

The LETTER of PAUL to the HEBREWS

LAST GENERATION VERSION

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Chapter 1

God sent Us His Son, the Heir of the Creation

God, formerly speaking at many times and in many ways to the fathers in the prophets, 2 upon the last of those days¹ has spoken to us in the Son² whom He appointed Heir of everything,³ through⁴ whom He also fashioned the ages.⁵ 3 Who being the radiance of the glory and the likeness of what undergirds Him,⁶ even carrying everything⁷ with the declaration of His⁸ power,⁹ by Himself having made a

¹ ἐπὶ ἐσχάτου τῶν ἡμερῶν τούτων (lit. “upon the last of the days those.”) Most English translations have incorrectly rendered this clause as “in these last days.” First, the preposition is not ἐν (in) but ἐπὶ (upon). Secondly, the word ἐσχάτου (last or end) is the sole object of the preposition, and τῶν ἡμερῶν τούτων is a genitive modifier not part of the object of the preposition. “Those days” refers to the days of the prophets, from Moses to John the Baptist. That Jesus’ ministry overlaps slightly the ministry of John the Baptist perfectly explains this statement. Paul was not calling the first century the “last days” as some have wrongly supposed. (cf. Matt. 11:12-13; Luke 16:16).

² Paul reminded his readers of Jesus’ parable of the vineyard owner who sent his servants to collect the fruit, but they were beaten and abused (Matt. 21:33-41). Lastly He sent his own Son. Jesus’ parable was based on Isaiah’s prophecy of YHVH’s vineyard (Isa. 5).

³ The second Psalm describes the preeminence of the Son of God as the future King in Jerusalem (Mt. Zion), the Heir of all the nations and the whole earth which God appointed Him. Psalm 2:6-9 LXX*. “*But I was established as King by Him on His holy hill of Zion, declaring the Master’s decree: The Master said to Me, ‘You are My Son, today I have begotten You; Ask of Me, and I will give you the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession. You shall shepherd them with a rod of iron; You shall shatter them like a potter’s vessel.’*” This text forms the basis for the entire book of Hebrews, which constantly points to the hope of the co-inheritance for all who remain joined to the Son.

⁴ διὰ when taking a genitive case object as here means “through,” that is it refers to agency, another who is the agent of the God, who participated in the creation. John used the same terminology in the prologue of His Gospel (John 1:3,10). Paul did the same in Col. 1:16b.

⁵ The ages were fashioned through the Son according to the six days of creation, with the Kingdom of Christ being the seventh millennium, the Sabbath (see notes on Heb. 4:1-11, Heb. 11:1-3, & 2 Peter 3:1-12). Many translations incorrectly have “worlds.”

⁶ That is in His preincarnate state “in the form of God” (Phil. 2:6).

⁷ Christ is the one who carried Israel throughout her history. “*And the Messenger of His Presence saved them; In His love and in His pity He redeemed them; And He bore them and carried them all the days of old*” (Isa. 63:9); “*... in the wilderness where you saw how the LORD your God carried you, as a man carries his son, in all the way that you went until you came to this place*” (Deut. 1:30-31). See also Ex. 23:20-23 & Isa. 46:3-4.

⁸ The personal pronoun refers back to “God” in vs. 1, that is God’s power.

purging of our sins, took His seat at the right side of the Majesty in the highest,¹⁰ 4 having become¹¹ so much better than the [celestial] messengers since inheriting a much more excellent name¹² compared to them. 5 For to which of the messengers has He ever said, “*You are My Son, this day I have begotten You*”?¹³ And again, “*I will be to Him a Father, and He will be to Me a Son*”?¹⁴ 6 Yet, whenever He again¹⁵ should bring the first-produced¹⁶ into the world¹⁷ He says, “*And give worship to Him all the messengers of God.*”¹⁸ 7 And indeed unto the messengers He says: “*... the one making His messengers breaths, and His servants a blazing fire.*”¹⁹ 8 Yet unto the Son: “*Your throne, O God, is for the age of*

⁹ Of the Son Paul wrote: “*And He is before everyone, and everything has stood together in Him.*” (Col. 1:17).

¹⁰ Psalm 110:1-2 “*The LORD said to my Master, ‘Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.’ The LORD shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies!*” Christ’s being seated at the Father’s right hand is the prelude to His taking His place as King of kings, in fulfillment of Psalm 2.

¹¹ As related in chapter 2, Christ’s coming in the form of Man initially made Him “*lower than the messengers*” (cf. Phil. 2:5-8). But, by finishing the work on earth assigned to Him by His Father, He has become perfected as the “*Son,*” making Him the heir of the inheritance, far superior to the celestial messengers. This is demonstrated by His taking His seat at the Father’s right hand, a sign that the inheritance of the nations is assured to Him. (See also: Eph. 1:20-21; Phil. 2:5-8; 1 Pet. 3:22).

¹² The name is “*the Son of God,*” which entitles Him to the inheritance described in Psalm 2.

¹³ After having indirectly referred to Psalm 2 twice already (vss. 2 & 4), Paul quoted from verse 7 directly.

¹⁴ 1 Chron. 17:10-14 Christ is the heir of the Davidic Covenant, the promised Son of David who will sit upon the Throne of David and reign over David’s kingdom forever, (see also: Isa. 9:6-7; Luke 1:31-33).

¹⁵ This will be the second time the Father sends His Son into the world, the second coming of Christ. Consequently, the clause “*into the world*” applies equally to both the incarnation as well as the second coming. This verse proves the preexistence of Christ consistent with the many passages in John’s Gospel which claim that Jesus came down from heaven (ex. John 3:13,31; John 16:28). Some translations alter the sentence structure to make the adverb “*again*” modify the verb “*says*” rather than “*bring.*”

¹⁶ πρωτότοκος; Christ is the “*first-produced among many brothers*” (Rom. 8:29); the “*first-produced of all creation*” (Col. 1:15); and “*first-produced from among the dead*” (Col. 1:18; Rev. 1:5). Christians are called “*the congregation of first-produced ones*” (Heb. 12:23).

¹⁷ τὴν οἰκουμένην refers to the inhabited world.

¹⁸ Deut. 32:44 LXX* (the quoted clause does not appear in the Hebrew text). “*Be glad O skies together with Him! **And give worship to Him all the messengers of God!** Be glad, O gentiles with His people, and grow in strength in Him all you sons of God! For the blood of His sons He shall avenge, and He shall avenge and recompense punishment to the enemies, and to those despising Him He will repay. And the Master shall purge the Land for His people.*” The personal pronouns, Him, He, and His, all have as their antecedent the “*Rock*” mentioned in verses 4, 15, 18, 30, & 31. Paul wrote in 1 Cor. 10:4 that this “*Rock*” which carried Israel in the wilderness was Christ. Here Paul interpreted the closing verse of the Song of Moses as referring to the Father’s sending the Son into the world the second time, when He will “*purge the Land for His people.*” The Hebrew text says “*He will provide atonement for His land and His people.*” This is what was done symbolically every year on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, (Lev. 16:16-19). It is the day of Christ’s return, when He will cleanse the sins of the nation of Israel (Joel 3:21; Zech. 13:1; Rom. 11:25-27).

¹⁹ Psalm 104:4 The celestial messengers are mere “*servants,*” clearly inferior to the Son.

the age, and the scepter of Your Kingdom is the scepter of integrity. 9 You loved justice and hated lawlessness. Therefore God, Your God,²⁰ anointed You with the jubilation oil in the presence of your fellow²¹ [heirs].”²² 10 Also:²³ “You Master, in the beginning, established the land, and the skies are the work of Your hands.²⁴ 11 They shall wear out,²⁵ yet You remain constant. And all [these] shall decay as a garment. 12 And like a cape [thrown about the body] you will spin²⁶ them, and they will be changed.²⁷ Yet, You are the same, and Your years will not fail.”²⁸ 13 When has He ever said to any of the messengers, “Sit on my right side until I should place Your enemies under your feet”?²⁹ 14 Are they not all attendant breaths commissioned for those who are about³⁰ to inherit the deliverance?³¹

²⁰ Jesus is called “God” and the Father is His “God” (cf. John 20:17). The term Θεός simply means the ultimate authority.

²¹ Jesus will be anointed King by the Father in the presence of all of His co-heirs, (Daniel 7:9-28; Rom. 8:15-23).

²² Psalm 45:6-7

²³ Meaning also to the Son it was said. That is, the following Psalm refers also to the Son.

²⁴ The land and skies are the work of the Son’s hands, as in John 1:1-3 & Col. 1:15-18. See also Heb. 1:2.

²⁵ The Greek word can mean to “destroy” or “ruin.” Yet, the verb is in the middle voice, which means the heavenly bodies will self-ruin rather than being disturbed by God directly.

²⁶ to whirl, as a sling over the head. This may refer to the rotations and orbits of the planets.

²⁷ The “change” refers to the restoration of all things (Acts 3:21), which is why the restored creation is called “*new skies and new land*” in Isaiah 65:17 & 66:22. The earth remains forever (Psalm 104:5).

²⁸ Psalm 102:25-27, see also: Isaiah 51:3-6 which uses the same language regarding the earth wearing out, yet clearly states that Jerusalem will be restored at that time. Here, Paul applies Psalm 102 to Jesus Christ. The present system will decay and cease, but Christ will remain forever. In this Psalm, David compared his short years of reigning in his kingdom to Christ’s reign, which will continue forever.

²⁹ Psalm 110:1

³⁰ The Greek word “μελλω” refers to something that is impending, or about to take place (See also Heb. 9:11 & 10:1). Michael and his messengers have been commissioned to assist believers through the Great Tribulation into the eschatological Kingdom of Christ, (Psalm 91:11; Dan. 10:21; Dan. 12:1; Rev. 12:6-7,14). The story of Lot’s escape from Sodom, assisted by the two celestial messengers (Gen. 19:1-26), sets the backdrop for Jesus’ instructions to His disciples about the “*days of the Son of Man*,” and their escape to places of safety during the Great Tribulation (cf. Matt. 24:15-29 & Luke 17:22-37). His ominous warning, “*Remember Lot’s wife*” (Luke 17:32) makes this connection inescapable. (See also Isaiah 26:20 - 27:1)

³¹ “Deliverance” in Hebrews is always eschatological, referring to the deliverance from this evil age by the return of Christ, and the inheritance in His Kingdom, (cf. Heb. 2:10 & Heb. 9:28).

Chapter 2

Do not Neglect the Son's Teaching Reported by His Apostles

Because of this, it is especially crucial for us to heed what we have heard, so at that time³² we might not slip away. 2 For if the word spoken through messengers³³ proved steadfast, and every violation received a just punishment,³⁴ 3 how will we escape neglecting a deliverance of such magnitude? Originally [it] was taken hold of to be proclaimed through the Master,³⁵ and was confirmed to us by those hearing Him,³⁶ 4 God verifying [their testimony] with signs,³⁷ and with miracles, and with various mighty acts, and with distributions of holy Breath³⁸ according to His will.

The Creation is to be Ruled by Man in the Kingdom

5 For He does not subjugate to [His] messengers the impending territory which we are discussing.³⁹ 6 Yet somewhere one witnesses saying: *"What is man, that You are mindful of him, or the son of man that You are visiting him? 7 You made him a little bit below the messengers, You crowned him with glory and honor, and You appointed him over the works of Your hands."*⁴⁰ 8 *You placed everything under his feet.*⁴¹ For in subjecting everything to him, He left nothing outside [man's] dominion. Yet now we do not yet see everything having been subjected to him.⁴²

³² μηποτε – "at that time," at the end of the age when we are "about to inherit the deliverance," (Heb. 1:14). For a discussion of this Greek word see Appendix D.

³³ The Law was given to Moses in the company of celestial messengers (Deut. 33:2 LXX; Acts 7:53)

³⁴ God's judgments upon Israel as in the rebellion at Kadesh Barnea

³⁵ The eschatological "deliverance" was already known from the prophets, but "taken hold of" (fully expounded) by Jesus. He spoke more in His parables about the coming Kingdom than anything else, (Matt. 13 & Acts 1:3,6).

³⁶ Paul spoke of the other Apostles in the third person because he was not present to witness Jesus' teaching during His public ministry, (1 Cor. 15:8-9).

³⁷ Mark 16:15-20

³⁸ The supernatural gifts were distributed by God Himself through the hands of the Apostles (Acts 8:14-19).

³⁹ This statement makes it clear that the "deliverance" is the coming Kingdom of Messiah.

⁴⁰ Genesis 1:28

⁴¹ Psalm 8:4-6

⁴² God's command to Adam to take dominion over everything on the earth was thwarted when man sinned. It was therefore necessary to take care of the sin problem before man could assume his rightful place as ruler of the whole inhabited earth in the age to come.

