever present.

One of the most telling illustrations of encouragement (putting heart into another) is the story of *Pederewski* the great pianist and a little boy. During the interval a small boy left his mothers knee and raced to the podium and the piano, sat down and started to play chopsticks. Presently *Pederewski* appeared – stood behind the boy and played a glorious descant – the boy was thrilled that he should be in such company and the great musician was encouraged that a lad should want to show his paces – and said “go on, go on” giving him steady encouragement. This is exactly the need as Paul sees it – we must keep on encouraging one another “daily”.

CHAPTER 4

THE REST OF FAITH 1-2

Exodus – the vital salvation

The Hebrews discovered through Moses the name of God “who saves” (Yahweh) and they were rescued from Egypt to worship Yahweh. But they failed to believe and hold to His name

The Hebrews of the Exodus were a loud alarm warning to the Hebrews of the first century – especially around 64-5AD for only a few years remained of forty – and that paralleled the loss of lives in the desert in Moses’ day. Actually in AD70 history repeated itself – and the words “we must therefore fear” (v.1) were prophetic and proved so wise. Lest “any one of you” should seem to come short” refers to Christians among the Jews. Like the Church in the wilderness they accepted the good news. If the word they heard was not “mixed” with faith they would not enjoy peace with God or live in victory.

We enter into rest in the first sense by believing what God says.

Four hundred years later David recorded the Lord’s oath ‘I swear in my wrath – they shall not enter into my rest’ (*Psalms 95.11*). God’s rest was his completion of the creation (No.1) and that which it symbolised – **the day of eternity – itself “rest” in the second sense** – will be enjoyed with the redeemed (No.2) [*cf. “God rested in the Seventh day from all His works”*] To the Christian that rest is revealed in the gospel.

THE PARALLEL REST 3-11

These verses address the topic of “ultimate rest” to which the present introduction is “faith resting on Christ’s work.

(a) **Man’s creation and the fall** rest of faith was there since the Garden of Eden (*Gen2.2*).

(b) **Exodus escape & failure** *The 95th Psalm* is cited a second time to declare an irrevocable loss in the generation under Moses.

(c) **Joshua’s victory & sin (cf. Achan)** certain that were left entered though those who formerly had the good news did not enter through unbelief – He again appointed a day saying in David after a long period, as he said (*before*) “Today if you hear His voice do not harden your hearts” (*Psa5 7-8*)

For if **Joshua** had given them rest He would not have given the message in song concerning another day.

(d) **New Testament rest & unbelief.** Surely or certainly a Sabbath remains to the people of God. For the one who has entered His rest is the same one who rested from all His works. **The Saviour sat down in glory is the same one who finished creation. The parallel of creation and new creation lies at the centre of understanding the concept of rest.**

Let us study or hasten to enter that rest, that no-one fall in the same example of unbelief.

ENERGY OF LIFE-THE VITAL BLESSING 12-13

The word of God is powerful cf. Jacob’s word of blessing

The word of God is now described as “penetrating” *διεικνεομαι*. it is able to pierce to divide the soul and spirit, as a sword divides between joints & marrow of the body.

This happened to Jacob in *Genesis 32* when the sinew of his thigh was touched – when

the Lord weakened the physical man but separated for Himself the spiritual man, Jacob and he became a 'prince with God'. "He took his brother by the heel in the womb and by his strength or nothingness or sorrow he contended or wrestled [jrv] with God. Yea, he had power over the angel and prevailed: **he wept, and made supplication to Him: he found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us**".

[Hosea12.4] registers the historic ancient incident. "He was caused or permitted to prevail" (Hophal) and "he was crying and he kept seeking favour or reconciliation" – In Gen 32 Each warrior 'dusted himself' in wrestling Himself (Niphal) the Lord saw prophetically He could not prevail – and He (Hiphil) **performed a deep reach strike** to the hollow of Jacob's thigh – it was "dislocated". "You must let me go or divorce me" – *yhl/v* God says. "I will not let you go unless you kneel to bless me" [krb] Jacob replies [32.30]. God said "What is this craving petitioning" or "borrowing my name?" Jacob wanted to be in the family of God nothing less would do. God penetrates deeply into Jacob's spirit in radical change.

God's word is not a "jury [δικαστης] but "the judge" [κριτικος] of the "heart" i.e. the motivation of the heart [Isaiah 49.2] God searches behind our desires to our intentions. It is like a wrestling finale – man is naked before the Lord, and in the master hold of the wrestler. It is as if the Lord's arms are locked around the throat of the one who is pleading his desperate case – and the eyes of both are on each other.

TIME OF NEED – THE VITAL PROFESSION 14-16

We have a great high priest. He passed through the heavens. The book of Enoch refers to seven heavens. Yet can Christ sympathise with our weaknesses. He submitted Himself to trial (*Middle voice*). He was in all things similar to ourselves – yet without sin. So we should have confidence to come to the throne of Mercy and find grace for an opportune rescue.

The Exodus was a "last minute rescue". The Peniel experience changed the heart of Jacob before he met Esau. The throne of Mercy deals with the past and gives grace at the vital time.

The call is to "hold on **mightily** to our profession of **the name** of Christ – that was what Moses did – and certainly what Jacob did. That was what Joshua did and what David did; it is precisely what we too must do!

CHAPTER 5

OUR REPRESENTATIVE LORD

The writer continues to speak of Jesus in the context of "holding with a wrestler's grip" to our profession (4.14). The ομολογια of chapter 4 is "a term of surrender" or "confession" that comes about in a contest about life itself – cf. Jacob at Peniel. The writer is keeping our natural weakness highlighted above before us. The Lord understands our "lack of strength" or "strength for (spiritual) warfare" on account of the flesh. Cf. The Lord's insightful Gethsemane statement to Peter – "The spirit is willing, the flesh is weak".

HEBREW HIGH PRIEST BRINGS WEAKNESS TO HIS OFFICE 1-4

He is not elected or chosen by men or appointed by men to act in divine things – to carry gifts & sacrifices for our sins. He is able to bear reasonably or in a measure with those who don't understand and err, since he himself is **clothed in περικειται** weakness. For this reason it is required "as a debt" that He offer sacrifice for himself

as for the people in sin offering. He has no personal honour, only as called under God as was Aaron – the first Jewish high-priest.

JESUS BRINGS NEW EFFECTIVENESS TO MEDIATION 5

Here the Hebrew writer uses one of his favourite adverbs with force – the word “simply”. He says “Also – *and here is the wonder of it all* – Christ **simply** did not glorify himself to become (*in very nature*) high-priest, But the One who **spoke to him intimately** [*λαλεω*] said, “You **are** (*i.e. already*) my Son, I have begotten you today”.

THE SALUTES OF HISTORY 6

“You are my Son” is the baptismal salute – extending Christ’s ministry into a new era. It is in accord with earlier greetings in the psalms. This quotation from *Psalms 2.7* – that expression was 1000BC – it enshrines a decree of eternity which was intimated to David and enunciated at Jesus’ baptism. Again, in another place, which we designate *Psalms 110.4* he continues to say “**You are a priest into the age according to the “legal cause”** or “battle order” of Melchizedek.” Now this “**according to**” *κατα* brings the ministry of Christ down the stream of history not as a derivative of that of Melchizedek but as flowing through it and before it for circa 1800BC the pre-incarnate theophanic Lord met Abraham when Moriah was a hillside scarp.

