

The LETTER of PAUL to the HEBREWS¹

LAST GENERATION VERSION

Translation & Notes by Tim Warner

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God sent Us His Son, the Heir of the Creation

God, having formerly spoken at many times and in many ways to the fathers in the prophets,² 2 upon the conclusion of those days³ spoke to us in the Son⁴ whom He appointed Heir of everything,⁵ through⁶ whom He also fashioned the ages.⁷ 3 Who,⁸

¹ Hebrews warns Jewish believers against this same sect of 'Judaizers' as Galatians. By this time their devotion to the Law of Moses led them to claim that Jesus was only a son of God by "adoption" due to His perfect adherence to the Law of Moses, thus denying His preexistence, something taught especially by Paul (Phil. 2:6-10; Col. 1:15-20). They claimed that Paul was an apostate from the Law, denouncing all of his letters. They became known as "Ebionites." Irenaeus informs us that they used Matthew's Gospel exclusively, minus its birth narrative (Against Heresies, Bk. 1, ch. 26), claiming that Joseph was Jesus' true father (Bk. 3 ch. 21), emphatically denying the Son's preexistence (Bk. 4, ch. 33). Hebrews begins with the Son's preexistence and superiority even to the angels, then addresses the superiority of the New Covenant, and the superiority of Christ's "Melchizedek" priesthood over the Levitical priesthood.

² Zech. 1:1-6; Luke 6:22-23; Luke 11:47-51; Acts 7:51-53

³ ἐπ' ἐσχάτου τῶν ἡμερῶν τούτων (lit. "upon the end of the days those.") Most English translations have incorrectly rendered this clause as "in these last days." The "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).

⁴ Paul reminded his readers of Jesus' parable of the vineyard owner who sent his servants the prophets to collect the fruit, but the rebellious fathers beat and abused them (Mark 12:1-11). But also having a beloved Son, He sent Him last. Jesus' parable was based on Isaiah's prophecy of YHVH's vineyard (Isa. 5).

⁵ Psalm 2:6-9 describes the promise to the Son of God on the same day that He was begotten out of God. He was then appointed to be the heir of all nations and the whole world by God.

⁶ The Son as God's Agent actively participated from the first day of creation week in God's entire plan for human history. The preposition διὰ when taking a genitive case object means "through," referring to agency (instrumentality) which requires the actual presence and active participation of the Son in the stated action. (The preposition διὰ with the sense "because of / on account of," without requiring active presence, can only be expressed if διὰ takes an accusative case object). All of God's working *through* the active participation of His Son is expressed as διὰ+ genitive case object. This applies to God's having creating everything through the Son (John 1:3,10; 1 Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:15-16; Heb. 2:10). It applies to God's performing all of Jesus' miracles through Him (John 3:1-2; Acts 2:22; Acts 10:38). And it applies to God's providing redemption for mankind through the Son's active participation (John 3:17; Rom. 1:5; Rom. 5:9; Rom. 8:37; 2 Cor. 5:18-19; Gal. 4:9; Eph. 2:18; Col. 1:20; Heb. 7:25; 1 Pet. 1:21; 1 John 4:9).

⁷ Compare 1 Cor. 2:6-7. The sequential ages were predetermined through the Son according to the six days of creation week, the Kingdom of Christ being the Sabbath (seventh millennium). See notes on Heb. 4:1-11, Heb. 11:1-3, & 2 Peter 3:1-12. Many translations incorrectly have "worlds."

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being the radiance of the glory⁹ and exact image of His Being,¹⁰ even carrying everything¹¹ with the declaration of His power,¹² having¹³ made a purging of our sins, took His seat¹⁴ at the right side of the Majesty in the highest,¹⁵ 4 having become¹⁶ so much superior to the messengers since inheriting a much more excellent name¹⁷ compared to them. 5 For to which one of the messengers¹⁸ did He once¹⁹ say, “You are

⁸ Paul apparently borrowed from the Jewish apocryphal book, Wisdom of Solomon: “For [Wisdom] is the brightness of the everlasting light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image of his goodness” (Wisdom 7:26 LXX), thus identifying the Son with Wisdom (cf. Prov. 8:22-31).