The Son of God became Son of Man to Lead Many Sons to His Inheritance

9 But we see Jesus, *“crowned with glory and honor,”* having been *“made a little bit lower than the messengers”*⁴³ for the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God He might partake of death for every man. 10 For it was proper for Him, the supreme leader of their deliverance, (for whom everything is⁴⁴ and through whom everything is⁴⁵), to become perfected⁴⁶ through hardship, in leading many sons to glory.⁴⁷

The Necessity for the Son of God to become just a Man

11 For both the consecrating one and those being consecrated are all out of one man.⁴⁸ For this reason He is not ashamed to call them ‘brothers,’⁴⁹ 12 saying: *“I will proclaim Your name to My brothers, in the middle of the Assembly”*⁵⁰ I will sing hymns to You.”⁵¹ And again: *“I will have confidence in Him.”*⁵² And again: *“Look! I and the children God gave to Me.”*⁵³ 14 Then since the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He likewise partook of the same, so that through death He may vanquish the one having the domain of death,⁵⁴ who is the Devil, 15 and to release those who were prone to always live in slavery to the fear of death, 16 (for doubtless it does not take hold⁵⁵ of the messengers,⁵⁶

⁴³ The clauses, *“crowned with glory and honor”* and *“made a little bit lower than the messengers,”* point to Christ’s full humanity. See vs. 7.

⁴⁴ Jesus is the heir of all the nations, and the ends of the earth (Psalm 2:6-9; Psalm 110; Heb. 1:2,4)

⁴⁵ Jesus was the co-creator and guide of human history, (Heb. 1:1-2; Heb. 11:1-3).

⁴⁶ The Word made flesh had to become perfected as Man through overcoming temptation. This is why He was tempted of the Devil and endured the trial in the garden of Gethsemane, (Heb. 1:4; Heb. 5:7-9).

⁴⁷ Christ is leading “many sons” to the glory of the inheritance which belongs to Him in the age to come.

⁴⁸ The preposition “ek” means “out of,” and the adjective “one” is in the masculine gender, referring to one man – Adam. Having shown that Jesus was fully human, (*“a little bit lower than the messengers”* and *“crowned with glory and honor”*), Paul spoke of the common humanity shared by Christ and His brothers.

⁴⁹ See Rom. 8:29

⁵⁰ See Heb. 12:23

⁵¹ Psalm 22:22. After the psalmist described the sufferings of Christ in verses 1-21, He announced the glory to follow when all the redeemed are to be gathered to Christ in the “great assembly” in the Kingdom, (Heb. 12:23).

⁵² This is the closing line in Isaiah 8:16-17: *“Bind up the testimony, Seal the law among my disciples [the brothers]. And I will wait on the LORD, Who hides His face from the house of Jacob; And I will hope in Him.”*

⁵³ Isaiah 8:18

⁵⁴ Satan was a murderer from the beginning (John 8:44), provoking Cain to kill his brother. Satan does not cause death directly, but indirectly since He deceives mankind into sin which results in death.

⁵⁵ The confusion among translations concerns the verb, “επιλαμβάνεται,” which literally means “seize” or “take hold.” The NKJV; NIV; NASB et al rendering “give aid to” is highly unlikely because: (1) the verb is in the middle voice (implying seize to self); (2) the two nouns “messengers” and “seed” are not dative (implying “to”), but genitive (implying “of”). The KJV rendering, “took to himself the nature of” is also

but it does take hold of the seed of Abraham).⁵⁷ 17 For this cause He was obliged to become like His brothers in every way,⁵⁸ so that He could become a merciful and faithful High Priest in things toward God to atone for the sins of the people. 18 For in what He suffered, having been tempted, He is able to help those being tempted.⁵⁹

Chapter 3

The Son Compared to Moses

Therefore holy brothers, sharers of the invitation of celestial dominion,⁶⁰ consider Jesus the Anointed one, the Emissary and High Priest of our confession, 2 being faithful to the One who appointed Him as Moses also [was] in all His house. 3 For this One has been deemed more worthy than Moses by the same proportion a builder has value over the house [he builds].⁶¹ 4 For every house is built by someone, yet God has built everything.

We Must Remain Faithful to the Pristine Faith

5 And Moses was indeed faithful in all His household as a servant, as a witness of what would be spoken later. 6 But the Anointed one [was faithful] as a Son over His own

unlikely because the verb is a present indicative (present continuous action), not aorist indicative (past tense) as the KJV renders it. The verb requires a present and continuous seizing or taking hold of something. It is better to take "fear" as the antecedent for "it" (the subject of the verb), and correctly render the verb in the present tense. Being seized by fear of death is the sense, (see Luke 8:37 for a similar expression).

⁵⁶ God's celestial messengers do not have fear of death, because they have not been cut off from the source of perpetual life, as has man (See: Luke 20:35-36).

⁵⁷ Paul's point is that the celestial messengers do not live with the fear of death, because no sentence of death has been passed upon them. But humanity lives with the fear of death because all are condemned in Adam (Rom. 5:12-19; 1 Cor. 15:22).

⁵⁸ That in the incarnation Jesus became fully human, giving up His uniquely Divine attributes, was necessary so that He could fully experience the human condition, including being tempted to sin, and to experience death. Philippians 2:5-20 shows plainly that the Son "emptied Himself" of the "form of God" in order to become in the likeness of men. The Roman Catholic doctrine of "hypostatic union" (that Jesus continued to possess all of His divine attributes in the incarnation), is proven false. If Jesus was like us "in every way," since we do not inherently possess uniquely divine attributes, neither did Jesus in His incarnation. Jesus repeatedly stated that He was unable to do anything from His own power (John 5:19,30), but that the Father was doing the miracles through Him (John 14:10). See also John 3:2 & Acts 10:38. Thus the humanity of Christ was total, which necessarily excludes uniquely divine attributes.

⁵⁹ Heb. 4:15

⁶⁰ The Kingdom of God (See Appendix D)

⁶¹ Christ Himself was the builder of Moses' household, and therefore His glory far surpasses Moses's glory. That Christ delivered the Law to Moses as the "Messenger of the Master." (See: Exodus 3:1ff, Ex. 23:20-23; Acts 7:30,35,38; 1 Cor. 10:1-4,9).

house, of whose house we are if we clutch⁶² the confidence and rejoicing of the confirmed hope⁶³ unto the consummation,⁶⁴ 7 according to which⁶⁵ the holy Breath says: *“This day, if you hear His voice, 8 you should not harden your hearts as in the provocation, as in the day of testing in the wilderness 9 where your fathers tried me, they tested Me and saw My works. 10 Forty years I was disgusted with that generation. And I said, ‘They are always straying in their heart and they do not know my ways,’ 11 as I swore in My anger whether they shall enter into My Rest.”*⁶⁶⁶⁷ 12 Beware brothers, if at that time⁶⁸ a wicked heart of unbelief shall⁶⁹ be found in any of you, in apostatizing from the living God. 13 But encourage one another each day until⁷⁰ that [day] which is called ‘*This day*,’ so that none from among you may be hardened by the seduction of sin. 14 For we have become partakers of the Anointed⁷¹ if we should clutch the original confirmed foundation⁷² unto the consummation,⁷³ 15 when it is to be proclaimed:⁷⁴ *“This day, if you hear His voice, you should not harden your hearts as in the provocation.”* 16 For some having heard, provoked

⁶² To grip tightly

⁶³ The permanent land inheritance of the Abrahamic Covenant, taken hold of and proclaimed by Jesus Christ, and confirmed by the Apostles’ testimony (Heb. 2:3). It was further confirmed by supernatural signs of the Breath of God accompanying the Apostles (Heb. 2:4). And also confirmed by God’s oath to Abraham (Heb. 6:13-20).

⁶⁴ The end of the age (Matt. 10:22; Matt. 24:6,13,14; 1 Cor. 1:8; Rev. 2:26)

⁶⁵ Psalm 95 is a prophecy about the “consummation.”

⁶⁶ The word “Sabbath” in Hebrew means “rest.” The original “Sabbath day” on which God rested (Gen. 2:2-3) and the weekly Sabbath day the Jewish – Christian readers observed (Ex. 20:11) was symbolic of the ultimate eschatological “Rest” of Christ the Creator. God’s Rest is clearly defined in Isaiah 62 as the coming Kingdom, when Jerusalem will be restored. *“For Zion’s sake I will not hold My peace, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest, until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a lamp that burns. ... I have set watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem; They shall never hold their peace day or night. You who make mention of the LORD, do not keep silent, and give Him no rest till He establishes and till He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth. ... Indeed the LORD has proclaimed To the end of the world: “Say to the daughter of Zion, ‘Surely your salvation is coming; Behold, His reward is with Him, And His work before Him.’” And they shall call them The Holy People, The Redeemed of the LORD; And you shall be called Sought Out, a City Not Forsaken.”* This passage was referenced by Jesus in Rev. 22:12. See also Isaiah 40:10.

⁶⁷ at the “consummation,” when Psalm 95:7-11 will be proclaimed

⁶⁸ μήποτε – referring to the “consummation” to which “*this day ...*” refers (see Appendix D).

⁶⁹ future tense, referring again to the consummation.

⁷⁰ Most translations incorrectly render this, “*while it is called Today.*” (See note on Heb. 4:12).

⁷¹ sharers in the inheritance of the “Son” in Psalm 2.

⁷² τῆς ὑποστάσεως – lit. “what stands beneath” (the thing that supports). The whole clause, “the original confirmed foundation” refers back to Heb. 2:3-4, the original testimony of the Apostles to Jesus’ teaching, confirmed by the supernatural signs of the holy Breath.

⁷³ We must maintain the pristine Faith handed down by the Apostles until the coming of Christ. (vs. 6)

⁷⁴ The exhortation in Psalm 95, “*This day...*” is to be proclaimed at the consummation of the age.

[God], but not all who came out of Egypt by Moses. 17 Yet with whom was He disgusted forty years? Was it not the ones sinning, whose corpses fell in the wilderness? 18 And to whom did He swear would not enter His rest except those who were unconvinced? 19 And we see that they were unable to enter because of disbelief.

Chapter 4

Our Future 'Kadesh Barnea' at the end of the Sixth Millennium

We should fear then, if at that time⁷⁵ any of you might appear to have fallen short⁷⁶ of the remaining promise⁷⁷ to enter into His⁷⁸ Rest. 2 For we also have been told the good message as they were (but the message heard [by them] had no benefit, not having been mixed with faith in the hearers).⁷⁹ 3 For we – the ones who believed – are entering⁸⁰ the Rest, (just as He said: *“As I swore in My anger, whether they shall come into My Rest,”*)⁸¹ although the labors came about because of the casting down of the world.⁸² 4 For He has declared somewhere concerning the seventh [day]⁸³ thus: *“And God ceased in the seventh*

⁷⁵ μηποτε – “if at such time” refers to the future ‘Kadesh Barnea’ when the believer’s faith in God’s promise of the inheritance (Rest) will be put to the test in the time of great tribulation. See Appendix D.

⁷⁶ “have fallen short” – the verb is in the perfect tense (a past completed action with continuous results). The sense is that when the future trial of our faith comes, some might discover that they have already fallen short, unable to recover. Jesus’ parable of the wise and foolish virgins illustrates the same point graphically (Matt. 25:1-13).

⁷⁷ The “remaining promise” is the future fulfillment of the promise of entering His rest implied in the quotation of Psalm 95. (Psalm 37 shows that David had the same understanding).

⁷⁸ “His” refers to the Creator, whom Paul has already identified as Christ (Heb. 1:2; Heb. 2:10).

⁷⁹ The “good news” was preached to the Israelites at Kadesh Barnea by Joshua and Caleb, but they rejected it, (Num. 13:30; 14:6-9). *“And all the congregation said to stone them with stones.”* (Num. 14:10)

⁸⁰ Paul was still speaking from the perspective of the future Kadesh Barnea (the time of testing just before Christ’s Kingdom arrives) which he introduced in verse 1 with the words, “at such time.” This is why he used the present tense “we ... are entering,” and the aorist tense “the ones who believed,” just as in verse 1 he used the perfect tense “appear to have fallen short.” His verb tenses in verses 1-3 are from the perspective of the consummation of the age.

⁸¹ Psalm 95:11 LXX

⁸² The “casting down of the world” refers to the overthrow of God’s established order when Adam sinned. From that point, man must provide sustenance for his family “in toil” and “in the sweat of your face” (Gen 3:17-19). In the Kingdom, we will have “rest” from the labors of the curse (cf. Rom. 8:18-25).

⁸³ The future “Rest” (Messiah’s Kingdom inheritance) for believers is here called the “seventh day.” Paul said that God has spoken of the “seventh day” in both Genesis 2:2 and in the promised “Rest” of Psalm 95, which he has placed as our future hope. That the creation week is a prophecy of the end of the age is strongly implied by Isaiah also. *“I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end at the beginning.”* (Isa. 46:9-10*). Paul stated unmistakably that the Kingdom of the Messiah is the “Seventh Day.” Just as the weekly Sabbath is the seventh day of the week, a “Seventh Day” Kingdom necessitates six previous “days” also. There is no escaping the clear implication of six ages followed by the seventh Kingdom age.

day from all His works.”⁸⁴ 5 And thus again: “whether they shall come into My Rest.”⁸⁵ 6 Since then it remains for some to enter into it, and those to whom it was previously announced did not enter because of stubbornness, He specifies another set day – ‘This day.’ 7 After such a long time⁸⁶ He says in [the Psalm of] David, according as was previously proclaimed,⁸⁷ “This day if you hear His voice, you should not harden your hearts.”⁸⁸ 8 For if Joshua [had provided] them the Rest, He⁸⁹ would not have been speaking of another day after those. 9 Consequently, a Sabbatical⁹⁰ awaits the people of God. 10 For the one entering into His Rest, he has also ceased from his own labors⁹¹ just as God did from His. 11 Therefore, we should be diligent to enter into that Rest, so that none fall into the same pattern of stubbornness.

