

Hebrews

Introduction: God Has Spoken Fully and Finally in His Son

1:1 After God spoke long ago¹ in various portions² and in various ways³ to our ancestors⁴ through the prophets, 1:2 in these last days he has spoken to us in a son,⁵ whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he created the world.⁶ 1:3 The Son is⁷ the radiance of his glory and the representation of his essence, and he sustains all things by his powerful word,⁸ and so when he had accomplished cleansing for sins, *he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.*⁹ 1:4 Thus he became¹⁰ so far better than the angels as¹¹ he has inherited a name superior to theirs.

¹ tn Or “spoke formerly.”

² tn Or “parts.” The idea is that God’s previous revelation came in many parts and was therefore fragmentary or partial (L&N 63.19), in comparison with the final and complete revelation contained in God’s Son. However, some interpret πολυμερῶς (*polumerōs*) in Heb 1:1 to mean “on many different occasions” and would thus translate “many times” (L&N 67.11). This is the option followed by the NIV: “at many times and in various ways.” Finally, this word is also understood to refer to the different manners in which something may be done, and would then be translated “in many different ways” (L&N 89.81). In this last case, the two words πολυμερῶς and πολυτρόπως (*polutropōs*) mutually reinforce one another (“in many and various ways,” NRSV).

³ tn These two phrases are emphasized in Greek by being placed at the beginning of the sentence and by alliteration.

⁴ tn Grk “to the fathers.”

⁵ tn The Greek puts an emphasis on the quality of God’s final revelation. As such, it is more than an indefinite notion (“a son”) though less than a definite one (“the son”), for this final revelation is not just through any son of God, nor is the emphasis specifically on the person himself. Rather, the focus here is on the nature of the vehicle of God’s revelation: He is no mere spokesman (or prophet) for God, nor is he merely a heavenly messenger (or angel); instead, this final revelation comes through one who is intimately acquainted with the heavenly Father in a way that only a family member could be. There is, however, no exact equivalent in English (“in son” is hardly good English style).

⁶ tn The phrase *in a son* is the fulcrum of Heb 1:1-4. It concludes the contrast of God’s old and new revelation and introduces a series of seven descriptions of the Son. These descriptions show why he is the ultimate revelation of God.

⁷ tn Grk “the ages.” The temporal (ages) came to be used of the spatial (what exists in those time periods). See Heb 11:3 for the same usage.

⁸ tn Grk “who being...and sustaining.” Heb 1:1-4 form one skillfully composed sentence in Greek, but it must be broken into shorter segments to correspond to contemporary English usage, which does not allow for sentences of this length and complexity.

⁹ tn Grk “by the word of his power.”

¹⁰ sn An allusion to Ps 110:1, quoted often in Hebrews.

¹¹ tn Grk “having become.” This is part of the same sentence that extends from v. 1 through v. 4 in the Greek text.

¹² tn Most modern English translations attempt to make the comparison somewhat smoother by treating “name” as if it were the subject of the second element: “as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs” (cf. NAB, NIV, NRSV,

The Son Is Superior to Angels

1:5 For to which of the angels did God¹² ever say, “*You are my son! Today I have fathered you*”?¹³ And in another place¹⁴ he says,¹⁵ “*I will be his father and he will be my son.*”¹⁶ 1:6 But when he again brings¹⁷ his firstborn into the world, he says, “*Let all the angels of God worship him!*”¹⁸ 1:7 And he says¹⁹ of the angels, “*He makes²⁰ his angels spirits and his ministers a flame of fire,*”²¹ 1:8 but of²² the Son he says,²³

“*Your throne, O God, is forever and ever,*”²⁴

CEV). However, the Son is the subject of both the first and second elements: “he became so far better”; “he has inherited a name.” The present translation maintains this parallelism even though it results in a somewhat more awkward rendering.

¹³ sn This comparison is somewhat awkward to express in English, but it reflects an important element in the argument of Hebrews: the superiority of Jesus Christ.

¹⁴ tn Grk “he”; the referent (God) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹⁵ tn Grk “I have begotten you.”

¹⁶ sn A quotation from Ps 2:7.

¹⁷ tn Grk “And again,” quoting another OT passage.

¹⁸ tn The words “he says” are not in the Greek text but are supplied to make a complete English sentence. In the Greek text this is a continuation of the previous sentence, but English does not normally employ such long and complex sentences.

¹⁹ tn Grk “I will be a father to him and he will be a son to me.”

²⁰ sn A quotation from 2 Sam 7:14 (cf. 1 Chr 17:13).

²¹ tn Or “And again when he brings.” The translation adopted in the text looks forward to Christ’s second coming to earth. Some take “again” to introduce the quotation (as in 1:5) and understand this as Christ’s first coming, but this view does not fit well with Heb 2:7. Others understand it as his exaltation/ascension to heaven, but this takes the phrase “into the world” in an unlikely way.

²² sn A quotation combining themes from Deut 32:43 and Ps 97:7.

²³ sn The Greek correlative conjunctions μέν and δέ (*men* and *de*) emphasize the contrastive parallelism of vs. 7 (what God says about the angels) over against vv. 8-9 and vv. 10-12 (what God says about the son).

²⁴ tn Grk “He who makes.”

²⁵ sn A quotation from Ps 104:4.

²⁶ tn Or “to.”

²⁷ tn The verb “he says” (λέγει, *legei*) is implied from the λέγει of v. 7.

²⁸ tn Or possibly, “Your throne is God forever and ever.” This translation is quite doubtful, however, since (1) in the context the Son is being contrasted to the angels and is presented as far better than they. The imagery of God being the Son’s throne would seem to be of God being his authority. If so, in what sense could this *not* be said of the angels? In what sense is the Son thus contrasted with the angels? (2) The μέν...δέ (*men...de*) construction that connects v. 7 with v. 8 clearly lays out this contrast: “On the one hand, he says of the angels...on the other hand, he says of the Son.” Thus, although it is grammatically possible that θεός (*theos*) in v. 8 should be taken as a predicate nominative, the context and the correlative conjunctions are decidedly against it. Hebrews

and a righteous scepter¹ is the scepter of your kingdom.

1:9 *You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness.*

So God, your God, has anointed you over your companions² with the oil of rejoicing.³

1:10 And,

“You founded the earth in the beginning, Lord,⁴ and the heavens are the works of your hands.

1:11 *They will perish, but you continue.*

And they will all grow old like a garment,

1:12 *and like a robe you will fold them up and like a garment⁵ they will be changed, but you are the same and your years will never run out.⁶*

1:13 But to which of the angels⁷ has he ever said, *“Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet”*?⁸ **1:14** Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to serve those⁹ who will inherit salvation?

Warning Against Drifting Away

2:1 Therefore we must pay closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away. **2:2** For if the message spoken through angels¹⁰ proved to be so firm that every

violation¹¹ or disobedience received its just penalty, **2:3** how will we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was first communicated through the Lord and was confirmed to us by those who heard him, **2:4** while God confirmed their witness¹² with signs and wonders and various miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed¹³ according to his will.

Exposition of Psalm 8: Jesus and the Destiny of Humanity

2:5 For he did not put the world to come,¹⁴ about which we are speaking,¹⁵ under the control of angels. **2:6** Instead someone testified somewhere:

“What is man that you think of him¹⁶ or the son of man that you care for him?

2:7 *You made him lower than the angels for a little while.*

You crowned him with glory and honor.¹⁷

2:8 *You put all things under his control.¹⁸*

For when he *put all things under his control*, he left nothing outside of his control. At present we do not yet see *all things under his control*,¹⁹ **2:9** but we see Jesus, who was made *lower than the angels for a little while*,²⁰ now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death,²¹ so that by God’s grace he would experience²² death on behalf of everyone. **2:10** For it was fitting for him, for whom and through whom all things exist,²³ in bringing many sons to

1:8 is thus a strong affirmation of the deity of Christ.

¹ **tn** Grk “the righteous scepter,” but used generically.

² **sn** God...has anointed you over your companions. God’s anointing gives the son a superior position and authority over his fellows.

³ **sn** A quotation from Ps 45:6-7.

⁴ **sn** You founded the earth...your years will never run out. In its original setting Ps 102:25-27 refers to the work of God in creation, but here in Hebrews 1:10-12 the writer employs it in reference to Christ, the Lord, making a strong argument for the essential deity of the Son.

⁵ **tc** The words “like a garment” (ὡς ἱμάτιον, *hōs himation*) are found in excellent and early mss (1)⁴⁶ **κ** **A** **B** **D*** 1739) though absent in a majority of witnesses (D¹ **Ψ** 0243 0278 33 1881 **℣** lat sy bo). Although it is possible that longer reading was produced by overzealous scribes who wanted to underscore the frailty of creation, it is much more likely that the shorter reading was produced by scribes who wanted to conform the wording to that of Ps 102:26 (101:27 LXX), which here lacks the second “like a garment.” Both external and internal considerations decidedly favor the longer reading, and point to the author of Hebrews as the one underscoring the difference between the Son and creation.

sn The phrase *like a garment* here is not part of the original OT text (see **tc** note above); for this reason it has been printed in normal type.

⁶ **sn** A quotation from Ps 102:25-27.

⁷ **sn** The parallel phrases to *which of the angels* in vv. 5 and 13 show the unity of this series of quotations (vv. 5-14) in revealing the superiority of the Son over angels (v. 4).

⁸ **sn** A quotation from Ps 110:1.

⁹ **tn** Grk “sent for service for the sake of those.”

¹⁰ **sn** The message spoken through angels refers to the OT law, which according to Jewish tradition was mediated to Moses through angels (cf. Deut 33:2; Ps 68:17-18; Acts 7:38, 53; Gal 3:19; and *Jub.* 1:27, 29; Josephus, *Ant.* 15.5.3 [15.136]).