⁹ John 1:14; John 17:5

¹⁰ He was “the image of the invisible God” to mankind (Col. 1:15), the Presence (lit. Face) of God in the Old Testament (Isa. 63:9 cf. Exod. 23:20-23; Exod. 33:12-16) since God cannot be seen by mortals (John 1:18; John 5:37; Col. 1:15; 1 Tim. 1:17; 1 Tim. 6:16; Heb. 11:27; 1 John 4:12,20).

¹¹ The Son is the one who carried Israel throughout her history. “And the Messenger of His Presence [lit. “face”] 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). Cf. Ex. 23:20-23; Jdg. 2:1-4; Isa. 46:3-4.

¹² Of the Son Paul wrote: “everything has been established together through Him” (Col. 1:17).

¹³ The Majority Text and Textus Receptus adds “through Himself” but this cannot be correct since one cannot be an agent of himself.

¹⁴ 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.

¹⁵ All of the conditions and actions of the Son in verses 2-3 are listed in chronological order: (1) the promise of the inheritance to Him on Day one when He was begotten, (2) His role in fashioning the ages in advance, (3) His being the radiance of the glory and exact image of God in His interactions with Adam, the patriarchs, and Moses, (4) His carrying Israel in the wilderness, (5) providing atonement for sin through His death, (6) taking His seat at God’s right hand.

¹⁶ When the God sent His “first-produced into the world” (v. 6), he became “a little lower than the messengers for the suffering of death” (Heb. 2:9). But, by finishing His role to make “a purging of our sins” (v. 3), He has given the name above all names (Phil. 2:5-11). This is demonstrated by His taking His seat at the Father’s right hand, a sign that the inheritance of the nations promised in Psalm 2 was now assured to Him.

¹⁷ His name is above all names including the messengers of God (Eph. 1:20-23; Phil. 2:5-11; 1 Pet. 3:18-22).

¹⁸ This statement and the one in vs. 13 are sometimes used to claim that Jesus could not have been the “Messenger of Yahweh.” Yet Mal. 3:1 calls Jesus “the Messenger of the Covenant” and Rev. 1:1-2 refers to Jesus as God’s “Messenger.”

¹⁹ ποτε – “when?” formerly, at some unspecified past time (Lk. 22:32; Jn. 9:13; Rom. 7:9; Rom. 11:30; Gal. 1:23; Eph. 2:2,3,11,13; Eph. 5:8; Col. 1:21; Col. 3:7; Titus 3:3; Phlm. 1:11; 1 Pet. 2:10; 1 Pet. 3:20), or “when,” pointing to an unspecified or unknown future time (cf. Matt. 24:3; Matt. 25:37,38,39,44; John 6:25). Many translations have “ever” which in English may imply a negative answer, as though God never said this to any “Messenger.” But the Greek term points to something that did or will occur. It does not expect a negative answer. The statement is a question expecting a positive answer: Which one of the “messengers” did God once say this to? The expected answer is that it was spoken to the one called “the Messenger of

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*My Son, this day I have begotten You”?*²⁰ And again, *“I will be to Him a Father, and He will be to Me a Son”?*²¹ 6 Yet again, whenever He should bring the first-produced²² into the world²³ He says, *“And give worship to Him all the messengers of God.”*²⁴ 7 And indeed toward the messengers He says: *“... the one making His messengers breaths, and His servants a blazing fire.”*²⁵ 8 Yet toward the Son:²⁶ *“Your throne, O God, is for the age of the age, and the scepter of Your Kingdom is the scepter of integrity. 9 You loved justice and hated lawlessness. Therefore God, Your God,²⁷ anointed You with the jubilation oil in the presence of your fellow²⁸ [heirs].”*²⁹ 10 Also:³⁰ *“You Master, in the beginning, established the land, and the skies are the work of Your hands.”*³¹ 11 *They shall wear out,³² yet You remain constant. And all*

Yahweh” (Gen. 22:10-18; Exod. 3:1-22; Exod. 23:20-23; Judg. 2:1-4).