The Son as High Priest at the Father's Right Side

12 For Logos⁹² of God⁹³ is alive and active, sharper beyond any double-edged knife,⁹⁴ penetrating until⁹⁵ the distribution⁹⁶ of both life and breath, of both joints and sinews,⁹⁷

The only component of Ante Nicene Chiliasm that is not explicitly stated here is the length of each of the seven ages. Yet, this is implied in Psalm 90:4 & 2 Pet. 3:8, and plainly stated in Rev. 20 as a millennium. The obvious conclusion is that man will toil under the curse for 6 millennia, and the believing ones will inherit the 7th millennium. See Appendix A for the opinion of early Christian writers on the millennial week & Sabbath Rest.

⁸⁴ Gen. 2:2

⁸⁵ Psalm 95:11 LXX

⁸⁶ Such a long time after the rebellion in the wilderness David wrote this Psalm which placed the opportunity to realize God's Rest in the future.

⁸⁷ Joshua and Caleb (Num. 14:6-9) and Moses (Deut. 1:29) previously pleaded with the Israelites at Kadesh Barnea to trust God and go into the Land.

⁸⁸ Psalm 95:8 LXX

⁸⁹ God through David in Psalm 95

⁹⁰ A Sabbath to be kept (a Sabbath awaits). Paul has clearly called the Kingdom age the “Sabbath.”

⁹¹ When the faithful believer enters God's rest (the 7th Millennium, the “Sabbatical”), he has reached the end of his own labors, just like God did at the very end of His creation labor.

⁹² John 1:1,14; 1 Pet. 1:23; 1 John 2:14; Rev. 20:4

⁹³ “Logos of God” (ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ) is a name for Jesus, as proven by Rev. 19:13: “And His name is called Logos of God” (ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ). He is portrayed as having eyes and conscious perception, being “the one to whom we report,” who is the Judge of all the earth, who is keenly observing the assemblies (Rev. 2:2,9,13,19; Rev. 3:2,8,15; Rev. 5:6). “Logos” (Word) is His name, derived from His origin (John 1:1).

⁹⁴ μάχαιραν δίστομον, A large two-edged knife used for skinning, dissecting, or processing animals for food. Such knives would expose every interior part of the dissected animal. This was in contrast to ῥομφαία, a much longer sword used by soldiers or guards.

⁹⁵ The Greek word ἄχρι is wrongly translated “to” or “unto” in most versions, with reference to distance or extent. However, without exception, ἄχρι always refers to duration of time in the New Testament, never to distance or extent. It should always be translated “until” (cf. Heb. 3:13 & 6:11).

and is the Judge of inner sentiments and thoughts of the heart. 13 And nothing created is imperceptible in His sight, but everything is naked and exposed to the eyes⁹⁸ of Him, the one unto whom we report. 14 Having then a great High Priest who has passed through the skies – Jesus the Son of God⁹⁹ – we should cling to the Profession.¹⁰⁰ 15 For we do not have a High Priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in every way that we are, [yet] without sin. 16 Therefore, we may come with boldness to the throne of grace,¹⁰¹ so that we may receive mercy and grace for prompt assistance.

Chapter 5

Qualifications of a High Priest

For every high priest being taken from among men is appointed over men [in] the things of God, so that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins, 2 being able to be compassionate to the ignorant and straying ones, since he also is enclosed with frailty. 3 This is why he is obliged to offer [sacrifices] for sins accordingly for the people, and for himself. 4 And no one takes this honor for himself, but [only] the one being called by God, just as Aaron [was].

The Son is Qualified to be High Priest

5 Thus the Anointed one also did not glorify Himself to become High Priest. Instead, the one saying to Him: *“You are My Son, this day I have begotten You,”*¹⁰² 6 also

⁹⁶ The Greek word μερισμοῦ is wrongly translated “dividing asunder” (KJV) or “dividing/division” (NKJV, NASB, NIV). In Scripture, it always means “distribution” (deliver to each one his portion). The only other time it appears in the N.T. is Heb. 2:4 where it refers to the distribution of spiritual gifts. In the Septuagint it always refers to the distribution of the Land inheritance to the various tribes of Israel.

⁹⁷ Here Paul used a very colorful description of the resurrection. The entire clause, *“the distribution of both life and breath, of both joint and sinews,”* is a direct reference to the resurrection so vividly described in the *Valley of Dry Bones* prophecy in Ezekiel 37:1-14.

⁹⁸ The Lamb seated at the Father’s side has “seven eyes,” which represents “the seven Breaths of God” (Rev. 5:6 & Rev. 1:4). These “seven breaths” are also portrayed as “the seven lamps” before the throne of God (Rev. 4:5), one for each of the “seven lampstands” which were the seven assemblies in Asia Minor (Rev. 1:20). Revelation reveals that “the Breath” of God is the direct link between Christ (the head) and the Body (the local assembly). Jesus said that *“where two or three are gathered together in My Name, I am there in the midst of them”* (Matt. 18:20).

⁹⁹ Paul linked together the “High Priest” and “Kingly” roles of the ‘Son’ in Psalm 2 & Psalm 110.

¹⁰⁰ “The Profession” refers to the “rock” on which Christianity is founded, that Jesus is the Christ (the anointed King to sit upon David’s throne), the Son of God. (cf. Psalm 2 LXX & Matt. 16:13-18)

¹⁰¹ Where Christ is seated at the Father’s right hand awaiting His inheritance (Psalm 110:1 & Rev. 3:21).

¹⁰² Psalm 2:7

accordingly in another [Psalm] says: “*You are priest for the age*¹⁰³ according to the order of Melchizedek.”¹⁰⁴ 7 Who in the days of His flesh,¹⁰⁵ offering both requests and pleadings to the one able to save Him from death with strong outcries and tears, was heard out of fear. 8 And even being the Son, He learned obedience from the things He suffered.¹⁰⁶ 9 And having become perfected, He became the source of perpetual deliverance to all those who are obeying Him, 10 having been called by God, ‘Chief Priest’ “*according to the order of Melchizedek.*”¹⁰⁷

A Rebuke of Their Slothfulness

11 The message about him is abundant and difficult for us to expound,¹⁰⁸ since you have become lazy in hearing. 12 For by this time you ought to be teachers, yet you are in need of being taught again yourselves what are the original principles of the pronouncements of God. And you have become dependent on milk and not solid food.¹⁰⁹ 13 For everyone [still] partaking of milk is inexperienced in the word of justice, for he is a baby. 14 Yet, solid food is for the mature, those who have conditioned their senses through practice, having discernment toward what is just and what is worthless.

¹⁰³ “εις τον αιωνα” This can be rendered, “for the age,” “during the age,” or “unto the age.” It means throughout this present age (until the next). Paul quoted Psalm 110:4 from the LXX here and in Heb. 7:17 & 21, which uses the singular “for the age” (not forever as in most English translations). Each time Paul referred to the duration of the priesthood of Christ in Hebrews he repeated the same clause, “for the age,” (Heb. 6:20; 7:24; 7:28). However, when speaking of Christ’s role as King, Paul quoted the LXX in Heb. 1:8, “for the age of the age,” referring to the Millennial Sabbath Rest.

¹⁰⁴ Psalm 110:4

¹⁰⁵ “*In the days of His flesh*” implies a time when He was not in the flesh. The concept that the Son of God “became flesh” at a point in time was introduced in Heb. 2:9-18, “*having been ‘made a little bit lower than the messengers’ for the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God He might partake of death for every man. ... Then since the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He likewise partook of the same ... For this cause He was obliged to become like His brothers in every way.*” His preexistence is expounded further in chapter 7 as Paul shows that Melchizedek was in fact the Son of God.

¹⁰⁶ The suffering referred to here was Jesus’ anguish in the Garden of Gethsemane (Luke 22:44).

¹⁰⁷ Psalm 110:4

¹⁰⁸ Notice that Paul continually expounds Christ from the Greek Old Testament (LXX), particularly the Psalms.

¹⁰⁹ 1 Cor. 3:1-4

Chapter 6

Through this [solid food], leaving the message of the basics of the Anointed, we should be carried on¹¹⁰ to maturity, not tearing down¹¹¹ again the foundation of repentance from dead works, of belief on God, 2 of the teaching about immersions,¹¹² or the placing of hands,¹¹³ or the resurrection of the dead, and permanent¹¹⁴ condemnation. 3 And we will do this if God should permit.¹¹⁵

*The Fearful Permanence of Apostasy*¹¹⁶

4 For those having been illuminated¹¹⁷ once, and having partaken of the gift¹¹⁸ of the heavenly dominion,¹¹⁹ having become fellow-sharers of the holy Breath,¹²⁰ 5 and having partaken of the good proclamation of God¹²¹ and the powerful abilities¹²² of the

¹¹⁰ The passive voice implies the effort of others (spiritual leaders) as the cause of believers reaching completion (Heb. 13:7,17), with God's permission (v. 3).

¹¹¹ The Greek noun "καταβολη" and the verb form "καταβελω" literally mean to "throw down." Here it refers to tearing down the previously laid foundation in order to examine every detail and build it back differently from what the Apostles had already established.

¹¹² Teaching about "baptisms" (plural) refers to the distinction between John's baptism and Christian baptism. Both accompanied repentance and were for the remission of sins (cf. Luke 3:4; Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16). However, John's baptism did not convey the holy Breath, but Christian baptism does (cf. Mark 1:4-8; Acts 19:1-6; 1 Cor. 12:12-13)

¹¹³ The bestowing of spiritual gifts by the 12 Apostles (Acts 8:14-20; Acts 19:6; Rom. 1:10-11; 2 Tim. 1:6)

¹¹⁴ This term is often translated, "everlasting." Yet the sense is not that the action is ongoing forever, but that the result is permanent. (See Jude 1:7 where the same term is used of the fire that destroyed Sodom).

¹¹⁵ The book of Hebrews is "solid food" for the mature believer, preparing him to be a capable "teacher" of the things of Christ.

¹¹⁶ Clearly, this passage was intended to strike fear into the hearts of the brethren who might be tempted to abandon Christ, (as also in Heb. 2:3; Heb. 4:1; Heb. 10:27; Heb. 12:15-17). Yet, Hebrews also seeks to provide confidence and boldness for those pressing on in their faith (Heb. 4:14; Heb. 10:19-23).

¹¹⁷ Paul also used the term 'illuminated' as a metaphor for being reconciled to God in Heb. 10:32. The earliest Christians referred to baptism as 'illumination'. "Then they are brought by us where there is water, and are regenerated in the same manner in which we were ourselves regenerated. ... And this washing is called 'illumination,' because they who learn these things are illuminated in their understandings," (Justin, First Apology, LXI). The ancient Aramaic New Testament (Pishitta) reads: "But this is impossible for those who have once been baptized and have tasted of the gift from heaven and have received the Holy Spirit," (Lamsa Translation).

¹¹⁸ The remission of sins (Acts 2:38-39)

¹¹⁹ See Appendix D

¹²⁰ See: 1 Cor. 12:12-13

¹²¹ The Gospel

¹²² Spiritual gifts

impending age,¹²³ 6 and yet fall away,¹²⁴ are unable to be restored again¹²⁵ to repentance, crucifying again for themselves the Son of God,¹²⁶ making a mockery. 7 For land which absorbs the frequent showers upon it, providing crops adequate for those by whom it is being farmed, receives blessing from God. 8 Yet, [if] producing thorns and briars, it is castaway and soon devoted to destruction, whose destiny is burning.¹²⁷ 9 Yet, we have assumed¹²⁸ the better concerning you, beloved, as still possessing these things¹²⁹ of the deliverance,¹³⁰ even though we speak like this. 10 For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown towards His name, having served the saints and continuing to serve. 11 Yet we are longing for every one of you to demonstrate diligence towards the assurance of the hope until the consummation,¹³¹ 12 so that you may not become lazy, but imitators of those who through faith and endurance inherit the promises.¹³²

The Anchor of Our Soul is the Abrahamic Promise

13 For God, in promising Abraham,¹³³ since He had no one greater to swear by, swore by Himself¹³⁴ 14 saying, *“Surely, in blessing I will bless you, and in multiplying I will*

¹²³ Supernatural spiritual gifts are viewed as precursors and prototypes of the powers given to believers in the Kingdom. Jesus said essentially the same thing when He sent out His disciples to heal the sick and raise the dead, proclaiming, *“The Kingdom of God has come near to you,”* (Luke 10:9).

¹²⁴ Matt. 24:9-13; 2 Thess. 2:3-12

¹²⁵ “Restored again” to repentance requires a previous repentance.

¹²⁶ Heb. 10:29 also describes the apostate in similar terms.

¹²⁷ John 15:1-6; Heb. 10:26-27. The warning of the permanence of apostasy here seems to be within the context of the Great Tribulation. The end time “Kadesh Barnea,” introduced in chapters 3-4, is the focal point of the whole book, and is the future event for which Paul sought to prepare his readers. Therefore, the “fire” is the destruction of the wicked on Day of the Master (Isa. 66:15-18,24; Mal. 4:1-3). It is therefore conceivable that the permanence of this apostasy, with no room for repentance, is due to the finality of one’s spiritual state during the Great Tribulation when “repentance” is impossible (Rev. 22:11), after having taken the mark of the Beast (Rev. 14:6-11). Notice the similarity between this passage and the Wheat and Tares parable in Matthew 13, which also concerns the end of the age.