¹¹ **tn** Grk “through angels became valid and every violation.”

¹² **tn** Grk “God bearing witness together” (the phrase “with them” is implied).

¹³ **tn** Grk “and distributions of the Holy Spirit.”

¹⁴ **sn** The phrase *the world to come* means “the coming inhabited earth,” using the Greek term which describes the world of people and their civilizations.

¹⁵ **sn** See the previous reference to *the world* in Heb 1:6.

¹⁶ **tn** Grk “remember him.”

¹⁷ **tc** Several witnesses, many of them early and important (**κ** **A** **C** **D*** **Ψ** 0243 0278 33 1739 1881 *al* lat co), have at the end of v 7, “You have given him dominion over the works of your hands.” Other mss, not quite as impressive in weight, lack the words (1)⁴⁶ **B** **D**² **℣**). In spite of the impressive external evidence for the longer reading, it is most likely a scribal addition to conform the text of Hebrews to Ps 8:6 (8:7 LXX). Conformity of a NT quotation of the OT to the LXX was a routine scribal activity, and can hardly be in doubt here as to the cause of the longer reading.

¹⁸ **tn** Grk “you subjected all things under his feet.”

sn A quotation from Ps 8:4-6.

¹⁹ **sn** The expression *all things under his control* occurs three times in 2:8. The latter two occurrences are not exactly identical to the Greek text of Ps 8:6 quoted at the beginning of the verse, but have been adapted by the writer of Hebrews to fit his argument.

²⁰ **tn** Or “who was made a little lower than the angels.”

²¹ **tn** Grk “because of the suffering of death.”

²² **tn** Grk “would taste.” Here the Greek verb does not mean “sample a small amount” (as a typical English reader might infer from the word “taste”), but “experience something cognitively or emotionally; come to know something” (cf. BDAG 195 s.v. γεύομαι 2).

²³ **tn** Grk “for whom are all things and through whom are all things.”

3:11 “As I swore in my anger, ‘They will never enter my rest!’”¹

3:12 See to it,² brothers and sisters,³ that none of you has⁴ an evil, unbelieving heart that forsakes⁵ the living God.⁶ 3:13 But exhort one another each day, as long as it is called “Today,” that none of you may become hardened by sin’s deception. 3:14 For we have become partners with Christ, if in fact we hold our initial confidence⁷ firm until the end. 3:15 As it says,⁸ “Oh, that today you would listen as he speaks!⁹ Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.”¹⁰ 3:16 For which ones heard and rebelled? Was it not all who came out of Egypt under Moses’ leadership?¹¹ 3:17 And against whom was God¹² provoked for forty years? Was it not those who sinned, whose dead bodies fell in the wilderness?¹³ 3:18 And to whom did he swear they would never enter into his rest, except those who were disobedient? 3:19 So¹⁴ we see that they could not enter because of unbelief.

God’s Promised Rest

4:1 Therefore we must be wary¹⁵ that, while the promise of entering his rest remains open, none of you may seem to have come short of it. 4:2 For we had good news proclaimed to us just as they did. But the message they heard did them no good, since they did not join in¹⁶ with those who heard it in faith.¹⁷ 4:3 For we who have believed enter that rest, as he has said, “As I

swore in my anger, ‘They will never enter my rest!’”¹⁸ And yet God’s works¹⁹ were accomplished from the foundation of the world. 4:4 For he has spoken somewhere about the seventh day in this way: “And God rested on the seventh day from all his works.”²⁰ 4:5 but to repeat the text cited earlier.²¹ “They will never enter my rest!” 4:6 Therefore it remains for some to enter it, yet those to whom it was previously proclaimed did not enter because of disobedience. 4:7 So God²² again ordains a certain day, “Today,” speaking through David²³ after so long a time, as in the words quoted before,²⁴ “O, that today you would listen as he speaks!²⁵ Do not harden your hearts.” 4:8 For if Joshua had given them rest, God²⁶ would not have spoken afterward about another day. 4:9 Consequently a Sabbath rest remains for the people of God. 4:10 For the one who enters God’s²⁷ rest has also rested from his works, just as God did from his own works. 4:11 Thus we must make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by following the same pattern of disobedience. 4:12 For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any double-edged sword, piercing even to the point of dividing soul from spirit, and joints from marrow; it is able to judge the desires and thoughts of the heart. 4:13 And no creature is hidden from God,²⁸ but everything is naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must render an account.

Jesus Our Compassionate High Priest

4:14 Therefore since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession. 4:15 For we do not have a high priest incapable of sympathizing with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in every way just as we are, yet without sin. 4:16 Therefore let us confidently approach the throne of grace to receive mercy and find grace whenever we need help.²⁹

¹ tn Grk “if they shall enter my rest,” a Hebrew idiom expressing an oath that something will certainly not happen.

² tn Or “take care.”

³ tn Grk “brothers.” See note on the phrase “brothers and sisters” in 2:11.

⁴ tn Grk “that there not be in any of you.”

⁵ tn Or “deserts,” “rebels against.”

⁶ tn Grk “in forsaking the living God.”

⁷ tn Grk “the beginning of the confidence.”

⁸ tn Grk “while it is said.”

⁹ tn Grk “today if you hear his voice.”

¹⁰ sn A quotation from Ps 95:7b-8.

¹¹ tn Grk “through Moses.”

¹² tn Grk “he”; in the translation the referent (God) has been specified for clarity.

¹³ sn An allusion to God’s judgment pronounced in Num 14:29, 32.

¹⁴ tn Here καί (kai) has been translated as “So” to indicate a summary or conclusion to the argument of the preceding paragraph.

¹⁵ tn Grk “let us fear.”

¹⁶ tn Or “they were not united.”

¹⁷ tc A few mss (N) and a few versal witnesses have the nominative singular participle συγκεκρασμένους (*sunkekerasmenous*, “since it [the message] was not combined with faith by those who heard it”), a reading that refers back to the ὁ λόγος (*ho logos*, “the message”). There are a few other variants here (e.g., συγκεκρασμένοι [*sunkekerammenoi*] in 104, συγκεκρασμένοι [*sunkekeramenous*] in 1881. 11), but the accusative plural participle συγκεκρασμένων (*sunkekerasmenous*), found in 13vid.46 A B C D* Ψ 0243 0278 33 81 1739 2464 pc, has by far the best external credentials. This participle agrees with the previous ἐκείνους (*ekeinous*, “those”), a more difficult construction grammatically than the nominative singular. Thus, both on external and internal grounds, συγκεκρασμένων is preferred.

¹⁸ sn A quotation from Ps 95:11.

¹⁹ tn Grk “although the works,” continuing the previous reference to God. The referent (God) is specified in the translation for clarity.

²⁰ sn A quotation from Gen 2:2.

²¹ tn Grk “and in this again.”

²² tn Grk “he”; the referent (God) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

²³ sn Ps 95 does not mention David either in the text or the superscription. It is possible that the writer of Hebrews is attributing the entire collection of psalms to David (although some psalms are specifically attributed to other individuals or groups).

²⁴ tn Grk “as it has been said before” (see Heb 3:7).

²⁵ tn Grk “today if you hear his voice.”

²⁶ tn Grk “he”; the referent (God) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

²⁷ tn Grk “his”; the referent (God) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

²⁸ tn Grk “him”; the referent (God) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

²⁹ tn Grk “for timely help.”

5:1 For every high priest is taken from among the people¹ and appointed² to represent them before God,³ to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. 5:2 He is able to deal compassionately with those who are ignorant and erring, since he also is subject to weakness, 5:3 and for this reason he is obligated to make sin offerings for himself as well as for the people. 5:4 And no one assumes this honor⁴ on his own initiative,⁵ but only when called to it by God,⁶ as in fact Aaron was. 5:5 So also Christ did not glorify himself in becoming high priest, but the one who glorified him was God,⁷ who said to him, “*You are my Son! Today I have fathered you.*”⁸ 5:6 as also in another place God⁹ says, “*You are a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek.*”¹⁰ 5:7 During his earthly life¹¹ Christ¹² offered¹³ both requests and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death and he was heard because of his devotion. 5:8 Although he was a son, he learned obedience through the things he suffered.¹⁴ 5:9 And by being perfected in this way, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him, 5:10 and he was designated¹⁵ by God as high priest *in the order of Melchizedek.*¹⁶

The Need to Move on to Maturity

5:11 On this topic we have much to say¹⁷ and it is difficult to explain, since you have become sluggish¹⁸ in hearing. 5:12 For though you should in fact be teachers by this time,¹⁹ you need someone to teach you the beginning ele-

ments of God’s utterances.²⁰ You have gone back to needing²¹ milk, not²² solid food. 5:13 For everyone who lives on milk is inexperienced in the message of righteousness, because he is an infant. 5:14 But solid food is for the mature, whose perceptions are trained by practice to discern both good and evil.

6:1 Therefore we must progress beyond²³ the elementary²⁴ instructions about Christ²⁵ and move on²⁶ to maturity, not laying this foundation again: repentance from dead works and faith in God, 6:2 teaching about baptisms, laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. 6:3 And this is what we intend to do,²⁷ if God permits. 6:4 For it is impossible in the case of those who have once been enlightened, tasted the heavenly gift, become partakers of the Holy Spirit, 6:5 tasted the good word of God and the miracles of the coming age, 6:6 and then have committed apostasy,²⁸ to renew them again to repentance, since²⁹ they are crucifying the Son of God for themselves all over again³⁰ and holding him up to contempt. 6:7 For the ground that has soaked up the rain that frequently falls on³¹ it and yields useful vegetation for those who tend it receives a blessing from God. 6:8 But if it produces thorns and thistles, it is useless and about to be cursed,³² its fate is to be burned. 6:9 But in your case, dear friends, even though we speak like this, we are convinced of better things relating to salvation. 6:10 For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love you have demonstrated for his name, in having served and continuing to serve the saints. 6:11 But we passionately want each of you to demonstrate the same eagerness for the fulfillment of your hope until the end, 6:12 so that you may not be sluggish,³³ but imitators of those who through faith and perseverance inherit the promises.