²⁰ After having indirectly referred to Psalm 2 twice already (vss. 2 & 4), Paul quoted Psalm 2:7 directly, indicating that God spoke these words originally and directly to the “Son” of vs. 1 (compare Heb. 5:5). They were not spoken to or about Israel’s kings generally as claimed by some.

²¹ 1 Chron. 17:10-14 Jesus 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).

²² πρῶτοτοκος - He is the “first-produced of all creation” (Col. 1:15) and “He is before everyone” (Col. 1:17), “who is the Beginning” (Col. 1:18) and the “first-produced among many brothers” (Rom. 8:29) thus begotten before all saints including Seth, Enoch, Noah, and Abraham (John 8:56-58), and “the Beginning of the creation of God” (Rev. 3:14).

²³ τὴν οἰκουμένην refers to entrance into the inhabited world, when “the Word became flesh” (Jn. 1:14). The same clause appears in Heb. 10:5 “This is why, coming **into the world** He says: ‘Sacrifices and offerings You did not desire, but a body you fit to Me,’” showing that this clause must refer to His first coming.

²⁴ Paul no doubt had two passages in mind here. The first is Psalm 97:7 LXX which reads: “Let all that worship graven images be ashamed, who boast of their idols; worship him all ye his angels.” Psalms 93-101 are Messianic in character so the application to the Son here is no stretch. The second reference is to Deut. 32:43 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.” In this Song of Moses the personal pronouns, Him, He, and His, all have as their antecedent the “Rock” mentioned in verses 4, 15, 18, 30, & 31, of which Paul wrote in 1 Cor. 10:4 that this “Rock was Christ.” That this applies to Christ’s first coming is also shown by Paul’s quote of Deut. 32:43 in Rom. 15:8-10 where he applied the statement, “Be glad O Gentiles with His People” to the Gentiles being redeemed in his day.

²⁵ Psalm 104:4 The celestial messengers are mere “servants,” clearly inferior to the Son.

²⁶ πρὸς δὲ τὸν υἱόν “But toward the Son” The preposition πρὸς means “toward,” not “about” or “of” as in the NIV, NASB, ESV. The following two Psalms were spoken to the Son when they were composed, as the second-person pronouns (Your/You) also indicate.

²⁷ Jesus is called “God” and the Father is His “God” (cf. John 1:1; John 20:17).

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

²⁹ Psalm 45:6-7

³⁰ Meaning also unto the Son it was said.

³¹ 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.

³² 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.

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[these] shall decay as a garment. 12 And like a cape [thrown about the body] you will spin³³ them, and they will be changed.³⁴ Yet, You are the same, and Your years will not fail."³⁵ 13 To which one of the messengers did He once³⁶ say, "Sit on my right until I should place Your enemies a footstool under your feet"?³⁷ 14 Are they not all attendant breaths being commissioned for those who are about³⁸ to inherit the deliverance?³⁹

Chapter 2

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

Therefore,⁴⁰ it is especially crucial for us to heed what we have heard so at such time⁴¹ we might not slip away. 2 For if the word spoken through messengers⁴² proved steadfast, and every violation received a just punishment,⁴³ 3 how will we escape having neglected a deliverance of such magnitude, which at first was taken up to be proclaimed through the Master,⁴⁴ and was confirmed to us by those hearing Him,⁴⁵ 4

³³ to whirl, as a sling over the head. This may refer to the rotations and orbits of the planets.

³⁴ 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).

³⁵ 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.

³⁶ See note for vs. 5

³⁷ Psalm 110:1 (LXX); Heb. 10:13

³⁸ The Greek word μέλλω 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)

³⁹ "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).

⁴⁰ Because of who the Son actually is ...

⁴¹ μηποτε – "at such time," referring to the scope of time defined by the context. In this case it refers to those who are "about to inherit the deliverance," (Heb. 1:14).