¹²⁸ A persuasion or supposition, not a fact (see also: Phil. 1:6)

¹²⁹ The things listed in verses 4-6

¹³⁰ As always in Hebrews, the “deliverance” is eschatological, dealing with “the impending age” (vs. 6).

¹³¹ See Heb. 3:6,14

¹³² The Abrahamic Covenant promises are for Christians (Rom. 4:13-16; Gal. 3:16, 26-29; Eph. 2:11-13)

¹³³ Gen. 22:15-18 is an oath confirming the earlier promises in Gen. 13:14-17 & Gen. 17:4-8. These promises include the permanent inheritance of the land, from the Nile to the Euphrates rivers, as an everlasting possession for Abraham and his “Seed.” In Gal. 3:16, Paul explained that the term “Seed” in all these promises is singular, and refers to Christ. (Unfortunately, many English translations have “descendants” {plural} in these passages in Genesis. But, they are always singular in both the Hebrew and the LXX.)

multiply you."¹³⁵ 15 And thus, through endurance,¹³⁶ he obtained the promise. 16 For indeed, men swear by something greater, and an oath for confirmation settles all disputes for them. 17 In this way God, being intent on showing to the inheritors of the promise¹³⁷ the irrevocability of His purpose, confirmed with an oath,¹³⁸ 18 so that by two irrevocable actions,¹³⁹ which God is unable to falsify, we – the fleeing ones¹⁴⁰ – might have powerful incentive to cling to the hope laying before us,¹⁴¹ 19 which we have as an anchor of the life, both secure and confirmed,¹⁴² entering into the chamber behind the veil,¹⁴³ 20 where Jesus the prototype¹⁴⁴ over us has entered, having become High Priest for the age according to the order of Melchizedek.

Then in Gal. 3:26-29, Paul wrote that all who are baptized into Christ are the children of Abraham and heirs of the promises of the Abrahamic Covenant. Here in Hebrews 6:13-20, Paul held up the hope of the permanent Land possession as our "anchor of the life," the thing that will assure our perseverance if we always keep this hope before us (see also: Heb. 11:10,13,39-40). Consequently, all theological systems which deny the future Land promise to Christians remove the "anchor of the life" as the incentive to press on to the inheritance. Instead, they substitute the Gnostic hope – ascending to the "seven heavens."

¹³⁴ Gen. 22:16

¹³⁵ Gen. 22:17-18

¹³⁶ The faith of Abraham was more than just mental assent. As explained in chapter 11, Abraham's "faith" was completed by his action (leaving his homeland & offering His son), and perseverance in hard times (living in the Promised Land in a tent as an alien, awaiting the fulfillment of the land promise).

¹³⁷ Christians are the inheritors of the promise to Abraham (see note on verse 13).

¹³⁸ The oath also included the permanent land inheritance (cf. Gen. 22:16-17; Gen. 26:3-5; Gen. 50:24; Psalm 105:8-11; Luke 1:68-75)

¹³⁹ The two irrevocable actions were the original promise confirmed by God's igniting Abraham's sacrifice (Gen. 15:7-21) and the oath God swore to Him when He offered his son, Isaac (Gen. 22:1-19).

¹⁴⁰ This is a direct reference to Jesus' instructions for His followers to flee from both the destruction of Jerusalem (AD70) and the Great Tribulation events, (Matt. 24:15-28; Luke 17:22-37; Luke 21:7-36; Rev. 12:3,13-17).

¹⁴¹ The oath God swore to Abraham, confirming His promise to give him a multitude of descendants and the permanent inheritance of the Land, was given for the benefit of "the fleeing ones." The hope of the Land inheritance is our destiny as co-heirs with the Son. This is also the "remaining promise" implied in Psalm 95, (quoted in Heb. 4:1), which is the "Rest" of the "seventh day" (Heb. 4:4) and the "Sabbatical" (Heb. 4:8). David also spoke extensively of this hope in Psalm 37, and Jesus quoted it in Matt. 5:5. See Appendix B for the opinion of the early Christians.

¹⁴² This hope was confirmed by the power of the holy Breath in the Apostolic ministry (Heb. 2:2-4).

¹⁴³ The Holy of Holies in heaven, explained further in Heb. 9

¹⁴⁴ This Greek word, προδρομος, appears only here in the NT. It appears twice in the LXX (Num. 13:20 & Isa. 28:4). In both it refers to early-sprouting fruit.

Chapter 7

A Closer Look at Melchizedek

For this 'Melchizedek,' king of Salem,¹⁴⁵ priest of God the Highest, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him, 2 to whom also Abraham apportioned a tenth of everything,¹⁴⁶ is indeed primarily translated "King of Justice."¹⁴⁷ After that [he is called] "King of Salem," which means 'King of Peace.' 3 [He is] without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life, yet having been portrayed as the Son of God,¹⁴⁸ He remains a priest¹⁴⁹ unto the materialization.¹⁵⁰ 4 Now you see the magnificence of this one, to whom the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of the booty. 5 And indeed, those of the sons of Levi who obtain the sacred office have instructions to receive tenths from the people according to the Law, from their own brothers who also come from the groin of Abraham. 6 Yet, [it was] someone apart from their genealogy to whom Abraham [gave] the tenth, who [then] blessed the one having the promises. 7 It is indisputable that the one who blesses is superior to the one who is blessed. 8 And here¹⁵¹ dying men receive tenths. But there¹⁵²

¹⁴⁵ Salem means "peace." "City of peace" is "Jeru-salem." Melchizedek was called King of Jerusalem before the city even existed. Both titles are prophetic and Messianic.

¹⁴⁶ Genesis 14:18-20

¹⁴⁷ A title of the Messiah (Isaiah 11:1-5)

¹⁴⁸ Moses portrayed Melchizedek as the Son of God in Genesis 14:18-20.

¹⁴⁹ Melchizedek remains a priest. Note the present tense.

¹⁵⁰ "εις το διηνεκες" literally means "unto the carry through." The word "διηνεκες" (carry-through) only appears 4 times in the New Testament, all occurring in Hebrews (Heb. 7:3, 10:1, 10:10; 10:14), always in the clause, "εις το διηνεκες" (unto the carry through), and always in the context of explaining Psalm 110 (which includes the promise of the present Melchizedek priesthood as Christ's temporary role until His coming Kingdom, when His enemies are placed under His feet. This clause (unto the materialization) always refers to the fulfillment of the Father's promises to His Son in that Psalm, His enemies being placed beneath His feet, and His receiving the nations and the ends of the land as His inheritance (Psalm 110:2-3,5-7 & Psalm 2:6-9). This meaning is clearly defined in Heb. 10:12-13. Paul wrote that Christ is seated at the Father's right hand, having received the Melchizedek Priesthood "unto the materialization (εις το διηνεκες), the remainder being received when His enemies should be placed under His feet." It is clear therefore, that this term refers specifically to the beginning of the Sabbath Rest, when the promises to the Son of His inheritance are to be fulfilled. The "priesthood" of Melchizedek is said to extend to this point (7:3), and so is the priesthood of Christ said to continue "εις το διηνεκες" (10:12).

This essentially means that Christ and Melchizedek are the same person, and His priestly function ends when His reigning over His enemies begins. This is why Jewish believers are now being prepared for the role of priests for the nations in the coming age (Heb. 9:14; 1 Peter 2:5), in fulfillment of Exodus 19:4-6.

¹⁵¹ The Law instructed the Levites to receive the tenth from their brothers (Deut. 14:22-29), and this was continuing at the Temple when Paul wrote Hebrews.

¹⁵² In Genesis 14:18-20

[it] is confirmed that He is alive!¹⁵³ 9 And, Levi, who receives the tenths, has given the tenth through Abraham, 10 because he was still in the patriarch's groin when Melchizedek met him! 11 If indeed, then, completion was through the Levitical priesthood, (for the people had been bound under law by it), why still the need for another priest to arise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not said to be according to the order of Aaron?

The Priesthood Superseded means the whole Law was Superseded

12 For the priesthood being superseded also requires that the Law be superseded. 13 For the one about whom these things are said was a member of a different tribe from which no one has attended the altar. 14 For it is obvious that our Master came forth from Judah, about which tribe Moses said nothing about the priesthood. 15 It is also abundantly obvious that if a different Priest stands up "*according to the order of Melchizedek,*" 16 who has not come according to the Law of a fleshly precept,¹⁵⁴ but according to power of a durable life,¹⁵⁵ 17 (for he attests, "*You are a priest unto the age according to the order of Melchizedek*"), 18 there is therefore indeed a cancellation of the previous ordinance because of its weakness and unprofitability. 19 For the Law brings no one to completion. But the introduction of a better hope does, through which we are approaching God.

The Superiority of the Melchizedek Priesthood

20 And indeed it was not apart from swearing an oath. 21 For indeed the priests have become [so] apart from the swearing of an oath. Yet this one [has become Priest] through the swearing of the oath to Him, "*The Master swore an oath, and will not reverse it, 'You are Priest unto the age, according to the order of Melchizedek'.*" 22 Accordingly, Jesus has become the guarantor of a much better covenant. 23 And there are many who have become priests, because death prevents them from continuing. 24 Yet this one, because

¹⁵³ Melchizedek was still alive when Paul wrote Hebrews. Melchizedek was a preincarnate appearance of Christ Himself, still being alive to this day. We are assured then, that Abraham met Christ face to face and paid Him the tenth. Christ, the King of Salem (Jerusalem), Priest of God the Highest, actually had the "communion" meal with Abraham (Gen. 14:18). Tithing directly to Christ therefore has precedent in Scripture, and establishes a pattern for all who are "*Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise*" (Gal. 3:29), who "*walk in the footsteps of the faith of our father Abraham*" (Rom. 4:12).

¹⁵⁴ A precept of the Law for men of flesh who die and must continually be replaced by successors.

¹⁵⁵ From Psalm 110:4, Paul inferred that the Melchizedek Priest needed no successors based on the clause, "unto the age" (for the whole age until the age to come).

He is to continue *“unto the age,”* has an untransferable priesthood. 25 From which [priestly office] He is able to complete the deliverance of those approaching God through Him, continually living to intercede over them. 26 For this kind of High Priest has been appropriate for us, blameless, innocent, pure, having been separate from sinners, having become superior to the heavenly beings.¹⁵⁶ 27 He has no daily necessity, (like the chief priests who first offer sacrifices for their own sin, and only afterward for the people). But He did this in totality, offering up Himself. 28 For the Law appoints as high priests men with imperfections. Yet, after the Law, the word of the sworn oath [appoints] the Son *“unto the age,”* having been perfected.¹⁵⁷

Chapter 8

The Son's High Priestly Function in Heaven

Now this is the primary thing being said: We have this kind of High Priest who is seated at the right side of the throne of the Majesty in the skies, 2 an officer of the holy things and of the true Tabernacle which the Master set up, not man. 3 For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices. Thus it was necessity for this one also to have something to offer.

The Better 'New' Covenant

4 For if indeed He was on earth, He would not be a priest, of the priests who offer sacrifices according to the Law. 5 Those [priests] perform service of the heavenly dominion¹⁵⁸ using symbol and similitude, according to what Moses was told when [he was] about to make the Tabernacle: *“For see,”* He says, *“you should do everything according to the model, the one shown to you in the mountain.”* 6 Yet now He has taken up a more excellent service, being administrator of a better covenant founded on better promises.¹⁵⁹ 7 For if the former [covenant] was unassailable, He never would have been seeking room for a second. 8 For blaming them, He says, *“‘Look! Days are coming,’ says the Master, ‘and I will complete a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, 9 not corresponding to the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, since they did not remain in My*

¹⁵⁶ Becoming superior to the celestial messengers (Heb. 1:3-4; Phil. 2:5-10)

¹⁵⁷ Heb. 2:10; Heb. 5:9

¹⁵⁸ God's dominion over Israel, including His rites performed by the priests, See Appendix C

¹⁵⁹ The New Covenant was inaugurated by Jesus Christ (Matt. 26:28; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25; 2 Cor. 3:6).

covenant, and I ignored them,¹⁶⁰ says the Master." 10 Because this is the covenant I will be covenanting with the house of Israel after these days,' the Master says, 'ingraining My laws¹⁶¹ into their thinking, and I will engrave them on their hearts.¹⁶² And I shall be God for them, and they shall be for Me a people. 11 And by no means should each [have to] instruct his neighbor or each his brother, saying "Get acquainted with the Master!" For all of them will have come to know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them.¹⁶³ 12 For I will be merciful to their wrongdoings, and their sins and their unlawful deeds I should by no means continue recalling."¹⁶⁴ 13 In saying "new," He has made the former obsolete.¹⁶⁵ And whatever is becoming obsolete and wearing out is close to disappearing.¹⁶⁶

Chapter 9

The Old Sanctuary and Priestly Service was an Allegory

Indeed then, the former [covenant] had ordinances of divine service, and also the earthly sanctuary. 2 For the front tabernacle was constructed, called 'the holy place,' containing the lamp-stand¹⁶⁷ and the table for displaying the loaves. 3 Yet after the second veil was a [rear] tabernacle called 'the holy of holies,' 4 having the golden censer, and the completely gold plated ark of the covenant, in which was the golden pot containing manna, the rod of Aaron that budded, and the [stone] tablets of the covenant. 5 Above it were glorious cherubim overshadowing the place of atonement, (about which no particular comment is to be made now). 6 And these things having been constructed like this, indeed the priests constantly¹⁶⁸ [enter] into the front tabernacle performing the divine service. 7 But only the high priest went into the second tabernacle, once a year,¹⁶⁹ never without blood, which he offered for himself and

¹⁶⁰ The LXX has "I ignored them," while the Hebrew has "I was a husband to them."