INTERCESSOR EXTRAORDINAIRE 7-9

Jesus in the days of his flesh (*i.e. humiliation and incarnation*) offered **binding beggings** *δεησεις* and the symbol of protection for fugitives *ικετηρια* (*literally “olive branches” – a powerful symbol – in the Mt of Olives*). Here we see Him in His weakness wonderfully powerful! He was bringing His offering with strong screaming and tears of blood. He was offering to the one who was able to save him from death and **he had listened in** *εισακουω* (*as one outside listens to a message from within-Aristotle strict sense*) from the cautious care of his attention to (his ministry), springing **from** *απο* “care and timidity” “reverent caution” *ευλαβειας* (*as to his ministry at that momentous time*).

Additionally as a Son **He learned the obedience** (*i.e. of death*) from or springing from the things He suffered. This can mean “He prepared Himself for everything” like Abraham of old and went through in splendid obedience. The mighty significance of Gethsemane is that it’s greater suffering found our Melchizedek strong and its lesser trial disclosed the utter weakness of the disciples and Peter.

**Lest I forget Gethsemane,
Lest I forget Thy love for me
Lest I forget thine agony,
Lead me to Calvary**

He is the perfect author of eternal salvation for all those who obey him – little wonder the Hebrew writer should utter the immortal idiom “Consider Him!”

A STORY TALK OR ACCOUNT OF MELCHISEDEK *λογος* 10–14

The Hebrew writer says he has a “valuable” talk on the subject of Melchizedek but it is **difficult hermeneutics** *δυσερμηνευτος* – hard to grasp accurately when you have **grown leisurely** in the things you listen to *νοθροι* or in obedience. For when you

ought to be teachers through this long time (*i.e. since Christ*) you have need to be taught again on certain basics of the first head of the stories or accounts of God – and you need milk not strong meat. For anyone who lives on milk has not **become acquainted with *απειρος*** a story of righteousness – he is an infant (*cf. Matthew 11.25 and the relationship of “repentance” and “babes”*). But **solid meat *τροφή*** (*truth hard won as in warfare*) belongs to those who are complete – through the regular or habitual mental moral and **intellectual training *εξις*** their spiritual **sensitivities *αισθητηρια*** have gained plenty of exercise in distinguishing the beautiful and the bad. *In this aside the writer virtually says he has an explanation of the matter of Melchizadek but it would prove too difficult to continue until he sets in place some additional infrastructure of thought. He will then resume the topic in Chapter 7. I observe that this is not normal Pauline methodology. He usually continues doggedly with parenthesis.*

CHAPTER 6

*This chapter is difficult of exposition. The writer is concerned with the way ahead after conversion. From beginning with Christ the way of followers of Christ “appears” to divide. One sort of disciple follows hard and through suffering and that way tends more and more to maturity. The other goes more smoothly but soon runs to ruin and what early Christian called apostasy. What makes the difference is a fourfold combination of “serving” “study” “swiftness of faith” and “steadiness” (*cf. vv.9-12.*) The writer has demurred from his discourse to teach a “lesson on Christian growth”.*

FIRST PRINCIPLES 1-3

“Leaving the subject-matter-the language of first principles – of foundation things” or “the topic” **Λογος** of the ancient anointing of Christ – let us extend up towards maturity or our full potential. But first we must not **overthrow *καταβαλλω*** the foundation –which is **repentance from “corpse works”; faith up into God; teaching or training for baptisms of believers; laying on of hands to commission; the resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment** .These stand whatever we do! People repent, believe, are baptised, trained and sent out preaching the risen Lord and the solemn message of judgment.

A PERADVENTURE *εανπερ* 3

This we will do if God leaves it to us-in the event that He should trust it altogether to us. *Chrysostom* following the western text reads “This we might do” or “ought to do”.

THE APOSTATE The public & private man! 4-6

It is impossible with men that those “once for all instructed and received the inward grace of baptism, who have tasted so as to experience and enjoy the gift of heaven and become partners in the Holy Spirit and have tasted the beautiful flowing word of God and the virtual capability of the coming age of the kingdom through miracle. If they **fall away *παραπιπτω*** as by chance to **renew them *ανακαινιζω*** so that they again recognise Satan as the enemy and are fighting on the Lord’s side. Hence they like the soldiers have crucified the Lord **in their hearts** and thus “censured” Christ and subjected him to their judgment and condemned Him – by public **demonstration**.

THE ILLUSTRATION 7-8

Ground – which, like the soul, drinks in rain that itself parallels the flowing active word of God – and receives much refreshment gives birth to useful good and well-adapted food or pasture for those who cultivated it. Such is like a soul receiving divine blessing. That which throws up–begins a war of **thorn and thistle** is spurious **reprobate** *αδοκιμος*. Such represents a soul close to accursed or condemnation – whose end is destruction by fire. So it is the condition of the “heart” that matters. The verb *τικτω* and the verb *εκφερω* contrast. One speaks of **bearing the seed** of faith by parallel with bringing forth botanical specimens– the other of the enemy’s work of sowing darnel and producing thorns and thistles of deceit and trouble.

THE SAVED 9-10

“We say this – yet are persuaded of better things in your case – which have salvation. **Service** God is not unrighteous to forget your work and love which you have **exhibited or shown openly** toward His name – having ministered to the saints and continuing that ministry. This is within the constraints of Israel in the first century.

STUDY THE NEED FOR PUBLIC CHALLENGE 11-12

A biblical challenge!

We desire each of you to demonstrate “study” or “speed” towards full assurance of hope throughout and until the accomplishment of fruitful lives. “Full assurance of hope” leads us to *1Thess1.5* – the Thessalonian certainty with the certainty of election and the work of the Holy Ghost and the joy of faith and the waiting for His Son from heaven–examples of faith publicly trumpeting the gospel; The Colossian assurance with “walking and rooted and built up and complete and buried with Christ” – not endangered by the trap of philosophy. *Colossians 2.2* Hope faith and understanding is sure.

Steadiness Not becoming lazy but imitators of those who through faith and longsuffering inherited the promises. There is a sense of “waiting” for an inheritance to be received – as for food to grow in the earth

THE PROMISE OF ABRAHAM 13-14

He fled from Ur – the city of sin

Genesis 22.16-17 is quoted. Abraham “fled” from the Chaldees and long afterward when Isaac was already born he is given the oath on top of the promise that links to this great act of faith in laying Isaac on the altar.

Here he shows himself a believer in the resurrection.

HE OBTAINED THE PROMISE 15-18a

He “fell in with” even “conversed with” the promise – in hearing the promise maker and this had to be through the substitutionary ram and the picture of the atonement enacted on Moriah. For men an oath is the end of argument.

God was desirous of showing the unchangeable nature of His will (*literally “not a changeable opinion” or “alterable treaty”*) and mediated it by an oath (*Genesis22.17*). *There is at this point a presumed reference by the Hebrew writer to Ben Sirach 44.21. Sirach wrote Ecclesiasticus circa 280BC. Paul did not quote Sirach who is extra-canonical to Hebrew and Reformed canons elsewhere.* This Jehovah – Jireh voice spoke of a future provision in Christ. From that moment on the cross was the whole prophetic theme steadfast or warranty it was with the resurrection the one certainty in future Jewish and world history.

A TENABLE POSITION 18b

We have obtained tenable consolation – like a position obtained in war not to be lost again to any enemy push.