¹ **tn** Grk “from among men,” but since the point in context is shared humanity (rather than shared maleness), the plural Greek term ἀνθρώπων (*anthrōpōn*) has been translated “people.”

² **tn** Grk “who is taken from among people is appointed.”

³ **tn** Grk “appointed on behalf of people in reference to things relating to God.”

⁴ **sn** Honor refers here to the honor of the high priesthood.

⁵ **tn** Grk “by himself, on his own.”

⁶ **tn** Grk “being called by God.”

⁷ **tn** Grk “the one”; the referent (God) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

⁸ **tn** Grk “I have begotten you”; see Heb 1:5.

sn A quotation from Ps 2:7.

⁹ **tn** Grk “he”; the referent (God) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹⁰ **sn** A quotation from Ps 110:4.

¹¹ **tn** Grk “in the days of his flesh.”

¹² **tn** Grk “he”; the referent (Christ) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹³ **tn** Grk “who...having offered,” continuing the description of Christ from Heb 5:5-6.

¹⁴ **sn** There is a wordplay in the Greek text between the verbs “learned” (ἐμαθεν, *emathēn*) and “suffered” (ἐπαθεν, *epathēn*).

¹⁵ **tn** Grk “having been designated,” continuing the thought of Heb 5:9.

¹⁶ **sn** The phrase *in the order of Melchizedek* picks up the quotation from Ps 110:4 in Heb 5:6.

¹⁷ **tn** Grk “concerning which the message for us is great.”

¹⁸ **tn** Or “dull.”

¹⁹ **tn** Grk “because of the time.”

²⁰ **tn** Grk “the elements of the beginning of the oracles of God.”

²¹ **tn** Grk “you have come to have a need for.”

²² **tc** † Most texts, including some early and important ones (א² A B* D Ψ 0122 0278 1881 ℣ sy Cl), have καί (*kai*, “and”) immediately preceding οὐ (*ou*, “not”), but other equally significant witnesses (Ⲛ⁴⁶ א* B* C 33 81 1739 lat Or Did) lack the conjunction. As it was a natural tendency for scribes to add a coordinating conjunction, the καί appears to be a motivated reading. On balance, it is probably best to regard the shorter reading as authentic. NA²⁷ has καί in brackets, indicating doubts as to its authenticity.

²³ **tn** Grk “Therefore leaving behind.” The implication is not of abandoning this elementary information, but of building on it.

²⁴ **tn** Or “basic.”

²⁵ **tn** Grk “the message of the beginning of Christ.”

²⁶ **tn** Grk “leaving behind...let us move on.”

²⁷ **tn** Grk “and we will do this.”

²⁸ **tn** Or “have fallen away.”

²⁹ **tn** Or “while”; Grk “crucifying...and holding.” The Greek participles here (“crucifying...and holding”) can be understood as either causal (“since”) or temporal (“while”).

³⁰ **tn** Grk “re-crucifying the son of God for themselves.”

³¹ **tn** Grk “comes upon.”

³² **tn** Grk “near to a curse.”

³³ **tn** Or “dull.”

6:13 Now when God made his promise to Abraham, since he could swear by no one greater, he swore by himself, 6:14 saying, “**Surely I will bless you greatly and multiply your descendants abundantly.**”¹ 6:15 And so by persevering, Abraham² inherited the promise. 6:16 For people³ swear by something greater than themselves,⁴ and the oath serves as a confirmation to end all dispute.⁵ 6:17 In the same way⁶ God wanted to demonstrate more clearly to the heirs of the promise that his purpose was unchangeable,⁷ and so he intervened with an oath, 6:18 so that we who have found refuge in him⁸ may find strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us through two unchangeable things, since it is impossible for God to lie. 6:19 We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, sure and steadfast, which reaches inside behind the curtain,⁹ 6:20 where Jesus our forerunner entered on our behalf, since he became *a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek.*¹⁰

The Nature of Melchizedek's Priesthood

7:1 Now this *Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, met Abraham as he was returning from defeating the kings and blessed him.*¹¹ 7:2 To him¹² also *Abraham apportioned a tithe¹³ of everything.*¹⁴ His name first means¹⁵ king of righteousness, then *king of Salem*, that is, king of peace. 7:3 Without father, without mother, without genealogy, he has neither beginning of days nor end of life but is like the son of God, and he remains a priest for all time. 7:4 But see how great he must be, if¹⁶ Abraham the patriarch gave him a tithe¹⁷ of his

plunder. 7:5 And those of the sons of Levi who receive the priestly office¹⁸ have authorization according to the law to collect a tithe from the people, that is, from their fellow countrymen,¹⁹ although they too are descendants of Abraham.²⁰ 7:6 But Melchizedek²¹ who does not share their ancestry²² collected a tithe²³ from Abraham and blessed²⁴ the one who possessed the promise. 7:7 Now without dispute the inferior is blessed by the superior, 7:8 and in one case tithes are received by mortal men, while in the other by him who is affirmed to be alive. 7:9 And it could be said that Levi himself, who receives tithes, paid a tithe through Abraham. 7:10 For he was still in his ancestor Abraham's loins²⁵ when Melchizedek met him.

Jesus and the Priesthood of Melchizedek

7:11 So if perfection had in fact been possible through the Levitical priesthood – for on that basis²⁶ the people received the law – what further need would there have been for another priest to arise, said to be in the order of Melchizedek and not in Aaron's order? 7:12 For when the priesthood changes, a change in the law must come²⁷ as well. 7:13 Yet the one these things are spoken about belongs to²⁸ a different tribe, and no one from that tribe²⁹ has ever officiated at the altar. 7:14 For it is clear that our Lord is descended from Judah, yet Moses said nothing about priests in connection with that tribe. 7:15 And this is even clearer if another priest arises in the likeness of Melchizedek, 7:16 who has become a priest not by a legal regulation about physical descent³⁰ but by the power of an indestructible life. 7:17 For here is the testimony about him:³¹ “**You are a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek.**”³² 7:18 On the one

¹ tn Grk “in blessing I will bless you and in multiplying I will multiply you,” the Greek form of a Hebrew idiom showing intensity.

sn A quotation from Gen 22:17.

² tn Grk “he”; in the translation the referent (Abraham) has been specified for clarity.

³ tn The plural Greek term ἀνθρώποι (*anthrōpoi*) is used here in a generic sense, referring to both men and women, and is thus translated “people.”

⁴ tn Grk “by something greater”; the rest of the comparison (“than themselves”) is implied.

⁵ tn Grk “the oath for confirmation is an end of all dispute.”

⁶ tn Grk “in which.”

⁷ tn Or “immutable” (here and in v. 18); Grk “the unchangeableness of his purpose.”

⁸ tn Grk “have taken refuge”; the basis of that refuge is implied in the preceding verse.

⁹ sn The *curtain* refers to the veil or drape in the temple that separated the holy place from the holy of holies.

¹⁰ sn A quotation from Ps 110:4, picked up again from Heb 5:6, 10.

¹¹ sn A series of quotations from Gen 14:17-19.

¹² tn Grk “to whom,” continuing the description of Melchizedek. Because of the length and complexity of the Greek sentence, a new sentence was started here in the translation.

¹³ tn Or “a tenth part.”

¹⁴ sn A quotation from Gen 14:20.

¹⁵ tn Grk “first being interpreted,” describing Melchizedek.

¹⁶ tn Grk “to whom.”

¹⁷ tn Or “a tenth part.”

¹⁸ tn Or “the priesthood.”

¹⁹ tn Grk “from their brothers.” See BDAG 18-19 s.v. ἀδελφός 2.b.

²⁰ tn Grk “have come from the loins of Abraham.”

²¹ tn Grk “the one”; in the translation the referent (Melchizedek) has been specified for clarity.

²² tn Grk “is not descended from them.”

²³ tn Or “a tenth part.”

²⁴ sn The verbs “collected...and blessed” emphasize the continuing effect of the past actions, i.e., Melchizedek's importance.

²⁵ tn Grk “in the loins of his father” (a reference to Abraham). The name “Abraham” has been repeated in the translation at this point (cf. v. 9) in order to clarify the referent (i.e., what ancestor was in view).

sn The point of the phrase *still in his ancestor's loins* is that Levi was as yet unborn, still in his ancestor Abraham's body. Thus Levi participated in Abraham's action when Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek.

²⁶ tn Grk “based on it.”

²⁷ tn Grk “of necessity a change in the law comes to pass.”

²⁸ tn Grk “shares in.”

²⁹ tn Grk “from which no one.”

³⁰ tn Grk “a law of a fleshly command.”

³¹ tn Grk “for he/it is witnessed that.”

³² sn A quotation from Ps 110:4 (see Heb 5:6 and 6:20).

hand a former command is set aside¹ because it is weak and useless,² 7:19 for the law made nothing perfect. On the other hand a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to God. 7:20 And since³ this was not done without a sworn affirmation – for the others have become priests without a sworn affirmation, 7:21 but Jesus⁴ did so⁵ with a sworn affirmation by the one who said to him, “*The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, ‘You are a priest forever’*”⁶ – 7:22 accordingly Jesus has become the guarantee⁷ of a better covenant. 7:23 And the others⁸ who became priests were numerous, because death prevented them⁹ from continuing in office,¹⁰ 7:24 but he holds his priesthood permanently since he lives forever. 7:25 So he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them. 7:26 For it is indeed fitting for us to have such a high priest: holy, innocent, undefiled, separate from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. 7:27 He has no need to do every day what those priests do, to offer sacrifices first for their own sins and then for the sins of the people, since he did this in offering himself once for all. 7:28 For the law appoints as high priests men subject to weakness,¹¹ but the word of solemn affirmation that came after the law appoints a son made perfect forever.