¹⁶¹ The LXX has "laws" (plural), while the Hebrew has "law" (singular).

¹⁶² See: Psalm 40:8; Ezek. 11:19; 2 Cor. 3:2-3

¹⁶³ The complete fulfillment of the New Covenant of Jeremiah's prophecy will only occur when national repentance takes place (Rom. 11:15-32).

¹⁶⁴ Jer. 31:31-34 quoted by Paul from the LXX

¹⁶⁵ Jeremiah's prophecy itself guarantees the obsolescence of the Mosaic covenant given at Mt. Sinai for those who embrace the New Covenant.

¹⁶⁶ 1 Kings 9:6-9; 2 Kings 23:27; 2 Chron. 7:19-22; Jer. 7:11-15 God promised to cast His own Temple out of His sight. He did this when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem, and He did it again in AD 70. This placed unbelieving Israel under the ultimate curse of the Mosaic Covenant, exile from the land.

¹⁶⁷ The seven branch menorah

¹⁶⁸ The priests entered this room daily throughout the year.

¹⁶⁹ On Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement.

the peoples' ignorant failures.¹⁷⁰ 8 Concerning this the holy Breath illustrates that the path of the holy things was not yet to have been made visible¹⁷¹ with the front tabernacle still having standing.¹⁷² 9 This was an allegory until the impending time. According to this both offerings and sacrifices are offered, yet being unable to complete according to conscience the one offering divine service, 10 [concerned] only with foods and drinks and various washing [rituals], and ordinances of the flesh being laid upon [us] until the time of thorough straightening.

The Superior Priesthood of Melchizedek

11 But the Anointed, High Priest of the impending good things,¹⁷³ having arrived through the greater and more complete tabernacle not hand-built, (that is not of this creation), 12 not even by the blood of goats and bulls,¹⁷⁴ but by His own blood He went once into the holy of holies, securing permanent redemption. 13 For if the blood of goats and bulls and ashes of a heifer, sprinkling those having been polluted, consecrates for purification of the flesh, 14 how much greater the blood of the Anointed, Who offered Himself flawless to God through the permanent Breath,¹⁷⁵ will¹⁷⁶ cleanse your conscience from dead acts¹⁷⁷ unto what is to be¹⁷⁸ divine service to the living God! 15

¹⁷⁰ The Greek word means to fail due to ignorance, misunderstanding, or inattentiveness.

¹⁷¹ The entrance of the high priest into the holy of holies (rear tabernacle) on Yom Kippur was obstructed from the people's view because of the front tabernacle.

¹⁷² The front tabernacle, called 'the holy place,' was temporary.

¹⁷³ The "impending good things" refers to the things of the Kingdom.

¹⁷⁴ The goats and bulls were offered once a year on Yom Kippur (Lev. 16).

¹⁷⁵ Many ancient manuscripts have "holy Breath" instead of "permanent Breath." Christ's entire human experience was empowered by the holy Breath, including His conception (Luke 1:35), His baptism (Luke 3:21), His temptation in the wilderness (Luke 4:1-2), His ministry and preaching (Isa. 11:2; Luke 4:16-20), and His miracles (Acts 10:38). The Breath of God may be called "permanent" here because it was with the Son continuously throughout His earthly life. Jesus had the Breath "without measure" (John 3:34).

¹⁷⁶ Paul placed the completion of their cleansing in the future, making them fit for a priestly function in Christ's Kingdom. This is the "completion" to which Paul instructed his Jewish readers to press on, (Heb. 6:1). The Law was inadequate to accomplish it (Heb. 7:19; Heb. 10:1). The "completion" of believers' deliverance is at the appearing of Christ's Kingdom (Heb. 12:23). Jesus Himself experienced the completion as "*the Supreme leader of their deliverance*" (Heb. 2:10). His achieving "completion" made Jesus Himself fit to function in the Melchizedek High Priestly role, (Heb. 5:5-10; Heb. 7:28). And it is the same process (which includes perseverance through suffering) that will make the adopted sons of God fit to carry out the function of the Melchizedek priesthood under Christ the King in the coming Kingdom. The "Order of Melchizedek" is not only one priest, but will become many. "*Blessed and holy is the one having a part in the first resurrection. Over these the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.*" (Rev. 20:6)

¹⁷⁷ The dead acts of service according to the Law of Moses, which became obsolete (Heb. 8:13)

And through this He is the Mediator of the New Covenant, thereby from death, [Himself] having become [the means] for release from the transgressions covered by the former covenant,¹⁷⁹ those having been called may receive the promise of the permanent inheritance.¹⁸⁰ 16 For whenever a covenant [was made], it was necessary to carry out the death of the covenant victim. 17 For a covenant is ratified upon dead victims,¹⁸¹ since it has no force at the time the covenant victim remains alive, 18 which is why the former covenant was not inaugurated without blood. 19 For every instruction under Moses having been spoken to all the people according to the Law, [and] having taken the blood of bulls and goats with water, scarlet wool, and hyssop, he sprinkled both the scroll itself and all the people 20 saying: *“This is the blood of the covenant God enjoins towards you.”*¹⁸² 21 And the tabernacle also, and all the instruments of the administration, he likewise sprinkled with blood. 22 And virtually everything is cleansed with blood according to the Law. And without bloodshed there is no deliverance. 23 It was indeed necessary then for the examples of things in the skies to be cleansed by these, yet the heavenly dominions¹⁸³ with better sacrifices than these. 24 For the Anointed one did not enter the holy of holies made by [human] hands, [which] represents the true [holy of holies], but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us, 25 not so that He may offer Himself repeatedly, like the high priest enters the holy of holies once a year with the blood of others, 26 (since that would have required Him to suffer repeatedly since the casting down of the world¹⁸⁴). Yet now,

¹⁷⁸ Paul here describes a future ‘priesthood’ in the coming Kingdom for believers whose deliverance has been completed. The future Millennial Priesthood is also referenced by Peter. *“And you also, as living stones, are a spiritual house being constructed, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”* (1 Peter 2:5*). At the end of the age, the 24 elders proclaim: *“You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals, because You were slain, and have redeemed some to God with Your blood from every tribe, and language, and people, and nation, and have made them to be kings and priests to our God. And they shall reign on the land,”* (Rev. 5:9-10*). The prophets also agree, (Isaiah 56:1-8; Isaiah 60:1-7; Jer. 33:14-22 Ezekiel 44:15-16; Zech. 14:21).

¹⁷⁹ Christ’s atonement retroactively cleansed all of the Old Testament saints by means of the New Covenant.

¹⁸⁰ The ‘age enduring inheritance’ is the Land promise of the Abrahamic Covenant. God promised the Land to Abraham and his ‘Seed’ (who is Christ – Gal. 3:16) *“unto an age-enduring inheritance”* (Gen. 17:8 LXX*). Cf. Psalm 37; Matt. 5:5; Rom. 4:13-16.

¹⁸¹ The slaying of an animal victim was always used to confirm the covenants. (See Gen. 15).

¹⁸² Exodus 24:8

¹⁸³ The “heavenly dominions” that are sprinkled and cleansed by the blood of Christ include believers on earth, as Heb. 10:22 shows. It is not merely the heavenly Temple that is cleansed, but all that is under the domain of heaven, including everything on earth that is in submission to Christ. See Appendix 3.

¹⁸⁴ This expression refers to the curse put upon creation due to Adam’s sin.

once, at the completion of the ages,¹⁸⁵ He has been manifest for the cancelling of sin by the sacrifice of Himself. 27 And since it is appointed for men to die once, and judgment afterward, 28 likewise the Anointed one also having been offered once, to carry the sins of the many, shall be seen a second [time] by those awaiting Him separated from sin¹⁸⁶ for the deliverance.¹⁸⁷

Chapter 10

The Law is Unable to Bring Israel to the Inheritance

For the Law, having a similitude of the impending good things,¹⁸⁸ but not the exact representation of the procedure, those same sacrifices which they are offering accordingly each year¹⁸⁹ are not able to complete the worshippers unto the materialization.¹⁹⁰ 2 Otherwise, would they not have ceased offering, because no one offering divine service, having been once cleansed, would still have conscience of sins? 3 But in them is a reminder of sins, according to each year.¹⁹¹

The Son's Physical Body as the Single Effective Offering for Sin

4 For the blood of bulls and goats is unable to remove sins. 5 This is why, coming into the world He says: "*Sacrifices and offerings You did not desire, but a body you fit to Me.* 6 In

¹⁸⁵ In chapter 4, Paul spoke of the Kingdom of Christ (Millennium) as the "seventh day" and "Sabbath," implying six previous "days" or millennial ages. In Heb. 1:2 & 11:3 he spoke of Christ's having organized the "ages" (plural). Paul was not indicating that Jesus Christ was crucified at the extreme end of all ages, because that would conflict with his other statements about Christ's second coming and the Kingdom age being future. Rather, he placed Jesus' crucifixion at a point in time when one millennial age ended and another began. In fact, Jesus' ministry and death was at the close of the first four millennial ages.

¹⁸⁶ 2 Cor. 11:2; Col. 1:21-23; Heb. 12:14; Rev. 7:13-17; Rev. 19:7-9

¹⁸⁷ Deliverance here is eschatological, as in Heb. 1:14 & Heb. 2:3-5

¹⁸⁸ The festivals of the Law pointed to the ordinances of the coming Kingdom. See: Col. 2:16-17.

¹⁸⁹ The repeated sacrifices of the Mosaic Law referenced in Hebrews refers to Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement), where the blood of a bull and a goat are sprinkled on the Ark of the Covenant by the high priest, (Lev. 16). This procedure will not be done anymore in Christ's Kingdom according to Jeremiah 3:16-17. However, Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles will be observed yearly, (Ezek. 45:18-25; Zech. 14:16-21)

¹⁹⁰ The clause, "εις το διηνεκες," (unto the materialization) is referencing Psalm 110:1-4 LXX*, "*The Master said to my Master, 'Sit on my right side until I should place Your enemies under your feet.' The Master shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies! ... The Master swore an oath, and will not reverse it, 'You are Priest unto the age, according to the order of Melchizedek.'*" This Psalm is about the delay in Christ's reign upon the earth with a rod of iron, during which time He waits at the Father's right hand and fulfills the role of Priest according to the order of Melchizedek. The "materialization" is when His priestly role ends and the promises of His Kingly role materialize (Psalm 2:6-9; Psalm 110).

¹⁹¹ Each year on the Day of Atonement

burnt offerings and [offerings] for sin, You have no pleasure. 7 Then I said, 'Look! I am coming! In the volume of the scroll it has been written about Me, the one to do Your will, O God!'"¹⁹² 8 At first saying, "Sacrifices and offerings" and "In burnt offerings and [offerings] for sin," "You did not desire" and "You have no pleasure," (which are offered according to the Law), 9 He then said, "Look! I am coming, ... the one to do Your will, O God!" He [thus] abolishes the first¹⁹³ so that He may establish the second,¹⁹⁴ 10 by which "will" we are [in a state of] having been set apart through the offering of the "body" of Jesus the Anointed once. 11 And indeed every high priest has repeatedly stood, according to the Day,¹⁹⁵ officiating and offering the same sacrifices many times, which are unable to remove¹⁹⁶ sins. 12 Yet He, offering one sacrifice over sins, seated Himself at the right side of God unto the materialization,¹⁹⁷ 13 the remainder being received when His enemies should be placed under His feet.¹⁹⁸ 14 For by one offering He has perfected unto the materialization the ones being set apart. 15 For after what was to have been proclaimed, 16 "This is the covenant I will be covenanting with the house of Israel after these days,' the Master says, 'ingraining My laws into their thinking, and I will engrave them on their hearts. ... 17 and their sins and their unlawful deeds I should by no means continue recalling,'"¹⁹⁹ 18 the holy Breath is also testifying to us – wherever there is remission from these, there is no longer offering over sin.

We All Have Access to the Holy of Holies through the Son

19 Therefore brothers, retaining boldness in the blood of Jesus unto the entrance of the holy of holies 20 which He inaugurated for us, a recently slain and living way through the veil, (that is, of His flesh),²⁰⁰ 21 and [having] a High Priest over the house of God, 22 we may approach with a true heart, in complete confidence²⁰¹ of faith, our hearts having

¹⁹² Psalm 40:6-8 LXX. The Hebrew text of this Psalm has been corrupted, substituting "You have opened my ears" in place of "but a body You have prepared for Me," as in the Septuagint.

¹⁹³ The entire Levitical priesthood and worship of God offered according to the Law

¹⁹⁴ The New Covenant (Heb. 8:5-13)

¹⁹⁵ According to the instructions regarding the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16)

¹⁹⁶ The Greek word means to remove from all around – from one's presence.