RUNNING FOR THE ANCHOR 19

The crux is to have “run for refuge”. The idea is not so much of runners but rather sailors hastening for their anchor which was “fixed” or laid ready much as food available. In storm when a ship is running aground all haste is made to cast an anchor from the stern. So this one hill steadfast warranty of Calvary is our one hope of life and safety connecting us through the resurrection to our future hope cf. *v11*

AN ANCHOR FOR THE SOUL 19-20

This anchor is cast “once for all”. It is a guarantee. The word “**guarantee**” *ασφαλη* in *Homer* is used exclusively of the “seat of God”. So we have the living Christ interceding for us – our place of refuge. Steadfast or **warrant** *Βεβαιος* and title of our property. Behind the veil is the one through whom we are entitled to heavenly joys. Christ is there – **the first envoy of προδρομος** victory in the war of the world on sin and Satan. *Hebrews 6.19 with its reference to the “Anchor” strikes a very ancient and central note of the Christian message. There is, for instance, an anchor cut into the stonework above the garden tomb.*

CHAPTER 7

REVIEW

Chapter 5 spoke of the “ancient anointing”. The topic of Chapter 6 is “anchor assurance” as opposed to apostasy – taking its security from Christ within the veil. Chapter 7 takes up the topic of “atonement applied”.

MELCHISEDEK-A DESCRIPTION OF HIS PERSON 1-3

This Melchizadek – king of Salem (Jerusalem) – priest of God most high, who stood alongside and over against Abraham when he was returning from the toilsome slaughter of the kings-and blessed him – to that person Abraham divided a tenth of all....this person ON THE ONE HAND **explains Himself** *ερμηνευομενος* (**middle voice**) as “King of righteousness” [...and so really/to our surprise *επειτα*] He is **also** (*besides the existing monarch*) “king of Salem, king of peace.” He is without father mother or genealogy, having neither beginning of days or end of life, ON THE OTHER HAND a portrait or making himself **a portrayal** [*αφωμοιωμενος*] (**middle voice**) of the son of God, i.e. It is a double portrait – of **humanity and divinity** What is being said here – and my understanding is based on the “middle voice clues” is that the pre-incarnate Christ is portraying himself as the true king of Salem – there being a first actual ruler whom some think was Shem. He is also “**eternal priest**”*v3 εις το διηνεκες.*

THE GREATNESS OF MELCHISEDEK 4ff

We see his stature in the whole parade of history *θεωρω* – back in chapter 5 and now again. We note the **magnitude** *πηλικος* of the person to whom Abraham gave the top of the heap of booty. The sons of Levi on the one hand received the priestly command to take a tithe from the people according to the law, this is from their own brothers- and they were in Abraham’s loins. On the other hand he who had no genealogical line from those Levite priests received Abraham’s tithe and blessed the one who had the

promises. Melchizadek had the tithe and gave the blessing. But beyond contradiction the lesser is blessed by the greater. Also on the one hand here men who died received tithes, there on the other He is witness that He lives. And as the saying goes or to speak loosely, through Abraham also Levi was recipient and paid tithes – for he was still in his father’s loins when Melchizadek met him.

THREE SPECIFICS 11-25

Our Melchizadek brings us nigh, is our guarantee and continually intercedes.

We come to realise that Melchizadek who expounded his office as that of “sharing or gifting righteousness” was also that of deity and eternal mediation. The writer exults in the greatness of his office and ministry by comparison with Levi.

Now if Levi – upon whom all of the law, for example, its hope of atonement – were based – was a complete answer – why is another set before us – one with no relation whatsoever to Aaron? The argument runs further. When the law is changed the priesthood must also be changed. Melchizadek is from a tribe – a different tribe – not priestly – but kingly – **Judah in fact**. From that tribe no altar service was given. The writer identifies the one he speaks of and clarifies – “our Lord **arose** from

Judah” *ανατεταλκεν*.

Like the sun which rises to fill the sky and to become prominent Melchizadek was to rise– yet plainly of this Judaic priesthood Moses spoke nothing. Even more plain still is it that a different priesthood is now standing up which owes nothing to the fleshly link in the law but is after the power of a life that **cannot be destroyed ακαταλυτος** He gives this witness “You are a priest for ever according to the order of Melchizadek” (*Psalm 110.4*).

(a) On the one hand the old command was set aside as being weak and without profit or advantage. On the other the “replacement” (*after Josephus’ use* – was both a better hope and brought completion unlike the former – **it has the concrete joyful advantage of “bringing us nigh to God”**).

(b) On the one hand in any case no oath was taken – for Aaronic priests were not sworn in. But He Christ is under oath, “The Lord sware to my Lord – ‘You are a priest perpetual according to the line of one – Melchizadek’” (*Psalm 110.4*).

JESUS BECAME THE GUARANTEE ACCORDING TO A BETTER COVENANT

(c) Another point – on the one hand there were many priests – prevented by death from permanently remaining in office. He remains for ever and there is no passing over to another – whence He can save eternally those who come willingly to God as ever alive to **intercede** for us *εντυγχανω*. This term was used of “angels” by the Rabbis – but here **Christ alone is stated to be perpetual mediator**

APPROPRIATE THROUGH HIS “PERSON AND WORK” 26

This is the High Priest we need – pious, apart from evil, unspotted, being ordained and before shown as separate from sinners. He is higher than the heavens – with no need to offer for Himself or others daily – having made Himself one sacrifice *εφαπαξ*. For the law constituted men high priests who were weak. The word of the oath following the law appointed the Son who has shown Himself perfect eternal priest.

The anarthos *υιος* (*wanting the definite article*) is in character all that v26 says and equally He is as to His work “perfect” too as v28 shows

SEPARATE FROM SINNERS

This expression is middle voice and indicates that He who was the “friend of sinners” in the first bible picture(s) we have of Him shows piety and attractive holiness. This accords with the *Genesis 14.18 and Psalm 110.4* presentations. Even before sin was “known” through law the ancient theophany showed His greatness and separation unto righteousness. He spoke alike to Moses before the law was given and conveyed both the glory and radiance and reality of separation of heart unto righteousness- “Take off thy shoes from off thy feet”. No spoiling spot of Adam’s sin touched our redeemer. His pre-incarnate self involvement with mankind as “priest” locks in a purity and holiness which the apostles saw on a daily basis lived out among sinners. His ministry BC ensured that the ancients who believed were dealt with as fully and graciously as the saints of the NT. This is the implication of His priesthood **from eternity** *αιωνα τετελειωμενον*.

CHAPTER 8

A SUMMARY 1-7

So a summary or “chief point” of these things that speak for themselves (*middle voice*) – we have such a high priest, who has sat down in the place of power on the throne of “**shared**” **majesty** (*μεγαλω-συνης*) in heaven – a minister of great largess belonging to the saints and a minister of the genuine tabernacle – which the Lord pitched and not man; for every priest is appointed to bring gifts and sacrifices – so it is essential that this priest has something to offer. If He was on earth he would not be a priest, the priests being bearers of the gifts that the law demands. These priests serve as a pattern and shadow of the heavenly, as it was transacted or agreed when Moses was ready to fulfil the command to make the tabernacle. For He said, “See you make it in everything according to the pattern pointed out to you in the mountain”. Now the ministry He has obtained is distinguished – He is Mediator of a better covenant which has been legislated on better promises. Had the first been without blame or criticism no place or **classic position** *τοπος* would have been sought for a second.

FAULT 8-12

God found fault both with the covenant and the priesthood. **The long statement from Jeremiah 31 31-34 adduces seven new promises.**

The time is “now” *νυνι* – the days have opened when the change was put into effect – the New Testament (*v.7*).

1. **The Lord will** bring all (*the house of*) Israel under one covenant and **make it complete** *τετελεισται – συντελεσω* in his death & resurrection. Then God took them by the hand – but they forsook it and He turned away. Jeremiah speaks of God’s back not His face (*v.9*).