The High Priest of a Better Covenant

8:1 Now the main point of what we are saying is this:¹² We have such a high priest, one who *sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven*,¹³ 8:2 a minister in the sanctuary and the true tabernacle that the Lord, not man, set up. 8:3 For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices. So this one too had to have something to offer. 8:4 Now if he were on earth, he would not be a priest, since there are already priests who offer¹⁴ the gifts prescribed by the law. 8:5 The place where

they serve is¹⁵ a sketch¹⁶ and shadow of the heavenly sanctuary, just as Moses was warned by God as he was about to complete the tabernacle. For he says, “*See that you make everything according to the design¹⁷ shown to you on the mountain.*”¹⁸ 8:6 But¹⁹ now Jesus²⁰ has obtained a superior ministry, since²¹ the covenant that he mediates is also better and is enacted²² on better promises.²³

8:7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, no one would have looked for a second one.²⁴ 8:8 But²⁵ showing its fault,²⁶ God²⁷ says to them,²⁸

¹⁵ **tn** Grk “who serve in,” referring to the Levitical priests, but focusing on the provisional and typological nature of the tabernacle in which they served.

¹⁶ **tn** Or “prototype,” “outline.” The Greek word ὑπόδειγμα (*hupodeigma*) does not mean “copy,” as it is often translated; it means “something to be copied,” a basis for imitation. BDAG 1037 s.v. 2 lists both Heb 8:5 and 9:23 under the second category of usage, “an indication of someth. that appears at a subsequent time,” emphasizing the temporal progression between the earthly and heavenly sanctuaries.

sn There are two main options for understanding the conceptual background of the heavenly sanctuary imagery. The first is to understand the imagery to be functioning on a vertical plane. This background is Hellenistic, philosophical, and spatial in orientation and sees the earthly sanctuary as a copy of the heavenly reality. The other option is to see the imagery functioning on a horizontal plane. This background is Jewish, eschatological, and temporal and sees the heavenly sanctuary as the fulfillment and true form of the earthly sanctuary which preceded it. The second option is preferred, both for lexical reasons (see **tn** above) and because it fits the Jewish context of the book (although many scholars prefer to emphasize the relationship the book has to Hellenistic thought).

¹⁷ **tn** The word τύπος (*typos*) here has the meaning “an archetype serving as a model, type, pattern, model” (BDAG 1020 s.v. 6.a). This is in keeping with the horizontal imagery accepted for this verse (see **sn** on “sketch” earlier in the verse). Here Moses was shown the future heavenly sanctuary which, though it did not yet exist, became the outline for the earthly sanctuary.

¹⁸ **sn** A quotation from Exod 25:40.

¹⁹ **sn** The Greek text indicates a contrast between vv. 4-5 and v. 6 that is difficult to render in English: Jesus’ status in the old order of priests (vv. 4-5) versus his superior ministry (v. 6).

²⁰ **tn** Grk “he”; in the translation the referent (Jesus) has been specified for clarity.

²¹ **tn** Grk “to the degree that.”

²² **tn** Grk “which is enacted.”

²³ **sn** This linkage of the change in priesthood with a change in the law or the covenant goes back to Heb 7:12, 22 and is picked up again in Heb 9:6-15 and 10:1-18.

²⁴ **tn** Grk “no occasion for a second one would have been sought.”

²⁵ **tn** Grk “for,” but providing an explanation of the God-intended limitation of the first covenant from v. 7.

²⁶ **sn** The “fault” or limitation in the *first covenant* was not in its inherent righteousness, but in its design from God himself. It was never intended to be his final revelation or provision for mankind; it was provisional, always pointing toward the fulfillment to come in Christ.

²⁷ **tn** Grk “he”; the referent (God) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

²⁸ **tc** † Several witnesses (N* A D* I K P Ψ 33 81 326 365 1505 2464 a1 latt co Cyr) have αὐτοῦς (*autous*) here, “[in finding fault with] them, [he says],” alluding to Israel’s failings mentioned in v. 9b. (The verb μέμφομαι [*memphomai*, “to find fault with”] can take an accusative or dative direct object.) The reading behind the text above (αὐτοῖς, *autois*), supported by Ƴ⁶ N² B D² 0278 1739 1881 Ƴ, is perhaps a harder reading theologically, and is more ambiguous in meaning. If αὐτοῖς goes with μεμφομένους (*memphomenos*, here translated “showing its fault”), the clause could be trans-

¹ **tn** Grk “the setting aside of a former command comes to pass.”

² **tn** Grk “because of its weakness and uselessness.”

³ **sn** The Greek text contains an elaborate comparison between v. 20a and v. 22, with a parenthesis (vv. 20b-21) in between; the comparison is literally, “by as much as...by so much” or “to the degree that...to that same degree.”

⁴ **tn** Grk “he”; the referent (Jesus) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

⁵ **tn** The words “did so” are not in the Greek text, but are implied.

⁶ **sn** A quotation from Ps 110:4 (see Heb 5:6, 6:20, and 7:17).

⁷ **tn** Or “surety.”

⁸ **tn** Grk “they on the one hand” in contrast with “he on the other hand” in v. 24.

⁹ **tn** Grk “they were prevented by death.”

¹⁰ **tn** Grk “from continuing” (the words “in office” are supplied for clarity).

¹¹ **sn** See Heb 5:2 where this concept was introduced.

¹² **tn** Grk “the main point of the things being said.”

¹³ **sn** An allusion to Ps 110:1; see Heb 1:3, 13.

¹⁴ **tn** Grk “there are those who offer.”

“Look, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will complete a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.

8:9 *“It will not be like the covenant¹ that I made with their fathers, on the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they did not continue in my covenant and I had no regard for them, says the Lord.*

8:10 *“For this is the covenant that I will establish with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord. I will put² my laws in their minds³ and I will inscribe them on their hearts. And I will be their God and they will be my people.⁴*

8:11 *“And there will be no need at all⁵ for each one to teach his countryman or each one to teach his brother saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ since they will all know me, from the least to the greatest.⁶*

8:12 *“For I will be merciful toward their evil deeds, and their sins I will remember no longer.”⁷*

8:13 When he speaks of a new covenant,⁸ he makes the first obsolete. Now what is growing obsolete and aging is about to disappear.⁹

The Arrangement and Ritual of the Earthly Sanctuary

9:1 Now the first covenant,¹⁰ in fact, had regulations for worship and its earthly sanctuary. **9:2** For a tent was prepared, the outer one,¹¹ which contained¹² the lampstand, the table, and the presentation of the loaves; this¹³ is called the

holy place. **9:3** And after the second curtain there was a tent called the holy of holies. **9:4** It contained the golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered entirely with gold. In this ark¹⁴ were the golden urn containing the manna, Aaron’s rod that budded, and the stone tablets of the covenant. **9:5** And above the ark¹⁵ were the cherubim¹⁶ of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Now is not the time to speak of these things in detail. **9:6** So with these things prepared like this, the priests enter continually into the outer tent¹⁷ as they perform their duties. **9:7** But only the high priest enters once a year into the inner tent,¹⁸ and not without blood that he offers for himself and for the sins of the people committed in ignorance.¹⁹ **9:8** The Holy Spirit is making clear that the way into the holy place had not yet appeared as long as the old tabernacle²⁰ was standing. **9:9** This was a symbol for the time then present, when gifts and sacrifices were offered that could not perfect the conscience of the worshiper. **9:10** They served only for matters of food and drink²¹ and various washings; they are external regulations²² imposed until the new order came.²³

¹⁴ **tn** Grk “in which”; in the translation the referent (the ark) has been specified for clarity.

¹⁵ **tn** Grk “above it”; in the translation the referent (the ark) has been specified for clarity.

¹⁶ **sn** *The cherubim* (pl.) were an order of angels mentioned repeatedly in the OT but only here in the NT. They were associated with God’s presence, glory, and holiness. Their images that sat on top of the ark of the covenant are described in Exod 25:18-20.

¹⁷ **tn** Grk “the first tent.”

¹⁸ **tn** Grk “the second tent.”

¹⁹ **tn** Or perhaps “the unintentional sins of the people”; Grk “the ignorances of the people.” Cf. BDAG 13 s.v. ἀγνοῦμα, “sin committed in ignorance/unintentionally.” This term seems to be simply a synonym for “sins” (cf. Heb 5:2) and does not pick up the distinction made in Num 15:22-31 between unwitting sin and “high-handed” sin. The Day of Atonement ritual in Lev 16 covered all the sins of the people, not just the unwitting ones.

²⁰ **tn** Grk “the first tent.” The literal phrase “the first tent” refers to either (1) the outer chamber of the tabernacle in the wilderness (as in vv. 2, 6) or (2) the entire tabernacle as a symbol of the OT system of approaching God. The second is more likely given the contrast that follows in vv. 11-12.

²¹ **tn** Grk “only for foods and drinks.”

²² **tc** Most witnesses (D¹ Ɔ) have “various washings, and external regulations” (βαπτισμοὶς καὶ δικαιοῦμασιν, *baptismois kai dikaiōmasin*), with both nouns in the dative. The translation “washings; they are... regulations” renders βαπτισμοὶς, δικαιοῦματα (*baptismois, dikaiōmata*); found in such important MSS as P⁴⁶ N* A I P 0278 33 1739 1881 a/ sa) in which case δικαιοῦματα is taken as the nominative subject of the participle ἐπιτείμενα (*epiteimena*). It seems far more likely that scribes would conform δικαιοῦματα to the immediately preceding datives and join it to them by καί than they would to the following nominative participle. Both on external and internal evidence the text is thus secure as reading βαπτισμοὶς, δικαιοῦματα.