¹⁹⁷ "εις το διηνεκες" unto the materialization of the remaining promises in Psalm 110 dealing with His reign as King.

¹⁹⁸ The remainder of the promises in Psalm 110:2-7, and in Psalm 2:6-9

¹⁹⁹ Again quoting Jer. 31:31-34 LXX, as in Heb. 8:8-12

²⁰⁰ Paul was apparently drawing a parallel between Christ's broken body and the veil of the Temple that was torn from top to bottom at His crucifixion, signifying that access to God was through His death.

²⁰¹ See vs. 35

been sprinkled²⁰² from a wicked conscience, and the body having been bathed²⁰³ in pure water.²⁰⁴

The Real Danger of the Coming Apostasy

23 We should clutch the profession of the hope²⁰⁵ unrelaxed,²⁰⁶ for the one who promised²⁰⁷ is faithful. 24 And we should watch out for one another to stimulate love²⁰⁸ and virtuous deeds, 25 not according to the habit of some – abandoning the assembling together of themselves – but calling [them] back²⁰⁹ [to the assembly], and more urgently as you observe ‘the Day’²¹⁰ nearing. 26 For our²¹¹ determined continuance in sin, after acquiring the full knowledge²¹² of the truth, leaves no more sacrifice for sins, 27 but a fearful expectation of judgment and the raging of “fire” that is about to “devour the hostile ones.”²¹³ 28 Anyone casting off the Law of Moses dies without pity over two or three witnesses. 29 How much worse do you suppose will someone be deemed deserving of punishment who has trampled the Son of God, and has regarded the blood of the covenant in which he was set apart²¹⁴ like an unclean thing, and has outraged the

²⁰² Exodus 24:8; Heb. 9:19

²⁰³ Similar expressions referring to baptism are found in the following passages: 1 Cor. 6:11 LGV “*And such were some of you, but you bathed, but you were set apart, but you were justified, in the name of the Master Jesus and in the Breath of our God.*” Ephesians 5:26 LGV “*that He should set her apart, cleansing her with the bath of water in the proclamation.*” Titus 3:5 LGV “*Not from acts of righteousness we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the bath of rebirth and renovation of the holy Breath.*”

²⁰⁴ Exodus 29:4; Leviticus 8:6

²⁰⁵ The “profession” is the acknowledgment that Jesus is the “Christ” (the anointed King to sit upon the Throne of David, Ps. 2 & 110). The “hope” is that we will share in His inheritance (Ps. 2:12; Ps. 110:3).

²⁰⁶ The Greek word for “recline” or “lean” (against something) with the negative particle prefixed.

²⁰⁷ Psalm 2:6-9; Psalm 110:1

²⁰⁸ “Love” needs to be encouraged, or it will “grow cold” in the last days (Matt. 24:9-13).

²⁰⁹ It is critical for believers in the last days to be part of a local assembly, to encourage and strengthen one another for endurance.

²¹⁰ This term refers to ‘this Day’ repeatedly quoted from Psalm 95:7-11 in Heb. 3:6-4:10. It is the ‘Day’ when Christians will face a similar test to what Israel faced at Kadesh Barnea, whether they will enter the inheritance (the Seventh Day, Sabbath rest), or fall away.

²¹¹ ἡμῶν (of us) The first person plural pronoun includes the writer as well as the readers, as having acquired “the full knowledge of the truth.” It is therefore clear that Paul was referring to believers who fall away from the truth of the Gospel.

²¹² ἐπιγνώσις “full discernment, acknowledgement” (Strong’s #1922)

²¹³ Quoting from Isaiah 26:11 LXX, the judgment of fire on the Day of the Master (cf. Mal. 4:1-3 & notes on Heb. 6:4-8).

²¹⁴ There can be no question that the person described here was once a Christian, since he was previously set apart (sanctified) by the blood of the New Covenant. See also Heb. 6:4-8.

Breath of grace? 30 For we have observed²¹⁵ the one who said, “*Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, says the Master,*” and again, “*the Master shall judge His people.*”²¹⁶ 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.²¹⁷

Encouragement to Persevere in the Coming Great Tribulation

32 Now recollect the former days in which, having been illuminated,²¹⁸ you endured a great struggle of hardship, 33 indeed being defamed, and a spectacle in persecution, and having become sharers with those who endured this. 34 For you sympathized with my shackles,²¹⁹ and you accepted with joy the confiscation of your possessions, knowing within yourselves to have a better and permanent possession in the skies.²²⁰ 221 35 Therefore you should not throw away your confidence,²²² which has an enormous compensation. 36 For you have need of endurance, so that upon doing the will of God, you should obtain the promise.²²³ 37 For there remains “*a little season.*”²²⁴ The “*coming*

²¹⁵ Paul points them to the consistent pattern in the Old Testament of how God has dealt with His covenant people who turn away from Him.

²¹⁶ Deut. 32:35-36, from the Song of Moses, which describes Israel’s forsaking the Master (their “Rock” – who is Christ {1 Cor. 10:4}), and His subsequently rejecting them.

²¹⁷ This entire section is placed within the setting of the Great Tribulation. This can be seen in the quotation of Isaiah 26 in verse 27, and the eschatological framework of the closing verse in the Song of Moses quoted in verse 30, when God will “*purge the Land for His people*” (Deut. 32:43 LXX). Also, the verses following (36-39) mention the Great Tribulation and the coming of the Antichrist. Therefore, as in chapter 6, it seems likely that the apostasy mentioned here is the same apostasy Jesus warned about in the last days (Matt. 24:9-13), and Paul wrote would accompany the arrival of the Man of Sin (2 Thess. 2:3-12). This final apostasy will not permit repentance (Rev. 22:11). Taking the mark of the Beast seals one’s fate, (Rev. 14:9-12). This final apostasy is also mentioned in verse 38, quoting Habakkuk’s prophecy of the final apostasy.

²¹⁸ See note on Heb. 6:4

²¹⁹ This refers to Paul’s imprisonment at Caesarea, (cf. Acts 21:8-15 & Acts 24:23-27)

²²⁰ Christ is in heaven, seated at the Father’s side (Psalm 110:1). The inheritance belongs to Him (Psalm 2:6-9). And He will bring His reward with Him when He returns, administering the inheritance to the faithful. (Isaiah 40:10-11; Isaiah 62:11-12; Rev. 22:12).

²²¹ The Apostle Paul brings to mind the faithfulness of believers in the early years of Christianity as a model for how believers must persevere in the time of tribulation. Holding earthly things loosely, not being concerned with the loss of material possessions, but rather placing our hope in the impending inheritance that will arrive at Christ’s appearance, is critical to our survival. Jesus warned, “*Remember Lot’s wife,*” (Luke 17:32).

²²² The “confidence” flows from Christ’s sacrifice, and having our hearts sprinkled with His blood and our bodies washed in baptism, (vss. 19-21).

²²³ The “promise” is the permanent land inheritance promised to Abraham and his “Seed” (who is Christ – Gal. 3:16,18 quoting Gen. 17:8 LXX). Cf. Heb. 6:13-20; Heb. 9:15; Heb. 11:8,13,39-40

one will arrive, and will not stay long.”²²⁵ 38 Yet, “the just shall live²²⁶ by faith,” and, “If he should ever withdraw, my life is not well-pleased in him.”²²⁷ 39 Now we are not of the “withdrawal” unto damnation,²²⁸ but of “faith” unto acquisition of life.²²⁹

Chapter 11

Documented Examples of People Justified by Faith, Who Will Live

Now faith is the supporting structure²³⁰ of anticipation, the persuasion of unseen ventures, 2 for in this the elders were documented. 3 “By faith”²³¹ we recognize that the

²²⁴ The Greek clause, “μικρὸν ὄσον ὄσον” (a little season) is a direct quote from Isaiah 26:20 LXX, the only other place it occurs in Scripture. “Go, my people, enter into thy closets, shut thy door, hide thyself for **a little season** (μικρὸν ὄσον ὄσον) until the anger of the Master has passed away. For, behold, the Master is bringing wrath from his holy place upon the dwellers on the land: the land also shall disclose her blood, and shall not cover her slain. In that day God shall bring his holy and great and strong sword upon the dragon, even the serpent that flees, upon the dragon, the crooked serpent: he shall destroy the dragon.” (Isaiah 26:20–27:1 LXX). This prophecy concerns faithful Christians going into the place(s) of hiding for divine preservation during the great tribulation. (See Rev. 12).

²²⁵ This does not refer to the second coming of Christ, but the coming of the Antichrist. It is a quotation of Hab. 2:2-3 from the Septuagint, which reads as follows: “And the Master answered me and said, ‘Write the vision clearly on a tablet, so that the one reading these things may flee. For the vision is for a set time, and it will arise at the consummation, and not in vain. If he should be tardy, wait for him, because **the coming one will arrive, and will not stay long.**’” (Hab. 2:2-3 LXX*). The “coming one” in this context refers back to Hab. 1:5-11 LXX, a prophecy of the Antichrist and the abomination of desolation. Hab. 1:11 NKJV reads as follows: “Then his mind changes, and he transgresses; He commits offense, Ascribing this power to his god.” The Hebrew word rendered “transgresses” also means “to take away” (Strong’s #5674), and refers to the daily sacrifice, while the “offense” is the abomination of desolation, (see Daniel 12:11). Habakkuk was instructed to write down the vision for the benefit of believers in the last days, so that they may “flee” at the proper time (see previous note). The “coming one” is also described in Daniel 9:26-27, along with the abomination of desolation in the midst of the 70th week. Jesus placed the “fleeing” of His followers to the place(s) of safety at that time, (Matt. 24:15-28; Luke 17:22-37).

²²⁶ “Shall live” is future tense, referring to the resurrection (see: Isa. 26:19; Ezek. 37:5-6,14; Jn. 11:25; Rom. 6:8; 2 Cor. 13:4; Rev. 20:4).

²²⁷ These two quotes follow immediately after the mention of the coming of Antichrist in Hab. 2:3-4 LXX. “The just shall live by faith” refers specifically to how believers will survive the great tribulation and achieve the resurrection of the just. The words, “If he should ever withdraw, my life is not pleased with him,” (the Hebrew reads differently) refers to those who fall away in the apostasy, (Matt. 24:9-14; 2 Thess. 2:3).

²²⁸ The great apostasy which accompanies the revelation of Antichrist, (Matthew 24:9-14; 2 Thess. 2:3; 1 Tim. 4:1-2; 2 Tim. 4:3-4)

²²⁹ This clause explains what “the just shall live by faith” means. The word “just” refers to those who have been “justified.” In Gal. 3:11, Paul again quotes Hab. 2:4 LXX “the just shall live by faith” to prove that the Law cannot save. “But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for ‘the just shall live by faith.’” That is, the resurrection (shall live) is not obtained through the Law, but by faith. The “acquisition of the life” refers to the resurrection of the body described in Ezekiel 37:1-14.

ages²³² have been organized by the declaration of God, resulting in what is being observed not having transpired from what is apparent.²³³ 4 “By faith” Abel offered to God a greater sacrifice than Cain, through which he was documented to be just, when God testified over his offerings. Through this, having died, he still speaks.²³⁴ 5 “By faith” Enoch was transported²³⁵ to avoid seeing death,²³⁶ and was not being located²³⁷ because God transported him. For before his transporting he was documented to have fully pleased God.²³⁸ 6 (And without faith it is impossible to fully please [God], for the one approaching God must believe that He exists, and [that He] is becoming the benefactor of those who search for Him²³⁹). 7 “By faith” Noah, being apprised about what was as yet unknown, being apprehensive, constructed an ark for the saving of his household. Through this he condemned the world, and the heir²⁴⁰ became just according to faith.²⁴¹ 8 “By faith” Abraham, having been called, obeyed,²⁴² migrating to the place which he was expecting to receive as the inheritance.²⁴³ And he left not knowing where he was going.²⁴⁴ 9 “By faith” he lodged in the Land of promise as a foreigner, living in tents with

²³⁰ ὑπόστασις – what stands beneath.

²³¹ All of these “by faith” statements in this chapter are referencing the quote from Habakkuk, as in Heb. 10:38, “the just shall live by faith.”

²³² See Heb. 1:2. The creation account in Genesis is bound together with God’s ultimate purpose of redemption carried out through six days (ages). The solar system is a clock, counting down to the seventh-day Rest, (Heb. 4:1-10).

²³³ This verse deals with far more than just the creation of the material cosmos, but with God’s invisible hand directing the course of human history throughout the Millennial Week (See Heb. 4:1-11). This interpretation agrees with the “unseen ventures” in verse 1, and sets the tone for what follows, a sequential recounting of God’s interaction in human affairs to fulfill the land promise to Abraham and his Seed.

²³⁴ Abel’s still speaking is a reference to his righteous blood crying out from the ground to God for vengeance (Gen. 4:10). Abel is considered the father of all of the martyrs of all ages, for whom God will reward and enact His vengeance upon their murderers (Luke 11:48-51; 1 John 3:12; Rev. 6:9-11).

²³⁵ Enoch’s destination is not stated anywhere in Scripture. Some have suggested the Garden of Eden, where he may have continued to live out his remaining years by eating of the tree of life until just before the flood. In any case, he did not ascend to heaven, since Jesus is the only one to have done so (John 3:13).