⁴² The Law was given to Moses in the company of celestial messengers (Deut. 33:2 LXX; Acts 7:53)

⁴³ God's judgments upon Israel as in the rebellion at Kadesh Barnea

⁴⁴ 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).

⁴⁵ 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).

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God verifying [their testimony] with signs,⁴⁶ and with miracles, and with various mighty acts, and with distributions of holy Breath⁴⁷ according to His will? 5 For He does not subjugate to messengers⁴⁸ the impending world concerning which we speak.⁴⁹ 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.*⁵⁰ 8 *You placed everything under his feet.*⁵¹ 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.⁵² 9 But we see Jesus, *“crowned with glory and honor,”* having been *“made a little bit lower than the messengers”*⁵³ 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 Founder⁵⁴ of their deliverance, (for whom everything is⁵⁵ and through whom everything is⁵⁶), to become perfected⁵⁷ through hardship, in leading many sons to glory.⁵⁸

⁴⁶ Mark 16:15-20

⁴⁷ The supernatural gifts were distributed by God Himself through the hands of the Apostles (Acts 8:14-19).

⁴⁸ Note the plural. God does not subjugate the Kingdom to His heavenly messengers (plural), but exclusively to the one heavenly “Messenger” in the previous chapter to whom He said, “You are My Son, this day I have begotten You”? And again, “I will be to Him a Father, and He will be to Me a Son”? (v. 5) and again “Sit on my right side until I should place Your enemies under your feet”? (v. 13).

⁴⁹ This statement makes it clear that “the deliverance” which is to be inherited in Heb. 1:14 is the coming Kingdom of Messiah.

⁵⁰ Genesis 1:28

⁵¹ Psalm 8:4-6

⁵² 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.

⁵³ 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.

⁵⁴ Heb. 12:2

⁵⁵ Jesus is the heir of all the nations, and the ends of the earth (Psalm 2:6-9; Psalm 110; Heb. 1:2,4)

⁵⁶ Jesus was the co-creator and guide of human history, (Heb. 1:1-2; Heb. 11:1-3).

⁵⁷ The Word made flesh had to become perfected as Man through overcoming temptation. This is why He was tempted of the Slanderer and endured the trial in the garden of Gethsemane, (Heb. 1:4; Heb. 5:7-9).

⁵⁸ Christ is leading “many sons” to the glory of the inheritance which belongs to Him in the age to come.

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The Necessity for the Son of God to become a Man

11 For both the consecrating one and those being consecrated are all out of one man.⁵⁹ For this reason He is not ashamed to call them 'brothers,'⁶⁰ 12 saying: "I will proclaim Your name to My brothers, in the middle of the Assembly"⁶¹ I will sing hymns to You."⁶² 13 And again: "I will have confidence in Him."⁶³ And again: "Look! I and the children God gave to Me."⁶⁴ 14 Since then the children have shared⁶⁵ blood and flesh, He likewise partook⁶⁶ of the same so that through death He may vanquish the one having the domain of death,⁶⁷ who is the Slanderer, 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 hold⁶⁸ of the messengers,⁶⁹ but it does take hold of the seed of Abraham).⁷⁰ 17 For this cause He was obliged to become

⁵⁹ 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.

⁶⁰ See Rom. 8:29

⁶¹ See Heb. 12:23

⁶² 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).

⁶³ 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."

⁶⁴ Isaiah 8:18

⁶⁵ κοινωνέω – (perf. tense) to have in common.

⁶⁶ μετέσχεν "aorist [active indicative] followed by the genitive (have a) share in, participate in, partake of, with the sharing always resulting from choosing to participate" (Friberg Greek Lexicon). While the "children" shared in flesh and blood by the choice of the parents, this verb requires that the Son of God intentionally chose to participate in humanity. Compare Phil. 2:5-7.

⁶⁷ The Slanderer was a murderer from the beginning (John 8:44), provoking Cain to kill his brother. He does not cause death directly, but indirectly since He deceives mankind which results in death.

⁶⁸ 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 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).