²³ **tn** Grk “until the time of setting things right.”

lated “in finding fault with them” or “in showing [its] faults to them.” If αὐτοῖς goes with the following λέγει (*legei*, “he says”), the clause is best translated, “in finding/showing [its] faults, he says to them.” The accusative pronoun suffers no such ambiguity, for it must be the object of μεμφομένου rather than λέγει. Although a decision is difficult, the dative form of the pronoun best explains the rise of the other reading and is thus more likely to be original.

¹ **tn** Grk “not like the covenant,” continuing the description of v. 8b.

² **tn** Grk “putting...I will inscribe.”

³ **tn** Grk “mind.”

⁴ **tn** Grk “I will be to them for a God and they will be to me for a people,” following the Hebrew constructions of Jer 31.

⁵ **tn** Grk “they will not teach, each one his fellow citizen...” The Greek makes this negation emphatic: “they will certainly not teach.”

⁶ **tn** Grk “from the small to the great.”

⁷ **sn** A quotation from Jer 31:31-34.

⁸ **tn** Grk “when he says, ‘new,’” (referring to the covenant).

⁹ **tn** Grk “near to disappearing.”

¹⁰ **tn** Grk “the first” (referring to the covenant described in Heb 8:7, 13), following the Hebrew constructions of Jer 31. The Greek makes this negation emphatic: “they will certainly not teach.”

¹¹ **tn** Grk “the first,” in order of approach in the ritual.

¹² **tn** Grk “in which [were].”

¹³ **tn** Grk “which,” describing the outer tent.

Christ's Service in the Heavenly Sanctuary

9:11 But now Christ has come¹ as the high priest of the good things to come. He passed through the greater and more perfect tent not made with hands, that is, not of this creation, **9:12** and he entered once for all into the most holy place not by the blood of goats and calves but by his own blood, and so he himself secured² eternal redemption. **9:13** For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a young cow sprinkled on those who are defiled consecrated them and provided ritual purity,³ **9:14** how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our⁴ consciences from dead works to worship the living God.

9:15 And so he is the mediator⁵ of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the eternal inheritance he has promised,⁶ since he died⁷ to set them free from the violations committed under the first covenant. **9:16** For where there is a will, the death of the one who made it must be proven.⁸ **9:17** For a will takes effect only at death, since it carries no force while the one who made it is alive. **9:18** So

even the first covenant was inaugurated with blood.⁹ **9:19** For when Moses had spoken every command to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and goats with water and scarlet wool and hyssop and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, **9:20** and said, "*This is the blood of the covenant that God has commanded you to keep.*"¹⁰ **9:21** And both the tabernacle and all the utensils of worship he likewise sprinkled with blood. **9:22** Indeed according to the law almost everything was purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness. **9:23** So it was necessary for the sketches¹¹ of the things in heaven to be purified with these sacrifices,¹² but the heavenly things themselves required¹³ better sacrifices than these. **9:24** For Christ did not enter a sanctuary made with hands – the representation¹⁴ of the true sanctuary¹⁵ – but into heaven itself, and he appears now in God's presence for us. **9:25** And he did not enter to offer¹⁶ himself again and again, the way the high priest enters the sanctuary year after year with blood that is not his own, **9:26** for then he would have had to suffer again and again since the foundation of the world. But now he has appeared once for all at the consummation of the ages to put away sin by his sacrifice. **9:27** And just as people¹⁷ are appointed to die once, and then to face judgment,¹⁸ **9:28** so also, after Christ was offered once to *bear the sins of many*,¹⁹ to those who eagerly await him he will appear a second time, not to bear sin²⁰ but to bring salvation.²¹

¹ **tn** *Grk* "But Christ, when he came," introducing a sentence that includes all of Heb 9:11-12. The main construction is "Christ, having come..., entered..., having secured..., and everything else describes his entrance."

² **tn** This verb occurs in the Greek middle voice, which here intensifies the role of the subject, Christ, in accomplishing the action: "he alone secured"; "he and no other secured."

³ **tn** *Grk* "for the purifying of the flesh." The "flesh" here is symbolic of outward or ritual purity in contrast to inner purity, that of the conscience (cf. Heb 9:9).

⁴ **tc** The reading adopted by the translation is attested by many authorities (A D* K P 365 1739* *al*). But many others (N D² 0278 33 1739^c 1881 *l* lat sa) read "your" instead of "our." The diversity of evidence makes this a difficult case to decide from external evidence alone. The first and second person pronouns differ by only one letter in Greek, as in English, also making this problem difficult to decide based on internal evidence and transcriptional probability. In the context, the author's description of sacrificial activities seems to invite the reader to compare his own possible participation in OT liturgy as over against the completed work of Christ, so the second person pronoun "your" might make more sense. On the other hand, TCGNT 599 argues that "our" is preferable because the author of Hebrews uses direct address (i.e., the second person) only in the hortatory sections. What is more, the author seems to prefer the first person in explanatory remarks or when giving the logical grounds for an assertion (cf. Heb 4:15; 7:14). It is hard to reach a definitive conclusion in this case, but the data lean slightly in favor of the first person pronoun.

⁵ **tn** The Greek word μεσίτης (*mesitēs*, "mediator") in this context does not imply that Jesus was a mediator in the contemporary sense of the word, i.e., he worked for compromise between opposing parties. Here the term describes his function as the one who was used by God to enact a new covenant which established a new relationship between God and his people, but entirely on God's terms.

⁶ **tn** *Grk* "the promise of the eternal inheritance."

⁷ **tn** *Grk* "a death having occurred."

⁸ **tn** *Grk* "there is a necessity for the death of the one who made it to be proven."

⁹ **sn** The Greek text reinforces this by negating the opposite ("not even the first covenant was inaugurated without blood"), but this double negation is not used in contemporary English.

¹⁰ **tn** *Grk* "which God commanded for you (or in your case)."

¹¹ **sn** A quotation from Exod 24:8.

¹² **tn** Or "prototypes," "outlines," referring to the earthly sanctuary. See Heb 8:5 above for the prior use of this term.

¹³ **tn** *Grk* "with these"; in the translation the referent (sacrifices) has been specified for clarity.

¹⁴ **tn** *Grk* "the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these."

¹⁵ **tn** Or "prefiguration."

¹⁶ **tn** The word "sanctuary" is not in the Greek text at this point, but has been supplied for clarity.

¹⁷ **tn** *Grk* "and not that he might offer," continuing the previous construction.

¹⁸ **tn** Here ἀνθρώποις (*anthrōpōis*) has been translated as a generic noun ("people").

¹⁹ **tn** *Grk* "and after this – judgment."

²⁰ **sn** An allusion to Isa 53:12.

²¹ **tn** *Grk* "without sin," but in context this does not refer to Christ's sinlessness (as in Heb 4:15) but to the fact that sin is already dealt with by his first coming.

²² **tn** *Grk* "for salvation." This may be construed with the verb "await" (those who wait for him to bring them salvation), but the connection with "appear" (as in the translation) is more likely.

Concluding Exposition: Old and New Sacrifices Contrasted

10:1 For the law possesses a shadow of the good things to come but not the reality itself, and is therefore completely unable, by the same sacrifices offered continually, year after year, to perfect those who come to worship.¹ **10:2** For otherwise would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers would have been purified once for all and so have² no further consciousness of sin? **10:3** But in those sacrifices³ there is a reminder of sins year after year. **10:4** For the blood of bulls and goats cannot take away sins.⁴ **10:5** So when he came into the world, he said,

“Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me.

10:6 *“Whole burnt offerings and sin-offerings you took no delight in.*

10:7 *“Then I said, ‘Here I am.’⁵ I have come – it is written of me in the scroll of the book – to do your will, O God.”⁶*

10:8 When he says above, *“Sacrifices and offerings and whole burnt offerings and sin-offerings you did not desire nor did you take delight in them”⁷* (which are offered according to the law), **10:9** then he says, *“Here I am: I have come to do your will.”⁸* He does away with⁹ the first to establish the second. **10:10** By his will¹⁰ we have been made holy through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. **10:11** And every priest stands day after day¹¹ serving and offering the same sacrifices again and again – sacrifices that can never take away sins. **10:12** But when this priest¹² had offered one

sacrifice for sins for all time, *he sat down at the right hand¹³ of God, 10:13* where he is now waiting¹⁴ until his enemies are made a footstool for his feet.¹⁵ **10:14** For by one offering he has perfected for all time those who are made holy. **10:15** And the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us, for after saying,¹⁶ **10:16** *“This is the covenant that I will establish with them after those days, says the Lord. I will put¹⁷ my laws on their hearts and I will inscribe them on their minds,”¹⁸* **10:17** then he says,¹⁹ *“Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no longer.”²⁰* **10:18** Now where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin.

Drawing Near to God in Enduring Faith

10:19 Therefore, brothers and sisters,²¹ since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, **10:20** by the fresh and living way that he inaugurated for us²² through the curtain, that is, through his flesh,²³ **10:21** and since we have a great priest²⁴ over the house of God, **10:22** let us draw near with a sincere heart in the assurance that faith brings,²⁵ because we have had our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience²⁶ and our bodies washed in pure water. **10:23** And let us hold unwaveringly to the hope that we confess, for the one who made the promise is trustworthy. **10:24** And let us take thought of how to spur one another on to love and good works,²⁷ **10:25** not abandoning our own meetings, as some are in the habit of doing, but

¹³ sn An allusion to Ps 110:1.

¹⁴ tn Grk “from then on waiting.”

¹⁵ sn An allusion to Ps 110:1.

¹⁶ tn Grk “after having said,” emphasizing the present impact of this utterance.

¹⁷ tn Grk “putting...I will inscribe.”

¹⁸ sn A quotation from Jer 31:33.

¹⁹ tn Grk “and.”

²⁰ sn A quotation from Jer 31:34.