2. **God will** give His laws to **their mind** – where their intents are decided – not to their ethical conscience – i.e. great principles as opposed to straight commands *διανοια...ηθικος* (*vv 9-10*)

3. And write them on their hearts by love. **It will** all work by a writing on the heart. Usually **law** *νομος* is a burden or tax but Christ’s laws pierce our deepest being enforcing His momentous atoning grace and substitutionary sacrifice of the cross (*vv9-10*).

4. **I will** belong to them as their God and they will belong to me as my people (*v.10*).

5. **They will** neither teach neighbour nor brother “Know the Lord” for they will all understand me from least to greatest (v.11).
6. **I will** have mercy on iniquity and sins – a far wider range of mercy (v.12a).
7. **I will** no longer remember their transgressions. So the little things done without intent are forgotten (v.12b). *The reader should compare this with 10.17.* The writer describes the Old Covenant was “getting old in its own way” and “a **cherished old fellow**” *γερασκον* but **out of public life** or heard of no more *αφανισμος*.

GOING

The former covenant has become old and is close to vanishing. This was the case 2000 years ago – so the law has obviously long ceded to the PRINCIPLES of Christ in His teaching and the LOVE of Jesus written on our hearts and the MERCY of God which is prepared to go to such lengths for his people –to whom he is MEDIATOR. Moses acted in the first instance – carrying the message of the plan for “sin to be dealt with”. Jesus has brought an entirely new plan which is not just a type but a great SPIRITUAL REALITY.

CHAPTER 9

The singular concept of Once-only service in a year or ministry of the High-priest is coupled with the Once-only coming together or payment of the ages in Christ atoning for sin-and this again is linked to the Once – only life and death of every man – and He will appear a second time as this chapter states at its end – to the joy of all who expect him – bringing a glorious salvation from the very presence of evil.

THE SYMBOLS SHOW THAT REFORM IS TO COME 1-10

The SINGULARITY of atonement

The old covenant had right rules for worship – also a beautiful holy place featuring a lamp stand, table, the placing of loaves, which speak of holy things. But after the second veil was a tabernacle called the holy of holies, having a golden altar and the Ark of the Covenant totally covered with gold, in which was a gold pot holding the manna and the rod of Aaron which budded and the tablets of the covenant – above it the cherubim of glory shaded **the cover of atonement** *ιλαστηριον*. Now is not the time to speak item by item of these things. They were so prepared that the priests were allowed to enter the first tent through continuously bringing to a conclusion their ministry. The high priest **once** *απαξ* a year entered the second – not without blood, which he offered for himself and the people for the unintentional and inadvertent sins. The holy Spirit was showing (*genitive absolute – of all this period*) that the way of the saints had not yet been made plain and clear while the first tabernacle stood – this is a parable for the present time – for they that bring such gifts are not able by this service to make the conscience clear – they only concern various foods and drinks and washings and regulations for the flesh till the moment of the laying down of **reformation** *διορθωσις*.

THE ONCE FOR ALL *εφαπαξ* MOVEMENT OF OUR MINISTER 11-22

Showing the SUPERIORITY & extent of atonement

The ministry of Christ depends on his atoning death and ascension linked with resurrection. So when Christ – high priest of good things available or made ready at hand – led in triumph *παραγω* – it follows: –

(a) **Throughout** *δια* the greater and perfect tabernacle not made with hands – this is to say not of this creation – i.e. not even within the 7 day process of Genesis

(b) Not a conqueror through the blood of goats and calves but by His own blood **throughout** he entered once for all into the holy places-the inventor of eternal redemption *λυτρωσις* i.e. payment of ransom.

For if the blood of bulls and goats and ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have had common/communicating relationships-purifying for the cleansing of the body,

(c) How much more the BLOOD OF CHRIST who **throughout** by the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God shall cleanse our conscience from dead works to serve the living God spiritually?

(d) And **throughout** it all He is mediator of a new covenant in such fashion that His death has taken place to ransom transgressors under the first covenant so that those called to the eternal inheritance receive the promise.

The writer explains that covenants are as legal wills or testaments. Where there is a testament, of necessity death makes the covenant terms operative – it is based on the death of the testator; it has no power while that person is alive, so even the first covenant was not inaugurated without blood.

When Moses “Had commanded” every command of the law to the people he took the blood of calves and goats with water, scarlet wool and hyssop and in exactly the same way sprinkled the **book of the law and the people**, saying “This is the blood belonging to the covenant God commanded for you.” Then he sprinkled the tabernacle and all the instruments of service alike with blood.” It is a schedule of the law that everything included in His will (*and the tabernacle represents Christ dwelling among His people*) is sprinkled with blood. Without blood **having been shed** there is no forgiveness – Lev17.11 (*In this chapter at least 36 passages of the law are mirrored*).

(3) THE TRIPLE *απαξ* THE SERIOUSNESS OF THIS ATONEMENT 23-28

The conclusion is that on the one hand it is essential for the illustrations of the heavenly things to be purified by these (*tangible means*) but on the other hand the heavenly things by better sacrifices. For Christ did not enter among holy things made with hands, a type instead of the true, but into heaven itself – now appearing before the very face of God (*the Father*) on our behalf. Nor is it needful that he should often carry in sacrifice as the high priest came annually with other blood – when it would be necessary for him to suffer often from the world’s foundation.

Now **once** *απαξ* at the coming together and time of payment of the ages **He has appeared** to put away sins through His sacrifice. It is laid out that men die **once** *απαξ* and after that the judgment – so Christ offered Himself **once** *απαξ* for all to bear the sins of many – He will appear the second time for those who expect Him to come out of the heavens – for their salvation (*in the widest and most profound sense*).

This comment has an obvious bearing on the critical state of things in Israel today as the hope of it had a bearing on the critical state of things Jewish in the earlier Roman period.

CHAPTER 10

*In all the writer refers 8 times to the **singularity** of Christ’s atonement in its implications. This factor is the central thrust of the epistle as the cross is the centre of history and the biblical perspective of ultimate truth. The references are these: –*

THE UNIQUE ATONING WORK OF JESUS CHRIST 1-12

1. The priest once a year entered with blood of the atoning lamb – maintaining the “liberty” concept of the Egyptian ransom 9.7.
2. The inaugurator and inventor of “ransom” entered heaven through His own blood (*shed*) or declaring His atonement – “its done” – so this 9.12.
δια δε του ιδιου αιματος εισηλθον εφραπαξ explains all the “perfects” of Hebrews- it has been accomplished.
3. The one “**time of payment**” *συντελεια* of the ages shows again the special power of the cross 9.26.
- 4 The one death we all die is disposed towards judgment and meeting with our “ransom”.
- 5 The one “lifting up of the sins of **many**” *οι πολλοι* 9.28 distinguishes Christ as the sole sin bearer 9.28.
6. There does not exist a non-repeatable answer in human religion – else prayer & sacrifice end 10.2-3.
7. As in Psalm 40.7 it is the WILL OF GOD THAT Christ once sanctified us in his death. This holiness fits us for heaven 10.10.
8. His ministry is attested still by **His sitting on the throne** till enemies fall 10.12 *Psalm 110.1*.