⁶⁹ 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).

⁷⁰ 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).

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like⁷¹ His brothers in every way,⁷² 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.⁷³

Chapter 3

The Son Compared to Moses

Therefore, holy brothers, sharers of the invitation of celestial dominion,⁷⁴ 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 His⁷⁵ house. 3 For this One has been deemed more worthy of glory than Moses by the same proportion a builder has greater value over the house [he builds].⁷⁶ 4 For every house is built by someone, yet God has built everything. 5 And Moses was indeed faithful in all His⁷⁷ 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 house, of whose house we are if we clutch⁷⁸ the confidence and rejoicing of the confirmed hope⁷⁹ unto the consummation,⁸⁰ 7 according to which⁸¹ the holy Breath says: *“This day, if you hear His voice, 8 you should not harden your hearts as in the*

⁷¹ ὁμοιωθῆναι “passive, become like” (Friberg Greek Lexicon). The same passive verb is used in Acts 14:11, “The gods descended to us having **become like** men!” This verb does not refer to origin, but to assimilation.

⁷² 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.

⁷³ Heb. 4:15

⁷⁴ The Kingdom of God

⁷⁵ Moses was a servant over the Son’s household (cf. note on v. 3)

⁷⁶ Christ Himself was the builder of Moses’ household, and therefore His glory far surpasses Moses’s glory. The Son of God delivered the Law to Moses as the “Messenger of the LORD.” (See: Exodus 3:1ff, Ex. 23:20-23; Acts 7:30,35,38; 1 Cor. 10:1-4,9).

⁷⁷ Israel in the wilderness was the Son’s household (cf. 1 Cor. 10:1-10)

⁷⁸ To grip tightly

⁷⁹ 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).

⁸⁰ The end of the age (Matt. 10:22; Matt. 24:6,13,14; 1 Cor. 1:8; Rev. 2:26)

⁸¹ Psalm 95 is a prophecy about the “consummation.”

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provocation, as in the day of testing in the wilderness 9 where your fathers tried Me, they tested Me and saw My works." 10 Consequently, "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.^{82,83} 12 Beware brothers, if at such time⁸⁴ a wicked heart of unbelief shall⁸⁵ be found in any of you, in apostatizing from the living God. 13 But encourage one another each day until⁸⁶ 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 Anointed⁸⁷ if we should clutch the original confirmed foundation⁸⁸ unto the consummation,⁸⁹ 15 when it is to be proclaimed:⁹⁰ "This day, if you hear His voice, you should not harden your hearts as in the provocation." 16 For some having heard, provoked [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.

⁸² 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.

⁸³ at the "consummation," when Psalm 95:7-11 will be proclaimed

⁸⁴ μήποτε – referring to the "consummation" to which "this day ..." refers (see Appendix D).

⁸⁵ future tense, referring again to the consummation.

⁸⁶ Most translations incorrectly render this, "while it is called Today." (See note on Heb. 4:12).

⁸⁷ sharers in the inheritance of the "Son" in Psalm 2.

⁸⁸ 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.

⁸⁹ We must maintain the pristine Faith handed down by the Apostles until the coming of Christ. (vs. 6)

⁹⁰ The exhortation in Psalm 95, "This day..." is to be proclaimed at the consummation of the age.

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Chapter 4

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

We should fear then, if at such time⁹¹ any of you might appear to have fallen short⁹² of the remaining promise⁹³ to enter into His⁹⁴ Rest. 2 For we also have been evangelized as they were (but the message heard [by them] had no benefit, not having been mixed with faith in the hearers).⁹⁵ 3 For we – the ones who believed – are entering⁹⁶ the Rest, (just as He said: *“As I swore in My anger, whether they shall come into My Rest,”*)⁹⁷ although the labors came about because of the casting down of the world.⁹⁸ 4 For He has declared somewhere concerning the seventh [day] thus: *“And God ceased in the seventh day from all His works,”*⁹⁹ 5 and thus again: *“whether they shall come into My Rest.”*^{100, 101} 6 Since then it

⁹¹ 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.