²¹ tn Grk “brothers.” See note on the phrase “brothers and sisters” in 2:11.

²² tn Grk “that he inaugurated for us as a fresh and living way,” referring to the entrance mentioned in v. 19.

²³ sn *Through his flesh.* In a bold shift the writer changes from a spatial phrase (Christ opened the way *through the curtain* into the inner sanctuary) to an instrumental phrase (he did this *through* [by means of] *his flesh* in his sacrifice of himself), associating the two in an allusion to the splitting of the curtain in the temple from top to bottom (Matt 27:51; Mark 15:38; Luke 23:45). Just as the curtain was split, so Christ’s body was broken for us, to give us access into God’s presence.

²⁴ tn Grk “and a great priest,” continuing the construction begun in v. 19.

²⁵ tn Grk “in assurance of faith.”

²⁶ sn The phrase *our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience* combines the OT imagery of the sprinkling with blood to give ritual purity with the emphasis on the interior cleansing provided by the new covenant: It is the heart that is cleansed and the conscience made perfect (cf. Heb 8:10; 9:9, 14; 10:2, 16).

²⁷ tn Grk “let us consider one another for provoking of love and good deeds.”

¹ tn Grk “those who approach.”

² tn Grk “the worshipers, having been purified once for all, would have.”

³ tn Grk “in them”; the referent (those sacrifices) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

⁴ tn Grk “for it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.”

⁵ tn Grk “behold,” but this construction often means “here is/there is” (cf. BDAG 468 s.v. ἰδοὺ 2).

⁶ sn A quotation from Ps 40:6-8 (LXX). The phrase *a body you prepared for me* (in v. 5) is apparently an interpretive expansion of the HT reading “ears you have dug out for me.”

⁷ sn Various phrases from the quotation of Ps 40:6 in Heb 10:5-6 are repeated in Heb 10:8.

⁸ tc The majority of mss, especially the later ones (N² 0278^{vid} 1739 Ⓜ lat), have ὁ Θεός (*ho theos*, “God”) at this point, while most of the earliest and best witnesses lack such an explicit addressee (so Ƴ⁴⁶ N* A C D K P Ψ 33 1175 1881 2464 a). The longer reading is a palpable corruption, apparently motivated in part by the wording of Ps 40:8 (39:9 LXX) and by the word order of this same verse as quoted in Heb 10:7.

⁹ tn Or “abolishes.”

¹⁰ tn Grk “by which will.” Because of the length and complexity of the Greek sentence, a new sentence was started here in the translation.

¹¹ tn Or “daily,” “every day.”

¹² tn Grk “this one.” This pronoun refers to Jesus, but “this priest” was used in the translation to make the contrast between the Jewish priests in v. 11 and Jesus as a priest clearer in English.

encouraging each other, and even more so because you see the day¹ drawing near.²

10:26 For if we deliberately keep on sinning after receiving the knowledge of the truth, no further sacrifice for sins is left for us,³ **10:27** but only a certain fearful expectation of judgment and a fury⁴ of fire that will consume God's enemies.⁵ **10:28** Someone who rejected the law of Moses was put to death⁶ without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.⁷ **10:29** How much greater punishment do you think that person deserves who has contempt for⁸ the Son of God, and profanes⁹ the blood of the covenant that made him holy,¹⁰ and insults the Spirit of grace? **10:30** For we know the one who said, "*Vengeance is mine, I will repay,*"¹¹ and again, "*The Lord will judge his people.*"¹² **10:31** It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

10:32 But remember the former days when you endured a harsh conflict of suffering after you were enlightened. **10:33** At times you were publicly exposed to abuse and afflictions, and at other times you came to share with others who were treated in that way. **10:34** For in fact you shared the sufferings of those in prison,¹³ and you accepted the confiscation of your belongings with joy, because you knew that you

certainly¹⁴ had a better and lasting possession. **10:35** So do not throw away your confidence, because it¹⁵ has great reward. **10:36** For you need endurance in order to do God's will and so receive what is promised.¹⁶ **10:37** For *just a little longer¹⁷ and he who is coming will arrive and not delay.*¹⁸ **10:38** *But my righteous one will live by faith, and if he shrinks back, I¹⁹ take no pleasure in him.*²⁰ **10:39** But we are not among those who shrink back and thus perish, but are among those who have faith and preserve their souls.²¹

People Commended for Their Faith

11:1 Now faith is being sure of what we hope for, being convinced of what we do not see. **11:2** For by it the people of old²² received God's commendation.²³ **11:3** By faith we understand that the worlds²⁴ were set in order at God's command,²⁵ so that the visible has its origin in the invisible.²⁶ **11:4** By faith Abel offered God a greater sacrifice than Cain, and through his faith²⁷ he was commended as righteous, because God commended him for his offerings. And through his faith²⁸ he still speaks, though he is dead. **11:5** By faith Enoch was taken up so that he did not see death, and he was not to be found because God took him up. For before his removal he had been commended as having pleased God. **11:6** Now without faith it is impossible to please him, for the one who approaches God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him. **11:7** By faith Noah, when he was warned about things not yet seen, with reverent regard²⁹ constructed an ark for the deliverance of his family. Through faith he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.

11:8 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place he would later receive as an inheritance, and he went out without

¹ sn The day refers to that well-known time of Christ's coming and judgment in the future; see a similar use of "day" in 1 Cor 3:13.

² tn This paragraph (vv. 19-25) is actually a single, skillfully composed sentence in Greek, but it must be broken into shorter segments for English idiom. It begins with several subordinate phrases (since we have confidence and a great priest), has three parallel exhortations as its main verbs (let us draw near, hold, and take thought), and concludes with several subordinate phrases related to the final exhortation (not abandoning but encouraging).

³ tn Grk "is left," with "for us" implied by the first half of the verse.

⁴ tn Grk "zeal," recalling God's jealous protection of his holiness and honor (cf. Exod 20:5).

sn An allusion to Zeph 1:18.

⁵ tn Grk "the enemies."

sn An allusion to Isa 26:11.

⁶ tn Grk "dies."

⁷ sn An allusion to Deut 17:6.

⁸ tn Grk "tramples under foot."

⁹ tn Grk "regarded as common."

¹⁰ tn Grk "by which he was made holy."

¹¹ sn A quotation from Deut 32:35.

¹² sn A quotation from Deut 32:36.

¹³ tc Most witnesses, including some important ones (א D² 1881 ㉓), read δεσμοῖς μου (*desmois mou*, "my imprisonment") here, a reading that is probably due to the widespread belief in the early Christian centuries that Paul was the author of Hebrews (cf. Phil 1:7; Col 4:18). It may have been generated by the reading δεσμοῖς without the μου (so Ɔ⁴⁶ Ψ 104 pc), the force of which is so ambiguous (lit., "you shared the sufferings with the bonds") as to be virtually nonsensical. Most likely, δεσμοῖς resulted when a scribe made an error in copying δεσμοῖς (*desmois*), a reading which makes excellent sense ("[of] those in prison") and is strongly supported by early and significant witnesses of the Alexandrian and Western texttypes (A D* H 6 33 81 1739 lat sy co). Thus, δεσμοῖς best explains the rise of the other readings on both internal and external grounds and is strongly preferred.

¹⁴ tn Grk "you yourselves."

¹⁵ tn Grk "which," but showing the reason.

¹⁶ tn Grk "the promise," referring to the thing God promised, not to the pledge itself.

¹⁷ sn A quotation from Isa 26:20.

¹⁸ sn A quotation from Hab 2:3.

¹⁹ tn Grk "my soul."

²⁰ sn A quotation from Hab 2:4.

²¹ tn Grk "not...of shrinking back to perdition but of faith to the preservation of the soul."

²² tn Or "the elders," "the ancients."

²³ tn Grk "were attested," "received commendation"; and Heb 11:4-6 shows this to be from God.

²⁴ tn Grk "ages." The temporal (ages) came to be used of the spatial (what exists in those time periods). See Heb 1:2 for same usage.

²⁵ tn Grk "by God's word."

²⁶ sn The Greek phrasing emphasizes this point by negating the opposite: "so that what is seen did not come into being from things that are visible."

²⁷ tn Or "through his sacrifice"; Grk "through which."

²⁸ tn Or "through his sacrifice"; Grk "through it."

²⁹ tn Cf. BDAG 407 s.v. εὐλαβέομαι 2, "out of reverent regard (for God's command)."

understanding where he was going. **11:9** By faith he lived as a foreigner¹ in the promised land as though it were a foreign country, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, who were fellow heirs² of the same promise. **11:10** For he was looking forward to the city with firm foundations,³ whose architect and builder is God. **11:11** By faith, even though Sarah herself was barren and he was too old,⁴ he received the ability to procreate,⁵ because he regarded the one who had given the promise to be trustworthy. **11:12** So in fact children⁶ were fathered by one man – and this one as good as dead – *like the number of stars in the sky and like the innumerable grains of sand⁷ on the seashore.*⁸ **11:13** These all died in faith without receiving the things promised,⁹ but they saw them in the distance and welcomed them and acknowledged that they were strangers and foreigners¹⁰ on the earth. **11:14** For those who speak in such a way make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. **11:15** In fact, if they had been thinking of the land that they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. **11:16** But as it is,¹¹ they aspire to a better land, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them. **11:17** By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac. He had received the promises,¹² yet he was ready to offer up¹³ his only son. **11:18** God had told him, “*Through Isaac descendants will carry on your name.*”¹⁴ **11:19** and he reasoned¹⁵ that God could even raise him from the dead, and in a sense¹⁶ he received him back from there. **11:20** By faith also Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning the future. **11:21** By faith Jacob, as he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph and

*worshiped as he leaned on his staff*¹⁷ **11:22** By faith Joseph, at the end of his life,¹⁸ mentioned the exodus of the sons of Israel¹⁹ and gave instructions about his burial.²⁰

11:23 By faith, when Moses was born, his parents hid him²¹ for three months, because they saw the child was beautiful and they were not afraid of the king’s edict. **11:24** By faith, when he grew up, Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, **11:25** choosing rather to be ill-treated with the people of God than to enjoy sin’s fleeting pleasure. **11:26** He regarded abuse suffered for Christ²² to be greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for his eyes were fixed on²³ the reward. **11:27** By faith he left Egypt without fearing the king’s anger, for he persevered as though he could see the one who is invisible. **11:28** By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood,²⁴ so that the one who destroyed the firstborn would not touch them. **11:29** By faith they crossed the Red Sea as if on dry ground, but when the Egyptians tried it, they were swallowed up. **11:30** By faith the walls of Jericho²⁵ fell after the people marched around them²⁶ for seven days. **11:31** By faith Rahab the prostitute escaped the destruction of²⁷ the disobedient, because she welcomed the spies in peace.