GOOD THINGS COMING 13 -17

In 9.11 Christ led the triumph for the new era of “blessing” or “good things” – the brave virtuous persons with a wealth of gifts which Christ will give. The law held a shadow of the good to come – it was not itself the image of these matters – it could never make those who came (*with sacrifice*) perfect with repeated sacrifices. Had it been effective they would not have ceased offering for they would not have even one pang of conscience had they as worshippers been cleansed **once for all απαξ** – (the writer uses yet another **perfect** in the balancing of the ineffectual law with effectual grace.) But in the circle of those sacrifices is an annual reminder of sin. Animal blood cannot negative sin.

So Christ as He entered the order of the time said “You did not desire victims slain and gifts of food – but you fitted a body to my task. You were not well-pleased with whole burnt offerings concerning sin...” Behold I come (in the little head of the book of Psalms i.e. the first part as it concludes – *Psalm 40* in fact) it **has been** written” – another perfect testimony of the Son of God. It reads: – “I come to do your will of God”. **First**, He says that slain sacrifice food offering and burnt are not your will and then that you were not pleased though they were brought by law – **then** He says “I come once for all to do your will”. He takes away the first that the second may stand. In the circle of this will we were sanctified **throughout** by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ **once for all εφραπαξ**.

Every priest stood daily ministering – and often bringing these sacrifices which were never able to take sin away from around **once for all (aorist)** – but on the other hand He himself has made one offering for sin for ever and sat down on God’s right hand. For the rest He is waiting outside (*well able to deal with opposition*) till His enemies are placed at His footstool.

By one sacrifice he has for ever **perfected** the sanctified ones.

The Holy Spirit testifies, “This is the covenant I will make with them after those days” (*Jer. 31 – the New covenant*) God says, I will give my laws on their hearts (*i.e. show my love intimately*) and write them on their understanding minds (*i.e. explain the principles*) – their sins & iniquities I will not remember *still (far beyond the law* –

which dealt in transgressions). These being forgiven – sacrifice for sin is wanted no more.

CHRISTIAN WITNESS IN THE FIRST ERA 18-25

Having confidence to enter the holiest place by the blood of Jesus which by a freshly slain and living sacrifice he dedicated or inaugurated for us through the veil, this is – i.e. it is still there – His flesh. The flesh was torn as the veil is torn but the risen Christ said, “A spirit hath not flesh and bone as you see I have”. We have a great priest over the house of God – let’s come with a true heart and full assurance of faith, **having had our hearts sprinkled** from an evil conscience (*atonement blood applied*) and **having** our bodies washed in pure water (*scripture*) – let us hold the profession of our hope unswervingly (*Not declining to either side i.e. losing it or boasting i.e. hold in check our **απολογία** so we **answer** when asked but do not go about boasting.*). He is faithful who made the promise about Himself (*i.e. “raised the third day”*) and let us learn about one another & consider to create a **paroxysm of love and good works** lest we leave off “**gathering over the boundaries**” *επισυναγωγή* – as is the those of some – but call one another alongside so much more as you see the day (*of the re-appearing of the priest of Gods house*) getting nearer.

APOSTACY 26-31

*If of our own free will we are continuing as sinners **after having taken hold of or grasping a clear personal knowledge of the truth** – there is no longer an other offering for sin remaining, but a specific fear of expected judgment and burning fire prepared to consume the enemies of God. Here is **hostility**.*

Anyone who set aside the Law of Moses died without mercy in consequence of the testimony of two or three witnesses. Of how much more severe punishment is he worthy who tramples under foot the Son of God and counted as common the blood of the covenant in which he was sanctified (*as swine used to trample down seed*) and **insulted** (*υβριζω – of hurting one close to you*) the Spirit of grace? Behind this is the thought of carelessness **typical of swine** and ill intent as of **a rapist**. The writer now quotes **Deuteronomy 32.35-6** “vengeance is mine I will repay” God says and **Psalms 35.14** (*possibly Davidic*) – and with this couplets **2 Samuel 24.14** “Let us fall into the hands of the Lord”

REMEMBER THE DAYS GONE BY 32-34

Remember when in former days – newly enlightened, you stood up to suffering amid much struggle. The great “athleticism” of their earlier profession is the source of joy here. On the other hand you were in the public domain (*literally on stage*) amid ridicule and trouble. Remember also how you shared with those who had to conduct their testimony amid such troubles, you shared the pain of prisoners and you took the confiscation of your goods rejoicing – knowing inside of you that yours in heaven was better and remaining substance. Therefore do not throw away your confidence – which has great promise of reward. For you have need of holding on patiently – so that having done God’s will you may obtain the prize – for in just however long however long or however short, however short – “He who comes will come and will not delay. But the just will continue to live by faith as in Habakkuk’s time **but if he shrinks back or cloaks his true thoughts** my soul will have no pleasure in him. But we are not of those who shrink back into perdition but of those who believe to the **preserving of our souls** – or the “laying up of our souls” to be possessed when He comes.

CHAPTER 11

Hebrews 10 spoke about “confidence” vv19 & 35 – “freespokenness-openness-boldness”. Now we come into the “cathedral of men and women of faith” Faith is defined, exemplified by twelve people & groups and then given seven further booster unopened cases to consider – and filled out by reference to “women of faith” and those who underwent terrible tortures – all commended ones who never received the blessings of Christ’s ministry and the New Covenant.

A DEFINITION THAT ALLOWS FOR A RELIGIO – SCIENTIFIC LINK

Faith is the *υποστασις* “the sediment, base, starting-point, support, reality of those who are living in hope, the evidence that shows you are a Christian – the proof of such – or reasoning behind heavenly or important affairs which have not shown themselves, i.e. The basis of our hope in Christ, the reason we wait for His appearing. By faith we understand that the aeons past and present were adjusted again by the word of God...so that the renewal of Genesis, the reinstatement after the flood and the re-creation in Christ are of a piece with God who is at work amid change (cf. *Romans 8.28*) Thus the things that render themselves to sight were not made from things that register by finite appearances i.e. There is indirect causation.

BIBLE BIOGRAPHY 4-7 THE PREDILUVIANS 4-7

Abel like all babies was taught to call out “Abba” and named “God is Father”. For his parents God made “coats of skin”.

In *Genesis 5.3* we learn that mankind was less than 130 years on the earth and a murder had taken place – ruin by sin had emerged and righteous Abel – continuing to mark the provision of “covering” by offering blood sacrifice – suffered fatal persecution. Cain despised divine warning against sin. *Genesis* speaks of the “voice of bloods” (Abel’s and Christ’s) *Heb 12.24*.

The Hebrew writer says of Abel-11.4 “He speaks” *Chrystostom* interprets of Christ’s blood “Oh how he SINGS”. The one is a plaintive – the other a victory song. Abel pleased God by living by the atonement – God witnessed to Cain by his atonement gift ...God calls us to witness to the atonement.

ENOCH GENESIS 5.22

(370 year later) walked with God 300 years after Methuselah was born. He was “dedicated” The word speaks of “tasting food put in the mouth”. He was feeding the boy set to be a warning of the forthcoming flood and he repented and believed. *He pleased God* by consistency, by *proclaiming the advent message* – cf. Jude. He lived on till the 987th year of then registered history. His contemporary Lamech prophesied the first war with the death of nigh 500 persons predicted. Enoch lived otherwise than this “tit-for-tat” violent style. Enoch prophesied of the “gloom” of the lower world – reserved for those who pre-flood lived profligate and the angels that left their estate. Third he was holy – cf. “He was not” or “He was ready” (*Heb YESH*) God calls us to witness to eternity.

It is essential to believe once for all to come constantly to God and that He rewards those who make an exhaustive search.