²³⁶ Enoch was transported to spare his life. This does not mean he never died. Verse 13 says, “these all died according to faith,” including Enoch.

²³⁷ The imperfect tense of the verb suggests an extensive search over a period of time.

²³⁸ Genesis 5:22

²³⁹ Deut. 4:2-30; 1 Chron. 28:9; Jer. 29:13-14

²⁴⁰ Heir of the post-flood earth

²⁴¹ Gen. 6:8-9; Romans 4

²⁴² Acts 7:2-5

²⁴³ Genesis 13:14-18; 17:8

²⁴⁴ Genesis 12:1

Isaac and Jacob, the co-heirs of the same promise.²⁴⁵ 10 For he was waiting for the city having foundations,²⁴⁶ whose designer and fashioner is God.²⁴⁷ 11 “By faith” Sarah herself received power for the overthrowing of a seed,²⁴⁸ and with the appointed season of age, gave birth, since she deemed faithful the one promising,²⁴⁹ 12 though which also, even this of having become dead,²⁵⁰ were begotten from one [man] according as the constellations of heaven in multitude, and like sand beside the seashore, innumerable.²⁵¹ 13 These all died according to “faith,” not having received the promises, but observing them far ahead,²⁵² and being persuaded and embracing [them], also acknowledged that they were aliens and foreigners in the Land.²⁵³ 14 For those saying such things demonstrate that they are yearning for the [promised] homeland.²⁵⁴ 15 And indeed, if

²⁴⁵ Genesis 26:1-5; Genesis 28:13-14; Genesis 35:9-12 (See Appendix B)

²⁴⁶ Isaiah 54:11-12; Rev. 21:14,19. Restored Jerusalem is the “New Jerusalem” in Revelation. See vs. 16

²⁴⁷ Abraham had knowledge of ‘Jerusalem’ from the King of that city, Melchizedek – Christ (Heb. 7:1-3). The “blessing” Melchizedek pronounced over Abraham no doubt spoke of Jerusalem, reconstructed by God. This is the present city of Jerusalem after its restoration indicated in Isaiah 54. Paul directly quoted Isa. 54 in Gal. 4:27, calling this restored Jerusalem, “higher Jerusalem” and “the mother of us all.” In Heb. 12:23-24, Paul called Jerusalem, “Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem,” then immediately quoted from Isaiah 66:6-10 LXX*, “Rejoice, O Jerusalem, and all you that love her hold in her a **general assembly**: rejoice greatly with her, all that now mourn over her: that you may suck, and be satisfied with the breast of her consolation; that you may milk out, and delight yourselves with the influx of her glory. For thus says the Master, Behold, I turn toward them as a river of peace, and as a torrent bringing upon them in a flood the glory of the Gentiles: their children shall be borne upon the shoulders, and comforted on the knees. As if his mother should comfort one, so will I also comfort you; and you shall be comforted in Jerusalem.” It is clear, therefore, that the city which Abraham waited for was not some celestial city in heaven or on some other planet, but the city of Jerusalem restored, as Isaiah 54 proves by referring to her history of violence and shame (Isaiah 54:4,11). The word “heavenly” is an adjective describing quality, not a location.

²⁴⁸ The expression “the overthrowing of a seed” refers to the displacement of Ishmael from the Abrahamic Covenant by the supernatural birth of Isaac as the “seed of promise” (Gen. 17:18-21). That Ishmael was “overthrown” or “cast down” as the heir of promise is also shown by the fact that God referred to Isaac as Abraham’s “only-begotten son” (cf. vs. 17 & Gen. 22:2).

²⁴⁹ Sarah’s inclusion ought to encourage those whose faith may at times falter, since at first she laughed at God’s promise (Gen. 18:1-15).

²⁵⁰ Sarah’s womb was “dead” (Rom. 4:19).

²⁵¹ Sarah is the mother of all Christians (Rom. 9:6-10; Gal. 3:16,26-29; Gal. 4:31)

²⁵² This statement proves that the future inheritance for believers is the fulfillment of the Abrahamic Land promise.

²⁵³ The “promise” and “inheritance” so often repeated in Hebrews is here clearly defined as the Land God promised to Abraham as an age-enduring inheritance, which he did not receive during his lifetime (Acts 7:2-5), but he will inherit it at the resurrection of the just along with all of his “seed,” both Jew and Gentile. (cf. Heb. 6:13-19; Heb. 11:39-40)

²⁵⁴ This was in contrast to their present state, living all their lives in the very Land God promised to them as an age-enduring inheritance, as though they had no ownership rights. The “fatherland” they yearned for was the very land in which they lived as aliens.

they were meditating on [the land] they left behind, they had every opportunity to go back.²⁵⁵ 16 But now they crave the better [homeland], that is, under heavenly dominion.²⁵⁶ Because of this, God is not ashamed of them, to be called their God,²⁵⁷ for He has prepared a city for them.²⁵⁸ 17 “By faith” Abraham, being tested, has offered Isaac. And the one who welcomed the promises was sacrificing the only-begotten, 18 about whom it was said, “*In Isaac your seed shall be called,*”²⁵⁹ 19 considering that God was also able to raise the dead, from where, in allegory, he did recover him. 20 “By faith” Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning the impending [promises].²⁶⁰ 21 “By faith” Jacob, when dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and bowed over the end of his cane.²⁶¹ 22 “By faith” Joseph, when dying, remembered [the prophecy] about the exodus of the sons of Israel,²⁶² and gave instructions concerning his bones. 23 “By faith” Moses, being born, was hidden by his fathers for three months, because they saw that the boy was impressive, and they were not afraid of the decree of the king. 24 “By faith” Moses, becoming great, disavowed the title, “*son of Pharaoh’s daughter,*” 25 preferring to be mistreated with the people of God, rather than to have the temporary enjoyment of sin.

²⁵⁵ The Patriarchs are our example, not to meditate on the material things of this world we are leaving behind, but to be “yearning” for the fatherland God promised to Abraham and His seed.

²⁵⁶ The land God promised the patriarchs, where they lived as foreigners and aliens, was under the dominion of the Canaanites and other nations (Acts 7:2-5). They longed for the fulfillment of the promise, when it would be their permanent inheritance, under the dominion of heaven. See Appendix C

²⁵⁷ Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are figuratively portrayed as still being alive because of their having died in faith (vs. 13). This is why God repeatedly refers to Himself as “*The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*” as though they were still alive (Matt. 21:31-32). Paul explains how God reckoned Abraham’s faith, “*in the presence of Him whom he believed — **God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did,** who, contrary to hope, in hope believed...*” (Rom. 4:17-18).

²⁵⁸ Jerusalem (Zion) restored by God, as described in Isaiah 54: “*Afflicted and outcast thou has not been comforted: behold, I will prepare carbuncle for thy stones, and sapphire for thy foundations; and I will make thy buttresses jasper, and thy gates crystal, and thy border precious stones. And I will cause all thy sons to be taught of God, and thy children to be in great peace. And thou shalt be built in righteousness: abstain from injustice, and thou shalt not fear; and trembling shall not come nigh thee. Behold, strangers shall come to thee by me, and shall sojourn with thee, and shall run to thee for refuge.*” (Isa. 54:11-15 LXX). See also Isaiah 66:10-24 & Heb. 11:10

²⁵⁹ Genesis 21:12; Romans 9:7

²⁶⁰ The term rendered “impending” (as a present participle) in Hebrews has in view what is yet to be fulfilled from the writer’s perspective (unless otherwise qualified). In Genesis 28:1-4, Isaac blessed Jacob, passing on the blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant, including the Land promise, but denied Esau. Thus, this passage puts the fulfillment of the Land inheritance in the future from the writer’s perspective. (cf. Heb. 1:14; Heb. 2:5; Heb. 6:5; Heb. 9:11; Heb. 10:1; Heb. 10:27; Heb. 13:14).

²⁶¹ Genesis 49:1,10,18 – a “last days” prophecy

²⁶² Genesis 15:13-16 LXX

26 He considered the disparagement of the Anointed one²⁶³ to be greater riches than the wealth in Egypt, because he was forward looking unto the reward. 27 *“By faith”* he left Egypt, not fearing the anger of the king. For he persevered as though seeing the Invisible One.²⁶⁴ 28 *“By faith”* he has appointed the Passover and the application of blood [to the doorposts], so that the executing of the first-produced²⁶⁵ [sons] would not affect them. 29 *“By faith”* they walked through the Red Sea, as though dry land. The Egyptians, attempting the same, were swallowed up. 30 *“By faith”* the walls of Jericho fell, being circumnavigated for seven days. 31 *“By faith”* Rahab the prostitute did not perish with the unconvinced, receiving the spies with peace. 32 And what more should I say? For time will fail me retelling about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephtha, David, and Samuel and the prophets, 33 who *“by faith”* overthrew kingdoms, delivered justice, received promises, sealed the mouths of lions, 34 quenched the power of fire, escaped gashes of the sword, were made strong from weakness, became invincible in battle, laying waste to the enemies’ camps. 35 Women received their dead through resurrection. Yet others refused relief when beaten so that they might achieve the better resurrection. 36 Still others received a trial of ridicule and whipping, and then shackles and imprisonment. 37 They were stoned, dismembered, scrutinized, [and] murdered with the sword. They roamed in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, enduring tribulation, being mistreated. 38 The world has not been worthy of these – living in remote and desolate places, in the mountains, in the caves, and in the crevices of the Land.²⁶⁶ 39 Yet all these, documented [to have been] *“by faith,”* did not attain the promise, 40 God having provided in advance that better thing²⁶⁷ for us, so that they would not be made complete without us.²⁶⁸

Chapter 12

Endure the Great Tribulation “By Faith”

Certainly we also, since having so many documented examples surrounding us, tossing aside every excess load and plaguing sin, should run with endurance the grueling

²⁶³ Moses had knowledge of the Christ.

²⁶⁴ John 1:18; John 5:37; John 6:46; Col. 1:15; 1 Tim. 1:17; 1 Tim. 6:16; 1 John 4:12,20

²⁶⁵ Num. 3:13; Heb. 12:23

²⁶⁶ The faithful remnant of Israel has lived just like Abraham, as a foreigner in the Promised Land.

²⁶⁷ Verse 16. The same permanent homeland and city for which Abraham craved is to be our inheritance also.

²⁶⁸ See Psalm 37

course²⁶⁹ lying ahead of us,²⁷⁰ 2 looking unto the originator and finisher of the Faith – Jesus. Who, instead of [choosing] the calm delight lying ahead of Him,²⁷¹ [He] endured the cross, ignoring the disgrace, and is now seated on the right of the throne of God. 3 For consider the one having endured such heckling by sinners, so that you may not be exhausted, despairing in your lives.

Suffering is a Necessary Discipline

4 You have not yet withstood unto blood, contending against sin. 5 And you have been oblivious to the summons which addresses you as sons, *“My son, do not loathe of the discipline of the Master, nor despair when being rebuked by Him. 6 For whom the Master loves He disciplines, and He whips every son whom He receives close.”*²⁷² 7 If you endure discipline, God is bringing it to you as ‘sons.’ For what son does a father not discipline? 8 Yet, if you are apart from discipline, of which all [sons] have become sharers, then you are illegitimate, and not sons. 9 Furthermore, we have had authoritarian fathers of our flesh and we respected [them]. Shall we not much rather submit to the Father of the winds²⁷³ and live?²⁷⁴ 10 For indeed they were disciplining [us] for a few days according to their judgment. But, He [disciplines] for our excellence, to partake of His holiness. 11 Now all discipline, for the present, does not seem to be pleasant, but agonizing. Yet it produces the tranquil fruit of justice in those who have been trained by it.

²⁶⁹ The Greek word rendered “grueling course” (αγωνα – ag-O-na) is the source of our English word, “agony.” Paul used it as a metaphor for intense tribulation and persecution in Phil. 1:29-30 & 1 Thess. 2:2. Here it refers to the Great Tribulation, mentioned in Heb. 10:37-39, which will be for “a little season,” when “the coming one [Antichrist] will arrive and not stay long.”

²⁷⁰ In Heb. 10:37-39, Paul reminded his readers of the impending “little season” of tribulation prophesied by Isaiah, and the impending arrival of “the coming one” (Antichrist), concluding that “the just shall live by faith” during this time of trial. After providing a long list of examples of how the just live by faith, he now turns his attention back to the great tribulation, “the grueling course lying ahead of us,” and the endurance necessary to safely navigate it.

²⁷¹ Phil. 2:5-8

²⁷² Proverbs 3:11-12

²⁷³ The Father of the four winds refers to the *Valley of Dry Bones* prophecy of Ezekiel. “And he said to me, *Prophesy to the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Master; Come from the four winds, and breathe upon these dead men, and let them live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath entered into them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet, a very great congregation*” (Ezek. 37:9-10).

²⁷⁴ This is a reference to the resurrection. (See notes on Heb. 4:12).

Desired Reaction to Discipline – Reform

12 Therefore, “*Straighten the hands which have become limp, and the knees which have become weak.*”²⁷⁵ 13 Make level paths for your feet, so that the faltering may not turn aside, but rather be recovered. 14 Pursue peace with everyone, and purity, without which no one will see the Master.