11:32 And what more shall I say? For time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets. **11:33** Through faith they conquered kingdoms, administered justice,²⁸ gained what was promised,²⁹ shut the mouths of lions, **11:34** quenched raging fire,³⁰ escaped the edge of the sword, gained strength in weakness,³¹ became mighty in

¹ tn Or “settled as a resident alien.”

² tn Or “heirs with him.”

³ tn Grk “that has foundations.”

⁴ tn Grk “past the time of maturity.”

⁵ tn Grk “power to deposit seed.” Though it is not as likely, some construe this phrase to mean “power to conceive seed,” making the whole verse about Sarah: “by faith, even though Sarah herself was barren and too old, she received ability to conceive, because she regarded the one who had given the promise to be trustworthy.”

⁶ tn Grk “these;” in the translation the referent (children) has been specified for clarity.

⁷ tn Grk a collective “the sand.”

⁸ sn An allusion to Gen 22:17 (which itself goes back to Gen 15:5).

⁹ tn Grk “the promises,” referring to the things God promised, not to the pledges themselves.

¹⁰ tn Or “sojourners.”

¹¹ tn Grk “now.”

¹² tn Here “received the promises” refers to the pledges themselves, not to the things God promised.

¹³ tn Grk “he was offering up.” The tense of this verb indicates the attempt or readiness to sacrifice Isaac without the actual completion of the deed.

¹⁴ tn Grk “in Isaac seed will be named for you.”

sn A quotation from Gen 21:12.

¹⁵ tn Grk “having reasoned,” continuing the ideas of v. 17.

¹⁶ tn Grk “in/by a symbol.”

¹⁷ tn Grk “worshiped on the top of his staff,” a quotation from Gen 47:31 (LXX).

¹⁸ tn Grk “coming to an end,” “dying.”

¹⁹ sn Joseph’s prophecy about the exodus of the sons of Israel is found in Gen 50:24.

²⁰ tn Grk “about his bones,” which refers by metonymy to the disposition of his bones, i.e., his burial.

sn The instructions about his burial are recorded in Gen 50:25.

²¹ tn Grk “Moses, when he was born, was hidden by his parents.”

²² tn Grk “the abuse [or ‘reproach’] of Christ.”

²³ tn Grk “he was looking away to.”

²⁴ tn Grk “the pouring out of the blood.”

sn The sprinkling of the blood refers here to the application of the blood to the doorways of the Israelite houses (cf. Exod 12:7, 13).

²⁵ map For location see Map5-B2; Map6-E1; Map7-E1; Map8-E3; Map10-A2; Map11-A1.

²⁶ tn Grk “after they had been encircled.”

²⁷ tn Grk “did not perish together with.”

²⁸ tn This probably refers to the righteous rule of David and others. But it could be more general and mean “did what was righteous.”

²⁹ tn Grk “obtained promises,” referring to the things God promised, not to the pledges themselves.

sn Gained what was promised. They saw some of God’s promises fulfilled, even though the central promise remained unfulfilled until Christ came (cf. vv. 39-40).

³⁰ tn Grk “quenched the power of fire.”

³¹ tn Or “recovered from sickness.”

battle, put foreign armies to flight, 11:35 and women received back their dead raised to life.¹ But others were tortured, not accepting release, to obtain resurrection to a better life.² 11:36 And others experienced mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. 11:37 They were stoned, sawed apart,³ murdered with the sword; they went about in sheepskins and goatskins; they were destitute, afflicted, ill-treated 11:38 (the world was not worthy of them); they wandered in deserts and mountains and caves and openings in the earth. 11:39 And these all were commended⁴ for their faith, yet they did not receive what was promised.⁵ 11:40 For God had provided something better for us, so that they would be made perfect together with us.⁶

The Lord's Discipline

12:1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses,⁷ we must get rid of every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and run with endurance the race set out for us, 12:2 keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith. For the joy set out for him he endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and *has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.*⁸ 12:3 Think of him who endured such opposition against himself by sinners, so that you may not grow weary in your souls and give up. 12:4 You have not yet resisted to the point of bloodshed⁹ in your struggle against sin. 12:5 And have you forgotten the exhortation addressed to you as sons?

“My son, do not scorn¹⁰ the Lord’s discipline or give up when he corrects¹¹ you. 12:6 “For the Lord disciplines the one he loves and chastises every son he accepts.”¹²

12:7 Endure your suffering¹³ as discipline;¹⁴ God is treating you as sons. For what son is there that a father does not discipline? 12:8 But if you do not experience discipline,¹⁵ something all sons¹⁶ have shared in, then you are illegitimate and are not sons. 12:9 Besides, we have experienced discipline from¹⁷ our earthly fathers¹⁸ and we respected them; shall we not submit ourselves all the more to the Father of spirits and receive life?¹⁹ 12:10 For they disciplined us for a little while as seemed good to them, but he does so for our benefit, that we may share his holiness. 12:11 Now all discipline seems painful at the time, not joyful.²⁰ But later it produces the fruit of peace and righteousness²¹ for those trained by it. 12:12 Therefore, **strengthen²² your listless hands and your weak knees,²³ 12:13 and make straight paths for your feet,²⁴** so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but be healed.

Do Not Reject God's Warning

12:14 Pursue peace with everyone, and holiness,²⁵ for without it no one will see the Lord. 12:15 See to it that no one comes short of the

¹ tn Grk “disregard,” “think little of.”

¹¹ tn Or “reproves,” “rebukes.” The Greek verb ἐλέγχω (*elenchō*) implies exposing someone’s sin in order to bring correction.

¹² sn A quotation from Prov 3:11-12.

¹³ tn Grk “endure,” with the object (“your suffering”) understood from the context.

¹⁴ tn Or “in order to become disciplined.”

¹⁵ tn Grk “you are without discipline.”

¹⁶ tn Grk “all”; “sons” is implied by the context.

¹⁷ tn Grk “we had our earthly fathers as discipliners.”

¹⁸ tn Grk “the fathers of our flesh.” In Hebrews, “flesh” is a characteristic way of speaking about outward, physical, earthly life (cf. Heb 5:7; 9:10, 13), as opposed to the inward or spiritual dimensions of life.

¹⁹ tn Grk “and live.”

^{sn} Submit ourselves...to the Father of spirits and receive life. This idea is drawn from Proverbs, where the Lord’s discipline brings life, while resistance to it leads to death (cf. Prov 4:13; 6:23; 10:17; 16:17).

²⁰ tn Grk “all discipline at the time does not seem to be of joy, but of sorrow.”

²¹ tn Grk “the peaceful fruit of righteousness.”

²² tn Or “straighten.”

²³ sn A quotation from Isa 35:3. Strengthen your listless hands and your weak knees refers to the readers’ need for renewed resolve and fresh strength in their struggles (cf. Heb 10:36-39; 12:1-3).

²⁴ sn A quotation from Prov 4:26. The phrase make straight paths for your feet is figurative for “stay on God’s paths.”

²⁵ sn The references to peace and holiness show the close connection between this paragraph and the previous one. The pathway toward “holiness” and the need for it is cited in Heb 12:10 and 14. More importantly Prov 4:26-27 sets up the transition from one paragraph to the next: It urges people to stay on godly paths (Prov 4:26, quoted here in v. 13) and promises that God will lead them in peace if they do so (Prov 4:27 [LXX], quoted in v. 14).

¹ tn Grk “received back their dead from resurrection.”

² tn Grk “to obtain a better resurrection.”

³ tc The reading ἐπίσθησαν (*episthēsan*, “they were sawed apart”) is found in some important witnesses (1^a46 [D* twice reads ἐπίσθησαν, “they were burned”?] pc sy^p sa Or^{ab} Eus). Other mss have ἐπειράσθησαν (*epēirasthēsan*, “they were tempted”), either before “sawed apart” ([S] L P [O48] 33 81 326 1505 pc sy^h), after “sawed apart” (1^a13^{vid} A D¹ Ψ 1739 1881 28 lat bo Or^{ab}), or altogether in place of “sawed apart” (0150 vg^{ms} Cl). Since the two words ἐπίσθησαν and ἐπειράσθησαν are so much alike in sight and sound, and since the position of “they were tempted” varies in the mss, it seems best to say that ἐπειράσθησαν is an accidental corruption of ἐπίσθησαν or an intentional change to a more common word (the root of ἐπίσθησαν [πρίζω, *prizō*] occurs only here in the NT, while the root of ἐπειράσθησαν [πειράζω, *peirazō*] occurs 38 times). The best reading here seems to be “sawed apart” without any addition before or after. (See TCGNT 603-4, for a discussion of emendations that scholars have proposed for this difficult problem.)

⁴ sn The expression *these all were commended* forms an *inclusio* with Heb 11:2: The chapter begins and ends with references to commendation for faith.