NOAH’S WARNING was a *χρηματιζω* or material warning of a business sort – that is – it demanded that action be taken. In a sense Abel took action in line with the

provision after the fall – as did Enoch to warn humanity. Now Noah does alike. He spent 500 years in the family of Methuselah – who lived right till the year of the flood. *Dr Barnhouse* puts it well, “Noah and Enoch show God can produce a lily in a manure pile – “Noah found grace”. It has been estimated there were 1-2 million persons then alive. The ark appears to have had internal lighting and shellac paint. Like Enoch Noah “caused himself to continually walk with God”. Peter calls him a “preacher of righteousness” (2Peter2.5), *Ezekiel (14.14)* calls him “man of prayer” He had just celebrated Abib – perhaps the coats of skin or covering month – the ark month and the Passover and crucifixion month. He was warned of things not yet seen – i.e. never before known – but believed! He condemned the order and became the heir! He lived in a vessel called in Hebrew TABAH(*chest-like ark*) and was kept as a man precious to God...God calls us to witness to judgment.

THE PATRIARCHAL COMPANY 8-22

GOD CALLS TO RESURRECTION BELIEF

Abraham went out from Ur at Gods call. He was to be Father of the faithful. He knew not where he went – but he knew God was the way (*John14*). His life is a fabulous study – he learns to walk “before God” *Gen.15 – in Gen13.8* he is taught intercession – in *Genesis 24.11* he believes for a bride for Isaac. Abraham dwelt in tents – while he sought a city “of foundations” i.e. lasting, whose artist architect and creator is God.

...God calls to inheritance.

As to the faithful he believed they would be above numbering like sand and stars. Also Sarah reckoned God faithful who made this promise which involved Himself (*the incarnate Lord*). The Lord swore by Himself – and tied His own future to it – “what faithfulness” we must say in one breathe as we say “what faith”...**God calls to resurrection belief.**

GOD CALLS US TO COMMITMENT

Abraham was a pilgrim and stranger but v16 there was a moment for **wheeling round his chariot** & going back *ανακαμφω* but now (*νυνι – at this very time*) they are **reaching ορεγονται** (*at a gallop*) a better country. **It is one of the conundrums of scripture why this “present tense” is used if it is not that the saints of the N.T. are joining the great patriarch in the “city of God”** ...**God calls to pilgrimage.**

Abraham **having a test “committed himself to trial”** *πειραζομενος* to offer his only son promised in “**an evening lullaby**” *Genesis15 λαλεω* – because he “reckoned” on One who could raise the dead. The writer takes it as a PARABLE of the resurrection v20. **God calls us to commitment.**

GOD CALLS US TO LEAN ON JESUS

Isaac in turn through blindness blessed Jacob first and then Esau. By faith **Jacob** blessed his sons & leaned on the head of his staff – *Genesis 49.10 &47.31* – so through his entire long oration he was supported by his staff – a PARABLE again of Judah and Christ. **God calls us to lean on Jesus.**

GOD CALLS US TO SUFFERING

Joseph remembered home and gave testimony about his bones and the Exodus-which he foresaw as a prophet. It is a distressful sacrilege that the tomb that stands as testimony to his faith was damaged of late...**God calls us to suffering and joy beyond.**

MOSES AND THOSE WHO ENTERED CANAAN 23-31

GOD CALLS US TO FEARLESS ACTION

Moses was “beautifully made” and his parents saw divine handiwork in him. **God calls us to fearless action.**

GOD CALLS US TO SUFFER

Moses refused to be *Hatshepsut's* successor but chose to identify with suffering Israel. He suffered reproach and sought divine reward. The writer here affirms that Moses was dealing with Christ in those 150 speeches of the Lord. cf. v26. He did not seek the reward of those who prefer he lived like them in enjoyment and amid **benefits** – hence *απολαυσις* v25.

GOD CALLS US TO SUFFER REPROACH AS SEEING THE UNSEEN

Moses by faith left Egypt – he had not feared the wrath of the king. He was steadfast and **resolved** *καρτερειω* because he saw the Invisible Lord. He was like Elijah and Elisha – enable to see the angels and even the hinder parts of God. **God calls us to see Him unseen.** Moses by faith held the first Passover – and the sprinkling – to save Israel's firstborn.

GOD CALLS US TO BELIEVE HE IS WILLING TO SAVE

Moses and the priests and nation went into the sea and passed through.

GOD CALLS US TO BELIEVE IN HIS PROTECTION

Joshua and the Judges By faith Joshua believed the walls would fall and they went down vertically **God calls us to testimony & praise.**

Rahab By faith she received the spies and learned of the “substitutionary” love of Salmon.

GOD CALLS US TO STAND WITH HIS PEOPLE

The Judges, former and latter prophets Gideon Barak Samson Jephthah – each acted by faith – cf. the 300; Barak in unequal engagement with Sisera trusted to the Lord. Samson when blinded looked for divine strength. Jephthah wrote a superb defence against Ammon and swore at Mizpeh and even to his hurt he swore and performed his vow.

GOD TEACHES US TO TRUST HIM INSTANTANEOUSLY 32b

David did many exploits – trusting God for the conquest of Goliath and preparing for the “house of God” to be built. Samuel administered Israel by faith setting the tone at Ebenezer. **Daniel** by faith prayed and the lion's mouths were shut. **This teaches God wants us to trust Him instantaneously.**

THE CATALOGUE OF ACTS OF FAITH 33-40

Kingdoms conquered, justice administered, promised good obtained, lions subdued, flames quenched, death by the sword avoided. Besides out of weakness they were made permanently strong; they became mighty in body in the middle of war; they made to bend and flee foreign armies; women received again their dead cf. Elijah and Elisha; others were beaten like drums in torture not receiving any ransom – still believing – to gain a better resurrection –**the acute reality of divine reward for martyrs.** Some were mocked and received test by stripes, others bonds and prison;

stoned with great slabs thrown on them; sawn asunder (*as Isaiah – reputed to be sawn in two by a wooden saw*); others put to the test of denial by torture; they died by murderous sword.

They went around in sheep and goatskins. They were terribly behind or needy, in terrible persecution, treated as malefactors. The world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts, mountains, caves, hideaway holes or roof spaces.

All of these having witnessed throughout by faith did not obtain the promise through their warfare – God Himself having foreseen a better thing for us – that they should not be made perfect without us.

CONCLUSION

The underlined section shows that the home going Christ led a relay of saints with Him to glory and to where the spirits of the just made perfect enjoy the glory. The resurrection and the rapture await the completion of the struggle of the ages which encircles the martyrs of this time and the stirring events of the days yet to be – the church’s rapture and Jacob’s trouble. This catalogue of brave testimony could not be complete else after the sheep “killed all the day long” and honoured by the church gloriously entered the holy presence of our utterly faithful Lord. This chapter models effectual calling & real faith.

CHAPTER 12

1. LAYING ASIDE EVERY WEIGHT AS DID THE LORD

Every “weight” includes every “loftiness”, every “exaltedness” and every “dignity”. It means running the race amid a mass of people. We are to lay aside the sin of “easy crowd admiration” and run with “patience” the race that is set before us. *The twin dangers are that we might grow tired [καμνω] and relax [εκλυω]. We are rather to be fired with the joy of Jesus and the patience of Jesus.*

Christ did not tire of the cross– He did not draw back – His great soul went on and on. *Emerson said “A man is a hero not because he is braver than anyone else but because he is brave for 10 minutes longer”. One step won’t take you very far – you’ve got to keep on walking; one word won’t tell folks who you are – you’ve got to keep on talking; one inch won’t make you tall; you’ve got to keep on growing. The cross comes before the crown.*

2. PATIENCE UNDER DISCIPLINE v.11 the gymnasium of chastening

(a) **David stands in God’s gymnasium** (2 Sam7.14) listening to Nathan’s word. Our writer goes on “Have you forgotten the **discourse διαλεγω** that discourses in a friendly philosophical manner “*My son, don’t despise the chastening of the Lord*”. The Hebrew MASOR and JACAH of the text in Samuel speak of “previous warning” and “after rebuke” which are both to be taken very seriously when God speaks.