⁹² “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).

⁹³ 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).

⁹⁴ “His” refers to the Creator, whom Paul has already identified as Christ (Heb. 1:2; Heb. 2:10).

⁹⁵ The good news of the Kingdom 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). See also 1 Pet. 4:6.

⁹⁶ 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.

⁹⁷ Psalm 95:11 LXX

⁹⁸ 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).

⁹⁹ Gen. 2:2

¹⁰⁰ Psalm 95:11 LXX

¹⁰¹ 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. 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

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remains for some to enter into it, and those formerly evangelized did not enter because of obstinance, He specifies another set day – “*This day.*” 7 After such a long time He says in [the Psalm of] David according as was previously proclaimed,¹⁰² “*This day if you hear His voice, you should not harden your hearts.*”¹⁰³ 8 For if Joshua [had provided] them the Rest, He¹⁰⁴ would not have been speaking of another day after those. 9 Consequently, the Sabbath-observance¹⁰⁵ awaits the people of God. 10 For the one entering into His Rest has also ceased from his own labors¹⁰⁶ as God did from His. 11 Thus we should be diligent to enter into that Rest so that none fall into the same pattern of rebellion.

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

12 For Logos¹⁰⁷ of God¹⁰⁸ is alive and active, sharper beyond any double-edged knife,¹⁰⁹ penetrating until¹¹⁰ the distribution¹¹¹ of both life and breath, of both joints and

inherit the 7th millennium.

¹⁰² 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.

¹⁰³ Psalm 95:8 LXX

¹⁰⁴ God through David in Psalm 95

¹⁰⁵ σαββατισμὸς (Sabbatismos), the keeping of the Sabbath. This noun occurs only here, but is derived from the verb ἐσαββάτισεν in Exod. 16:30 LXX which reads, “*And the people kept Sabbath on the seventh day.*” The same term is used twice of the Land observing its Sabbaths (the 7th year) consecutively during the exile (Lev. 26:35 LXX; 2 Chron. 36:21 LXX). Here Paul called the Kingdom age (which is 1000 years – Rev. 20:4) the “Sabbath-observance” which is the “seventh day” (vss. 4-5).

¹⁰⁶ When God’s people enter God’s 7th Day Sabbath Rest we will reach the end of our own labors, just like God did at the end of six literal 24-hour days.

¹⁰⁷ John 1:1,14; 1 Pet. 1:23; 1 John 2:14; Rev. 20:4

¹⁰⁸ “*Logos of God*” (ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ) is a name for Jesus, as proven by Rev. 19:13. He is portrayed here as having eyes and conscious perception, being “*the one to whom we report,*” who is keenly observing the assemblies (Rev. 2:2,9,13,19; Rev. 3:2,8,15; Rev. 5:6).

¹⁰⁹ 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.

¹¹⁰ 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).

¹¹¹ 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.

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sinews,¹¹² and is the Judge of inner sentiments and thoughts of the heart.¹¹³ 13 And nothing created is imperceptible in His sight, but everything is naked and exposed to the eyes¹¹⁴ 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 God¹¹⁵ – we should cling to the Profession.¹¹⁶ 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,¹¹⁷ 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 having said to Him: “*You are My Son, this day I have begotten You,*”¹¹⁸ 6 also

¹¹² 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.

¹¹³ Jesus is clearly identified in Rev. 2:23 by the same language: “all the assemblies will know that I am the one searching the minds and hearts.”

¹¹⁴ 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). Yet His knowledge of our struggles is also due to His having experienced similar struggles (Heb. 2:17-18; Heb. 5:8-10).

¹¹⁵ Paul linked together the “High Priest” and “Kingly” roles of the ‘Son’ in Psalm 2 & Psalm 110.

¹¹⁶ “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)

¹¹⁷ Where Christ is seated at the Father’s right hand awaiting His inheritance (Psalm 110:1 & Rev. 3:21).