⁵ tn Grk “the promise,” referring to the thing God promised, not to the pledge itself.

⁶ tn The Greek phrasing emphasizes this point by negating the opposite: “so that they would not be made perfect without us.”

⁷ tn Grk “having such a great cloud of witnesses surrounding us.”

⁸ sn An allusion to Ps 110:1.

⁹ tn Grk “until blood.”

grace of God, that no one be like *a bitter root springing up¹ and causing trouble, and through him many become defiled*. **12:16** And see to it that no one becomes² an immoral or godless person like Esau, who *sold his own birthright for a single meal*.³ **12:17** For you know that⁴ later when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no opportunity for repentance, although he sought the blessing⁵ with tears. **12:18** For you have not come to something that can be touched,⁶ to a burning fire and darkness and gloom and a whirlwind **12:19** and the blast of a trumpet and a voice uttering words⁷ such that those who heard begged to hear no more.⁸ **12:20** For they could not bear what was commanded: “*If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned.*”⁹ **12:21** In fact, the scene¹⁰ was so terrifying that Moses said, “*I shudder with fear.*”¹¹ **12:22** But you have come to Mount Zion, the city¹² of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, to the assembly **12:23** and congregation of the firstborn, who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous, who have been made perfect, **12:24** and to Jesus, the mediator¹³ of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks of something better than Abel’s does.¹⁴

12:25 Take care not to refuse the one who is speaking! For if they did not escape when they

refused the one who warned them on earth, how much less shall we, if we reject the one who warns from heaven? **12:26** Then his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, “*I will once more shake not only the earth but heaven too.*”¹⁵ **12:27** Now this phrase “*once more*” indicates the removal of what is shaken, that is, of created things, so that what is unshaken may remain. **12:28** So since we are receiving an unshakable kingdom, let us give thanks, and through this let us offer worship pleasing to God in devotion and awe. **12:29** For our *God is indeed a devouring fire.*¹⁶

Final Exhortations

13:1 Brotherly love must continue. **13:2** Do not neglect hospitality, because through it some have entertained angels without knowing it.¹⁷ **13:3** Remember those in prison as though you were in prison with them,¹⁸ and those ill-treated as though you too felt their torment.¹⁹ **13:4** Marriage must be honored among all and the marriage bed kept undefiled, for God will judge sexually immoral people and adulterers. **13:5** Your conduct must be free from the love of money and you must be content with what you have, for he has said, “*I will never leave you and I will never abandon you.*”²⁰ **13:6** So we can say with confidence, “*The Lord is my helper, and²¹ I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?*”²² **13:7** Remember your leaders, who spoke God’s message to you; reflect on the outcome of their lives and imitate their faith. **13:8** Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever! **13:9** Do not be carried away by all sorts of strange teachings.²³ For it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not ritual meals,²⁴ which have never benefited those who participated in them. **13:10** We have an altar that those who serve in the tabernacle have no right to eat from. **13:11** For the bodies of those animals whose blood the high priest brings²⁵ into the sanctuary as an offering for sin are burned outside the camp. **13:12** Therefore, to sanctify

¹ **tn** Grk “that there not be any root of bitterness,” but referring figuratively to a person who causes trouble (as in Deut 29:17 [LXX] from which this is quoted).

sn An allusion to Deut 29:18.

² **tn** Grk “that there not be any,” continuing from v. 15.

³ **sn** An allusion to Gen 27:34-41.

⁴ **tn** Or a command: “for understand that.”

⁵ **tn** Grk “it,” referring either to the repentance or the blessing. But the account in Gen 27:34-41 (which the author appeals to here) makes it clear that the blessing is what Esau sought. Thus in the translation the referent (the blessing) is specified for clarity.

⁶ **tn** This describes the nation of Israel approaching God on Mt. Sinai (Exod 19). There is a clear contrast with the reference to Mount Zion in v. 22, so this could be translated “a mountain that can be touched.” But the word “mountain” does not occur here and the more vague description seems to be deliberate.

⁷ **tn** Grk “a voice of words.”

⁸ **tn** Grk “a voice...from which those who heard begged that a word not be added to them.”

⁹ **sn** A quotation from Exod 19:12-13.

¹⁰ **tn** Grk “that which appeared.”

¹¹ **tn** Grk “I am terrified and trembling.”

sn A quotation from Deut 9:19.

¹² **tn** Grk “and the city”; the conjunction is omitted in translation since it seems to be functioning epexegetically – that is, explaining further what is meant by “Mount Zion.”

¹³ **tn** The Greek word μεσίτης (*mesitēs*, “mediator”) in this context does not imply that Jesus was a mediator in the contemporary sense of the word, i.e., he worked for compromise between opposing parties. Here the term describes his function as the one who was used by God to enact a new covenant which established a new relationship between God and his people, but entirely on God’s terms.

¹⁴ **sn** Abel’s shed blood cried out to the Lord for justice and judgment, but Jesus’ blood speaks of redemption and forgiveness, *something better than Abel’s does* (Gen 4:10; Heb 9:11-14; 11:4).

¹⁵ **sn** A quotation from Hag 2:6.

¹⁶ **sn** A quotation from Deut 4:24; 9:3.

¹⁷ **sn** This is a vague allusion to people described in scripture and extra-biblical literature and may include Abraham and Sarah (Gen 18:2-15), Lot (Gen 19:1-14), Gideon (Judg 6:11-18), Manoah (Judg 13:3-22), and possibly Tobit (Tob 12:1-20).

¹⁸ **tn** Grk “as being imprisoned together.”

¹⁹ **tn** Or “since you too are vulnerable”; Grk “you also being in the body.”

²⁰ **sn** A quotation from Deut 31:6, 8.

²¹ **tc** Some important mss (N* C* P 0285^{vid} 33 1175 1739 pc lat) lack καί (*kai*), but because the omission conforms to the wording of Ps 118:6 (117:6 LXX), it is suspect.

²² **sn** A quotation from Ps 118:6.

²³ **tn** Grk “by diverse and strange teachings.”

²⁴ **tn** Grk “foods,” referring to the meals associated with the OT sacrifices (see the contrast with the next verse; also 9:9-10; 10:1, 4, 11).

²⁵ **tn** Grk “whose blood is brought by the high priest.”

the people by his own blood, Jesus also suffered outside the camp. **13:13** We must go out to him, then, outside the camp, bearing the abuse he experienced.¹ **13:14** For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come. **13:15** Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, acknowledging his name. **13:16** And do not neglect to do good and to share what you have,² for God is pleased with such sacrifices.

13:17 Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls and will give an account for their work.³ Let them do this⁴ with joy and not with complaints, for this would be no advantage for you. **13:18** Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a clear conscience and desire to conduct ourselves rightly in every respect. **13:19** I especially ask you to pray⁵ that I may be restored to you very soon.

Benediction and Conclusion

13:20 Now may the God of peace who by the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead the great shepherd of the sheep, our Lord Jesus Christ, **13:21** equip you with every good thing to do his will, working in us⁶ what is pleasing before him through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever.⁷ Amen.

13:22 Now I urge you, brothers and sisters,⁸ bear with my message of exhortation, for in fact I have written to you briefly. **13:23** You should know that⁹ our brother Timothy has been released. If he comes soon, he will be with me when I see you.¹⁰ **13:24** Greetings to all your leaders and all the saints. Those from Italy send you greetings. **13:25** Grace be with you all.¹¹

⁶ **tc** Some MSS (C P Ψ 6 629* 630 1505 *pm* latt *sy*ⁿ) read ὑμῖν (*humin*, “in you”) here, but ἡμῖν (*hēmin*) has stronger external support (Ɑ⁴⁶ Ɱ A D^{vid} K 0243 0285 33 81 104 326 365 629^c 1175 1739 1881 *pm* *sy*^p *co*). It is also more likely that ἡμῖν would have been changed to ὑμῖν in light of the “you” which occurs at the beginning of the verse than vice versa.

⁷ **tc** † Most MSS (Ɱ A [C*] 0243 0285 33 1739 1881 Ɱ latt) include the words “and ever” here, but the shorter reading (supported by Ɑ⁴⁶ C³ D Ψ 6 104 365 1505 *al*) is preferred on internal grounds. It seemed more likely that scribes would assimilate the wording to the common NT doxological expression “for ever and ever,” found especially in the Apocalypse (cf., e.g., 1 Tim 1:17; 2 Tim 4:18; Rev 4:9; 22:5) than to the “forever” of Heb 13:8. Nevertheless, a decision is difficult here. NA²⁷ places the phrase in brackets, indicating doubts as to its authenticity.

⁸ **tn** *Grk* “brothers.” See note on the phrase “brothers and sisters” in 2:11.

⁹ **tn** *Grk* “Know that” (an imperative).

¹⁰ **tn** *Grk* “has been released, with whom, if he comes soon, I will see you.”

¹¹ **tc** Most witnesses, including several important ones (Ɱ² A C D H Ψ 0243 1739 1881 Ɱ lat *sy* *bo*), conclude the letter with ἀμήν (*amēn*, “amen”). Such a conclusion is routinely added by scribes to NT books because a few of these books originally had such an ending (cf. Rom 16:27; Gal 6:18; Jude 25). A majority of Greek witnesses have the concluding ἀμήν in every NT book except Acts, James, and 3 John (and even in these books, ἀμήν is found in some witnesses). It is thus a predictable variant. Further, there is sufficient testimony (Ɑ⁴⁶ Ɱ* ^{vid} 6 33 *sa*) for the lack of the particle, rendering its omission the preferred reading.

¹ **tn** *Grk* “his abuse.”

² **tn** *Grk* “neglect doing good and fellowship.”

³ **tn** Or “as ones who will give an account”; *Grk* “as giving an account.”

⁴ **tn** *Grk* “that they may do this.”

⁵ **tn** *Grk* “I urge you to do this all the more.”