(b) **Solomon in the gymnasium.** (1 Kings 11.11) On the matter of his “strange wives” and “Ashtoreth” ultimately the kingdom of Solomon was rent in two and given to one of his servants after his day.

(c) **Israel in the wilderness gymnasium** Israel was humbled and tested for 40 years on account of her lack of faith and obedience.

(d) **Job in the gymnasium** (Job 12.10) Job learned to recognise that God knows best and can best deal with Satan.

(e) **Laodicea in the gymnasium** this church was solemnly warned about its lukewarmness.

Correction is unpleasant but it brings with it the peaceable fruits of righteousness. The spiritual work-out is akin to the physical which tones up the muscles and trains the back to bear the burden and the knees to take the strain of distance.

3. THE PURSUIT OF HOLINESS 12-17 cf. Seeking and seeing the face of God

The **pleasurable sight** of Christ in Glory (*οψομαι*) v.15 depends on the pursuit of peace and holiness without which no man shall see the LORD. Holiness also requires that there be “shepherd care” in our character. It demands that there be no abiding “root of bitterness” (*Deuteronomy 29.18*) or turning away from God. Such bitterness would “crowd out” the Lord and stain our lives with guilt. Such a root was found in Esau who sold his birthright. After **when he was inclined to inherit a blessing** with tears because he was **a profane catamite and prostitute** (*πορνος βεβηλος*) he found no repentance. In *Genesis 33.10* we find Jacob regards his account as “paid off” (*Hebrew RAZAN*). Though Esau’s face may have expressed “peace” Jacob wanted more – he wanted to see Grace in his eyes! Scripture in letting us catch a glimpse of the faces of Jacob looking into the eyes of the theophanic Christ with tears and that of Esau with his harsh eyes. Jacob pursues holiness and separates from Esau setting up his altar to Yahweh.

4. THE NECESSITY OF DIRECT RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD 18-24

cf. v.18 -the untouchable mountain that could be touched

The writer says “You are not come to the mountain you have **to grope around in the dark**” (*Deut.4 11-12*) *ψηλαφωμενος* but to Christ. Jesus used this very same Greek word when He said to his disciples to “**handle me** and see” (*ψηλαφω*)” a Spirit has not flesh and bones as you see I have” (*Luke24.39*) The deep assurances of church fellowship of the early disciples – a deeply meaningful relationship with Christ –with darkness dispelled engendered joy and deep peace and promoted holiness and **faith not fear**.

5. THE DESIRE OF ALL NATIONS cf.Haggai 2 6-7 Nowhere to run! 25-29

Long ago the Lord who transacted with men χριμματιζοντα entreated and interceded on earth – but they did not escape punishment in the desert – so now how shall we who turn back and dissuade ourselves from the One who intercedes from heaven escape?

“Yet once more will I shake the earth”. (*cf. Isaiah13.13, Joel3.16, Haggai 2.6, 7, 21.with Hebrews 12.26.*) Just one more time the Lord promises a mighty worldwide shaking at which time Christ – the desire of nations-shall come (*Haggai 2.7*)

This shaking as the text indicates signifies the removal or migration of things shakeable to admit the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Hebrew writer speaks of our God as a “**forest fire**” *πυρ καταναλισκον* and asks that we who are receiving a kingdom that is unshakable should hold firm to grace to give God large and total service to His pleasing with reverence and godliness.

CHAPTER 13

SEVEN COMMANDS SUPPORTED BY A PROMISE 1-6

1. Let there be Philadelphia (*brotherly love*). An illustration drawn from the Quaker settlement of the American town by that name tells us that *William Penn* developed a true kinship with the native Indian – so much so that they covenanted with him “to be friends while rivers run and grass grows”.

2. Do not forget to be friends with strangers-for some all unaware have entertained angels all unknown to themselves. The plain desk attendant who gave his room to the couple without bed was made manager of the first *Waldorf Astor hotel* – the lady who gave *Queen Victoria* her old umbrella did equally well – but it is Abraham and Sarah that the writer selects – who hosted angels – as indeed did Lot. People matter

3. Remember those in bonds as having been yourselves bound with them. This word *μιμνεσκεσθε* means we “**make ourselves alike**” – imagine what it means – put ourselves in their shoes. E.g. *Terry Waite* taped up save for nostrils in parcel tape. What is it to languish thus? It yells at us to “write” “Go” “Pray”

4. Try to stand in the shoes of those who are suffering injury that could easily lead to death – and they are unable to escape. Take it that you are in the body that is hurt by their wounds. Today the hard-pressed churches of the Philippines and Christians in Byelorussia and others fit this description. Lord – they are ours and we are theirs.

5. Marriage is **honourable** and intercourse that is free from ungodliness. *αμιαντος* is used of the purity of the sea by *Aeschylus* – in days before pesticides and nuclear waste and other pollutants came about. Christians are to recognise God made marriage and sex but that God hates looseness that fornication and adulterous relations promote and we have learned that nature has in this and other quarters her own sanctions.

6. Equally the way of life without love of silver is **honourable**. Don’t allow mammon to rule your life – remember the *Cree Indian* saying – “White man will not learn he cannot eat money till the last river runs dry and the last fish is caught”. Such a lifestyle will be generous.

7. And allowing yourselves to be content with such things as you have. Satisfied – because I have always got *παρουσια* i.e. I have Christian friends, family, the Holy Spirit – “all sufficiency in all things” (*Paul*) what do I need else! As *Ann Graham Lotts* says, “Just give me Jesus”. This is **honourable**.

He has said (Notable Greek ‘Perfect tense) I will not breathe my last or go up to heaven to leave you; I will not leave you behind in my race forwards-as an athlete. So we may say with courage as those who venture in a struggle with the future – cf. Jn16.33 and Acts28.15 – “The Lord is my helper”. The Lord is like reinforcement for the hard pressed army – Psalm 118...because He is the rejected stone become capstone David foresees VICTORY – no less the Hebrew writer.

JESUS WALKS AMONG THE LEADERS OF THE FIRST CENTURY CHURCH ηγουμενοι 7-21

1. Jesus is the whole object of the story of the first church leaders who could retail from memory the word of God. They carried it in their hearts as those who could not always have it written. Look again at their way of life and especially their landing or disembarking. These men like James the brother of John and Peter and Stephen had “kept the faith”. This “endurance of faith” is to be mimicked. The promise that supports is that Jesus is the same. He lives, He supports, He is Lord, He comes again, He greets the faithful. **He is the great LEADER ηγεμων – His is the final rule.**

2. Don't be carried around or become dizzy by multi-coloured and strange doctrine. The idea of *περιφερομαι* is one of moving between colourful and strange teachings or having these as twin centres of a doctrinal merry-go-round. Then the author shows that grace not sacrificial meats meets the need of the heart i.e. gives the conscience comprehension, will and emotion a solid foundation. **We have an altar i.e. Calvary – north of the city** – those who continue to minister at the tabernacle do not hold the prerogative to eat – while it continues to be the blood of beasts that the high priest bears in to the holy place as sacrifice for sin, the bodies of the same being burned outside the camp i.e. Gehenna to the south.