¹¹⁸ Psalm 2:7

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accordingly in another [Psalm] says: “*You are priest for the age*”¹¹⁹ according to the Melchizedek arrangement.”¹²⁰ 7 Who in the days of His flesh,¹²¹ 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.¹²² 9 And having become perfected,¹²³ He became the source of perpetual deliverance to all those obeying Him, 10 having been called by God, ‘Chief Priest’ “according to the Melchizedek arrangement.”¹²⁴ 11 Concerning him [Melchizedek], the message to us is great and difficult to expound since you have become lazy in hearing.¹²⁵ 12 For by this time you ought to be teachers, yet you have need of someone to teach again the fundamentals of the beginning of God’s declarations.¹²⁶ And you have become dependent on milk and not solid food.¹²⁷ 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.

¹¹⁹ “εις τον αιωνα” Throughout this age (quoting Psalm 110:4 LXX) See: Heb. 6:20; 7:24; 7:28. However, in Heb. 1:8, Jesus’ future during the Millennial Sabbath is “for the age of the age.”

¹²⁰ Psalm 110:4

¹²¹ “*In the days of His flesh*” (as Son of Man) implies a time when He was not “flesh” (John 1:14; Phil. 2:7; Heb. 2:9-18).

¹²² The suffering referred to here was Jesus’ anguish in the Garden of Gethsemane (Luke 22:44).

¹²³ See Heb. 2:10; Heb. 7:28

¹²⁴ Psalm 110:4

¹²⁵ Paul went on to explain the message concerning Melchizedek in chapter 7.

¹²⁶ The “*beginning of God’s declarations*” refers to the testimony that God Himself gave three times by voice from heaven concerning His begotten Son (the subject of Psalm 2:7) at His baptism (Luke 3:22) and at the Transfiguration (Luke 9:35), also concerning the fulfillment of prophecy about His crucifixion (John 12:27-28). See: 1 John 5:5-10.

¹²⁷ 1 Cor. 3:1-4

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Chapter 6

Apostasy from the Doctrine of Christ

Therefore, granting the message¹²⁸ about the beginning¹²⁹ of the Anointed One,¹³⁰ we should be carried on¹³¹ to perfection,¹³² not overthrowing¹³³ again the foundation¹³⁴ of repentance from dead works,¹³⁵ of belief upon God,¹³⁶ 2 of instruction about

¹²⁸ Paul began Hebrews (1:1-5) by establishing that Jesus, God's Son, was His Agent in fashioning the ages. In vs. 3 he quoted Psalm 2:7 in reference to the Son's origin: "You are My Son, Today I have begotten You." In vs. 4 he referred to the only-begotten Son as "being the radiance of the glory and exact image of His Being," further explained by Paul as "the image of the invisible God" through whom He created all things (Col. 1:15-16). He was the Presence (lit. Face) of God in the Old Testament (Isa. 63:9 cf. Exod. 23:20-23; Exod. 33:12-16).

¹²⁹ The Father's own verbal identification of Jesus as God's "begotten Son," both at His immersion and the Transfiguration, points to the beginning/origin of the Anointed One, the subject of Psalm 2:7. "You are My Son, Today I have begotten You" requires an origin out from God Himself (See John 8:42 & notes).

¹³⁰ John 1:1-4 The doctrine of Christ and His preexistence is a prominent theme of chapters 1-5, concluding with a second quote of Psalm 2:7 in Heb. 5:5, and then identifying this Son with Melchizedek who appeared to Abraham (Heb. 5:10-11, further explained in Heb. 7).

¹³¹ The passive voice implies the effort of others towards reaching maturity; God's Spirit (Heb. 3:7; Heb. 6:4), and spiritual leaders (Heb. 13:7,17; Heb. 10:29).

¹³² Heb. 11:40; Heb. 12:23

¹³³ The Greek noun "καταβολή" and the verb form "καταβελω" literally mean to "throw down." Here the verb form refers to not tearing down the foundation laid by Jesus and His Emissaries.