Undesired Reaction to Discipline – Anger and Apostasy

15 Watch over [each other], that no one exhausts the grace of God, that no growing “*root of bitterness*”²⁷⁶ may encroach (and many may be contaminated by this), 16 that no one is a fornicator or a vile person like Esau who gave away his birthright for one meal. 17 For you have seen that afterward, desiring to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no room for repentance, even seeking it with tears!²⁷⁷

Our Hope, the Universal Assembly in Restored Jerusalem

18 For you have not approached toward the mountain²⁷⁸ that could be touched, which has been burnt²⁷⁹ with fire, toward the blackness and gloominess and storm, 19 and the blaring of a trumpet, and the commanding voice, (which when hearing, they recoiled, [asking] that no more be spoken to them, 20 because they were unable to endure the admonishing). Even if an animal would touch the mountain, it must be stoned or shot with an arrow. 21 And the spectacle was so frightening that Moses said, “*I am terrified*

²⁷⁵ Paul quoted Isaiah as an exhortation to endurance in light of Christ’s Kingdom which is about to appear. “*Strengthen the weak hands, And make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are fearful-hearted, ‘Be strong, do not fear! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, With the recompense of God; He will come and save you.’ ... And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, And come to Zion with singing, With everlasting joy on their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, And sorrow and sighing shall flee away.*” (Isaiah 35:3-4,10 NKJV)

²⁷⁶ Here Paul quoted a severe warning about the dire consequences of apostasy. “*So that there may not be among you man or woman or family or tribe, whose heart turns away today from the LORD our God, ... and that there may not be among you a root bearing bitterness or wormwood; and so it may not happen, when he hears the words of this curse, that he blesses himself in his heart, saying, ‘I shall have peace, even though I follow the dictates of my heart’ ... The LORD would not spare him; for then the anger of the LORD and His jealousy would burn against that man, ... and the LORD would blot out his name from under heaven,*” (Deut. 29:18-20 NKJV) This is a severe warning for those who think they can abuse God’s grace and still have an inheritance in Christ’s Kingdom.

²⁷⁷ Genesis 27:34-38

²⁷⁸ Mount Sinai, Exodus 19

²⁷⁹ The perfect tense implies that the results of this burning of Mt Sinai could still be seen in Paul’s day.

and shaking."²⁸⁰ 22 But you have approached toward Mount Zion, the city of the living God,²⁸¹ Jerusalem of heavenly dominion,²⁸² and tens of thousands of messengers,²⁸³ 23 toward the universal congregation²⁸⁴ and assembly²⁸⁵ of first-produced ones²⁸⁶ having been preregistered in the skies,²⁸⁷ and toward God the Judge of all, and toward the breaths²⁸⁸ of the just ones who have been perfected, 24 and toward Jesus, the administrator of the New Covenant and the blood of sprinkling that says better things than Abel.²⁸⁹

²⁸⁰ Paul used the frightening scene on Mount Sinai to represent the whole Mosaic system, which demanded service to God out of fear, the system that had been done away with by the coming of the New Covenant (Heb. 8).

²⁸¹ Mt Zion, the city of God, is always Jerusalem (Psalm 48)

²⁸² Isaiah 65:17-25; 66:10-18, restored Jerusalem under heavenly dominion, see Appendix C

²⁸³ These messengers are the 144,000 Jews of Rev. 7 whom God will deliver from harm in the Great Tribulation by means of the seal of God in their foreheads. They are described in the same passage from which all these other terms were drawn – Isaiah 65-66. *"And I will leave upon them a seal, and I will send the ones who have been delivered ... unto those who have not heard my name, nor seen my glory; and they will proclaim my glory among the nations."* (Isaiah 66:19-20 LXX)

²⁸⁴ *πανηγυρει* – this word only appears twice in the Bible, here and in Isaiah 66:10 LXX. By quoting this unique term, Paul intended to import the whole context into the minds of the reader. *"Rejoice, O Jerusalem! And all who love her, hold in her the universal assembly. Rejoice greatly with her, all who mourn over her: that you may nurse and be satisfied with the breast of her consoling; that you may be weaned, and delight yourselves with the influx of her glory. For the Master says this: 'Behold, I turn toward them as a river of peace, and as a torrent bringing upon them in a flood the glory of the Gentiles. Their children shall be carried on their shoulders, and comforted on their knees. Like a mother comforts, so I will also comfort you. And you shall be comforted in Jerusalem'."* (Isaiah 66:10-12 LXX*).

²⁸⁵ See Heb. 2:12

²⁸⁶ The Son of God was *"first-produced of all creation"* (Col. 1:15), whom God sent into the world once (and will again {Heb. 1:6}), being *"obliged to become like His brothers in every way"* (Heb. 2:17), so that He might become *"the first-produced among many brothers"* (Rom. 8:29). God killed all the *"first-produced"* in the land of Egypt, but spared all of the *"first-produced"* of the sons of Israel who remained inside the house marked with the blood of the lamb (Heb. 11:28). Therefore, all of the *"first-produced ones"* of Israel, both man and clean beast, God claimed as His own (Num. 3:13). The *"first-produced ones"* here refers to all who have been joined to *"the only-begotten Son of God"* (John 3:18), the *"first-produced of all creation"* (Col. 1:15). These are now the *"first-produced ones"* who are the co-heirs with Christ of His inheritance (Psalm 2), the restored creation, (Rom. 8:17-25).

²⁸⁷ In the Book of Life (Luke 10:20)

²⁸⁸ See notes on Heb. 4:12 & 12:9.

²⁸⁹ Heb. 11:4

A Final Warning of the Coming Great Tribulation

25 Beware! You should not reject the one speaking. For if they did not escape, refusing the one speaking on land,²⁹⁰ much more we [will not escape – that is] those who turn away from the one [speaking] from the skies.²⁹¹ 26 Whose voice then shook the ground. But now He has promised, saying: “*Yet once more I am shaking, not only the ground, but also the heaven.*”²⁹² 27 Yet this [statement], “*Yet once more...*,” reveals the replacing²⁹³ of what is being shaken²⁹⁴ (as those which have been constructed²⁹⁵) so that the unshakable thing should remain.²⁹⁶

The Glorious Kingdom Inheritance

28 Through this²⁹⁷ unshakable Kingdom which we are receiving,²⁹⁸ we may possess grace through which we may offer divine service²⁹⁹ pleasing to God with reverence and fear. 30 For our God is a consuming fire.³⁰⁰

²⁹⁰ The voice speaking from Mount Sinai

²⁹¹ Matt. 3:17; Matt. 17:5; John 12:27-30

²⁹² It is unfortunate that virtually all commentators completely ignore the contexts of the Old Testament prophecies quoted in Hebrews. A survey of the popular commentaries demonstrates a heavy amillennial and/or dispensational bias imposed on Hebrews, and this passage is no exception. Most refer to this “shaking” as the complete destruction of this material creation, followed by an abode in heaven. Yet, the prophecy quoted here speaks of the restoration of the Temple in Jerusalem, which was under construction when this prophecy was given. “*For thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘Once more (it is a little while) I will shake heaven and earth, the sea and dry land; and I will shake all nations, and they shall come to the Desire of All Nations, and I will fill **this temple** with glory,’ says the LORD of hosts. ‘The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine,’ says the LORD of hosts. ‘**The glory of this latter temple shall be greater than the former,**’ says the LORD of hosts. ‘**And in this place I will give peace,**’ says the LORD of hosts.” (Hag 2:6-9 NKJV).*

²⁹³ The transferring of a thing or state (cf. Heb. 7:12 & 11:5)

²⁹⁴ “*What is being shaken*” refers to the Temples and Levitical Priesthood of the Mosaic Covenant.

²⁹⁵ This is a reference to the various Temples constructed for use by the Levitical priesthood – the Tabernacle, Solomon’s Temple, and the Second Temple. The clause, “*those which have been constructed,*” is masculine in gender (in contrast to “*created things*” which would be neuter in gender) - Hag. 1:14 LXX.

²⁹⁶ The new Temple in Jerusalem will be grander than Solomon’s Temple (Hag. 2:6-9). Jesus alluded to this Temple also, quoting Isaiah 56:7 in Mark 11:17. This is also “*My Father’s House*” in John 14:1-3, containing the many chambers for the priests in Christ’s Kingdom (cf. 1 Kings 6:5,10; 1 Chron. 9:24-34; 1 Chron. 28:11-13; Ezekiel 40:44-46; Ezekiel 41:5-11; Ezekiel 44:15-19; Ezekiel 45:1-5).

²⁹⁷ The word “*this*” must refer back to Haggai’s prophecy of the greater Kingdom & Temple.

²⁹⁸ The Greek language frequently uses the present tense for the future when stressing the certainty of an anticipated event, such as the second coming of Christ in Rev. 3:11; Rev. 22:7,12,20. (See Wallace, GGBB, p. 536)

²⁹⁹ In the Kingdom, the Priesthood will consist of Christians (Col. 2:16-17; 1 Pet. 2:4-5; Rev. 20:6)

³⁰⁰ Deut. 4:24

Chapter 13

Final Exhortations for Last Days Pilgrims

Retain brotherly love. 2 Do not forget hospitality, for by this some have lodged messengers³⁰¹ without realizing it. 3 Remember those who are bound, as being bound with them; of those abused, as also being [abused] in body. 4 Marriage is honorable in every way, and the bed is pure. But God will judge fornicators and adulterers.³⁰² 5 Your manner [should] not be fondness for silver,³⁰³ [but] being content with what you have. For He has said, *“I will certainly not ignore you or abandon you.”*³⁰⁴ 6 Therefore, we have the courage to say, *“The Master is my helper, and I will not fear! What can anyone do to me?”*³⁰⁵ 7 Be mindful of your leaders, those who speak the word of God to you, carefully watching the end result of their behavior. Imitate their faith. 8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and unto the ages. 9 [So] do not be carried aside by various and foreign teachings. For it is best to stabilize the heart with grace, not with kosher foods, by which those observing were not benefitted.

Temporary Priestly Service While We Await the Permanent City

10 We have an altar from which those serving the tabernacle have no right to eat. 11 For blood of animals is carried by the high priest into the holy of holies for sins, and their bodies are burned *“outside the camp.”*³⁰⁶ 12 Through this [allegory] Jesus also suffered outside the gate so that He may cleanse the people with His own blood. 13 Now then, we should go out toward Him *“outside the camp,”*³⁰⁷ carrying His ridicule. 14 For we do

³⁰¹ Heb. 1:14 indicated that celestial messengers were commissioned to assist believers on the threshold of the inheritance (Great Tribulation). Lodging celestial messengers without realizing will become more common in the last days.

³⁰² Rev. 2:18-29

³⁰³ Exodus 16:16-20; James 5:1-6

³⁰⁴ Joshua 1:5 LXX: *“I will certainly not ignore you or abandon you.”* It is significant that this quotation immediately follows the forbidding of greed because it was the greed of Achan which caused God’s presence to leave Israel. God explained to Joshua, *“Israel has sinned, ... Neither will I be with you anymore, unless you destroy the accursed from among you”* (Josh. 7:11-12). It is apparent that the original promise was conditional. (See Deut. 28). We should not expect Paul or his readers to understand it as unconditional here. God will never initiate a separation. However, if we depart from Him He will depart from us, (1 Chron. 28:9; 2 Chron. 15:2; Ezra 8:22; 2 Tim. 2:12-13).

³⁰⁵ Psalm 118:6 LXX

³⁰⁶ Exod. 29:14

³⁰⁷ The *“Tent of Meeting”* was set up by Moses *“outside the camp.”* And *“everyone who sought the LORD went out to the tabernacle of meeting which was outside the camp.”* There the Messenger of the LORD descended in

not possess a permanent city now, but we yearn for the impending one.³⁰⁸ 15 Even so, through Him we may continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God which is the fruit of our lips, acknowledging His name. 16 And do not forget benevolence and contributions, for with these sacrifices God is well pleased. 17 Heed your leaders, and submit to them. For they stay alert, watching over your lives as someone who must give an accounting, so that they may do this with joy and not with sighing, for that has no advantage for you.

Personal Remarks

18 Pray for us! For we have been confident of a good conscience, being willingly well behaved in everything. 19 Yet, I am asking you to do this more earnestly, so that I may be restored to you quickly. 20 Now may the God of peace, the one who raised our Master Jesus from the dead, the great Shepherd of the sheep, in the blood of the permanent covenant, 21 may He equip you to do His will in every good work, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight through Jesus Christ, to Whom be the glory unto the ages of the ages, Amen! 22 I urge you, brothers, tolerate this briefly written message of admonition. 23 You know that brother Timothy has been released, with whom (if he comes soon) I will see you. 24 Greet all your leaders and all the saints. Those of Italy greet you. 25 Grace be with all of you,³⁰⁹ Amen!³¹⁰

the pillar of cloud to meet with Moses “*face to face, as a man speaks to his friend*” (Exod. 33-7, cf. John 1:18). The earliest Christians understood this to be the Son of God (Justin, Dialogue with Trypho, ch. xxxviii).

³⁰⁸ Heb. 11:14,16,40 (cf. Isaiah 54 & Gal. 4:21-28; Isaiah 62 & Rev. 21:2,9-10)

³⁰⁹ Paul’s signature statement in all of his letters written in his own handwriting (2 Thess. 3:17-18).

³¹⁰ Some manuscripts add: “*Written to the Hebrews from Italy through Timothy.*”