3. It is on this account also i.e. for atonement (*cf. Altar*) that Jesus that he might sanctify the people through His own blood died without the gate. This gate it is said is the Gennath – but it would seem more suited to the historic Gol-Goth- (**Hill of Smiting or “place of a skull”**) first noted in *Jeremiah 31* and known as *Selikah* – the place of stoning – that the gate led toward what is now Gordon's Calvary. The writer then adds –and *τοινον* can be ironical – “Let us go to him outside the camp-bearing his reproach”. Could it be that Joseph of Arimathea began in the later period to foster the faith at a gathering here hinted. It appears that neither the upper room nor Mary's house are longer the main venue. Could it also be that Easter or the Christian Passover was already marked by a massive witness at the tomb? **Christ is risen – Hallelujah.**

4. The author continues, “We have here no continuing city – we seek one to come” Here is another great subjunctive of exhortation – “Let us bear up the sacrifice of praise through all circumstance (*the Romans possibly being established in or around the city*). The encouragement is to go on despite the situation with the great celebration praise. In *Acts 20.16* Paul was keen to get to Jerusalem for “Pentecost” again for undoubted praise & celebration. This “fruit of the lips” was a confession of Christ as Lord – good works and common love-feast fellowship meals were not to be forgotten as also themselves well pleasing self-effacing sacrificial responses of the believers to God. So the writer speaks of meek faithfulness to Christian leadership as to men who watch for their souls – as they will be the ones to give account – that they may be able to do this with joy and not howling. For this **chain of succession αλυσιτελες** is for you. Here the encouragement is not I think negated but rather the meek acceptance of leadership is enforced by the reality that it comes from the church's first leaders – many by now martyred – and still has absolute credibility. That “joyful account” instead of “sad” should be classed bad for them is curious logic. The chain of faith goes on through faithful church praise and koinonia celebration meals as through the adherence to doctrine – and especially that of the atonement & resurrection.

WHO IS THE AUTHOR WHO VALUES PRAYER FOR HIMSELF?

The author asks for intense prayer and speaks of his clear conscience i.e. they are notable apologists for the gospel and arraigned on no less charge than simply being Christians. He believes he like them has sought to live honesty – a reference to his self support (*which could be a reference to “tent-making” on the assumption the author is Paul*). He distances himself from the travelling mendicant. His prayerful plea has to do with his desire for speedier release and return to Jerusalem.

The early church did not agree that Paul wrote the epistle. *Erasmus, Calvin and Luther* were consentient it was not from his pen. Eusebius notes that the canon of the early presbyter Caius affirmed only thirteen Pauline epistles excluding *Hebrews*. *Irenaeus* and *Hippolytus* do not accept Pauline authorship though the Alexandrian *Origen* (from the eastern wing of the church) did. *Jerome* swung opinion towards Pauline authorship from his extensive reading of eastern and Greek materials although he himself spoke of it as Paul's or from "whoever wrote it". *Augustine* at the councils of Hippo (393) and Carthage (397 & 419) heavily influenced its acceptance as Pauline but he again was unsure of the authorship.

FACTORS FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. In *10.34* the author seeks "compassion on my bonds".
2. *Hebrews 23.23* "Do you know that our brother Timothy has been "set at liberty" or "been sent away from us"?"
3. The epistle has been alleged to have been written after Paul's death by his older companion Barnabas after his martyrdom and the detailed Levitical referencing would dovetail with his authorship though the date need not be so late.
4. The Clementine *Recognitions* tell us Barnabas ministered in Rome while the *Homilies* say he taught in Alexandria. *Dr Salmon* accepted the first view because Roman tradition would not accept readily a teacher of the first generation in Rome preceding Peter and so history conveniently set his ministry in Alexandria.
5. The authorship of Apollos runs with the view that it was sent to Alexandrian Jews of the first century. *Dean Farrar* is a lonely exponent of this view.
6. The case for Barnabas builds as one considers his seniority coupled with his sadness at the falling away of Jerusalem believers he may well have witnessed on coming to the feast. His rebuke would have found acceptance in the city. *Hebrews 13. 24* shows the letter emanated from Italy and probably Rome.
7. *Codex Claromontanus* records a numerical ranking of New Testament by the number of verses they contain. **Barnabas** (850verses), Revelation (1200), Acts (2600), 1 Corinthians (1060). This "**Barnabas**" is very likely Hebrews for the so-called *Epistle of Barnabas* is twice the length of the **Barnabas in Claromontanus**.
8. Its date is commonly held to be between 62-64AD and about the time the Sanhedrin commanded James to proclaim from a temple gallery that Jesus was not Christ. He did the opposite and was hurled to his death. The author wrote into the vacuum caused by his vicious murder *Chrysostom* speaks of Barnabas as alive in 63AD though a pseudo Mark document has it he died earlier. Some believe he is referred to as the one "whose praise was in all the churches" (2 Cor. 8.18)
9. I would favour Barnabas authorship like Tertullian. The Greek syntax is the best in the NT. The author is familiar with the LXX and his background is Alexandrian. He quotes Wisdom – an Alexandrian apocryphal book. This words "effulgence" (1.3) and "substance" (1.3) are both found in that book (7.26 & 16.21) Cyriot Jews were trained in the Alexandrian Jewish rabbinic school. This authorship is strongly argues by *Conybeare and Howson Life and Epistles of Paul* P.788 and I now conclude with their evidence: – (1) Barnabas as a Levite would dwell on Levitical worship prominent in the letter.

(2) Barnabas as a Cyprian Levite would most probably receive his theological education at Alexandria. (3) Ancient tradition connects Barnabas and his nephew Mark with the church of Alexandria. (4) The writer was a friend of Timothy (*cf. Barnabas & Timothy Acts 13 & 14*) (5) The appellation “Son of consolation” equipped Barnabas for a composition distinguished for its power of exhortation and admonition.

BENEDICTION – THE GRACE OF GOD BE WITH YOU ALL cf. 7, 17, 24

The oral word – the chain of testimony

The God of peace who led up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep in the circle of the blood of the eternal covenant – our Lord Jesus – fit you as a ship with every good work to do His will – inspiring among you what is well-pleasing in His presence through Jesus Christ – to whom be eternal Glory.” Christ appeared amid His own and has now been led to heaven itself among the triumphant ones – and the church on earth is still to be a colony of heaven – pleasing him here and now. Have high on you agenda the word of comfort – namely Timothy is released and Paul longs to see the believers along with Timothy. In *Gal.2.3* Paul brought Titus to Jerusalem – now it seems the apostle desires to re-introduce Timothy – who has been a leading figure in Ephesus. Embrace your leaders – and all the saints – the saints from Italy embrace you

The writer - is saying here that he has written with direction or command in a rather **short and shallow** *βραχέων* manner – so he sets alongside the numerous biddings of the book and especially of this chapter the EXHORTATION – Timothy is free and I hope to come to you soon. This was a great boost to the church under pressure – it was akin to the visit of *Billy Graham* to the British church over the 50’s and 60’s and into the 80’s of the last century.

The three arguments for the adherence to Christian leaders are:

1. They have the oral tradition and are faithful to it
2. They are in the chain of command since the Lord and the apostles
3. They are a team and have within them as the NT provides the power for discipline and to lead well in doctrine in good works in fellowship

FINIS

Bob Coffey

L’shuvkha Marya

(To the glory of the Lord)

Aramaic & Greek Bible Companion