¹³⁴ That which the Emissaries of Jesus taught

¹³⁵ The Judaizers, opposing Paul, taught that Christians must observe of the Mosaic Law in addition to believing that Jesus was the Messiah. But Paul called such "dead works" (Heb. 9:14, cf. Gal. 2:16; Gal. 3:2,5,10).

¹³⁶ πίστεως ἐπὶ θεόν ("faith upon God"), this is the only time this expression appears in the Bible and indicates faith in God's own testimony from heaven about His Son (Heb. 5:12 notes). The Judaizers (called Ebionites after the destruction of Jerusalem) opposed Paul's teaching concerning God literally begetting a Son who then became flesh, but instead taught that Jesus was merely the son of Joseph, thus denying His preexistence as "the first-produced of all creation" (Col. 1:15), the Logos (John 1:1,14). (See: Panarion of Epiphanius, Bk. 1, Sec. 2, ch. 30, 3:1). The Ebionites used a truncated Gospel of Matthew in Aramaic which eliminated the virgin birth, and began with John's preaching followed by Jesus' baptism. In their pseudo-Matthew the voice from heaven stated, "Thou art my beloved Son, in Thee I am well pleased, ... This day I have begotten Thee." (Panarion, Bk. 1, Sec. 2, ch. 30, 13:6 & 14:1). This shows that the Ebionites interpreted Psalm 2:7 (the "begetting" of the Son) as Jesus' adoption by God at his baptism.

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immersions,¹³⁷ besides the placing of hands,¹³⁸ besides the resurrection of the dead¹³⁹ and permanent¹⁴⁰ condemnation.¹⁴¹ 3 And we will do this if God should permit.¹⁴² 4 For those having been illuminated¹⁴³ once, and having partaken of the gift¹⁴⁴ of the heavenly dominion,¹⁴⁵ having become fellow-sharers of the holy Breath,¹⁴⁶ 5 and having partaken

¹³⁷ The Judaizers (Ebionites) continued to practice “immersions” (washings), ritual immersing of the hands in water before eating, and other ritual cleansing of objects in water as practiced under the Mosaic Law (Heb. 9:10). The Essenes (Jewish mystics) were also meticulous about ritual purity, and practiced frequent “mikvahs” (ritual baths). Epiphanius of Salamis writes of the Ebionites, “that every day, if a man has been with a woman and has left her, he must immerse himself in water —any water he can find, the sea or any other. Moreover, if he should meet anyone while returning from his immersion and bath in the water, he runs back again for another immersion, often even with his clothes on!” (Panarion, Bk. 1, Sec. 2, ch. 30::4-5

that The instruction of Jesus was that such outward ritual washings were irrelevant and not binding upon Christians (Mark 7:2-16).

¹³⁸ The bestowing of spiritual gifts was exclusively through the hands of Jesus’ Emissaries, including Paul whom the Judaizers rejected (Acts 8:14-20; Acts 19:6; Rom. 1:10-11; 2 Tim. 1:6). The Judaizers had no such power to bestow gifts of God’s Spirit.

¹³⁹ Both the pseudo-Christian Judaizers (Ebionites) and the Essenes (Jewish mystics) believed in the immortality of the soul, thus denying the resurrection from among the dead. Josephus states that the Essenes believed in the immortality of the soul (which he compares to Platonism), that souls of the righteous when released from the body at death ascend to heavenly realms, but the wicked souls face unending punishment (Wars of the Jews, 2.8.11). Likewise, some Ebionites rejected the resurrection of the dead, believing in the immortality of the soul and claiming Jesus was resurrected in a spiritual rather than physical form. (Epiphanius of Salamis, Panarion, Bk. 1, sec. 2, ch. 30).

¹⁴⁰ 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).

¹⁴¹ Permanent condemnation is the “second death” (Psalm 37; Rev. 20:14). The belief that souls are immortal by both Ebionites and Essenes necessarily conflicted with this permanent death. Immortality of the wicked souls requires conscious punishment (torment forever) rather than permanent destruction (Matt. 10:28; 2 Thess. 1:9).

¹⁴² The book of Hebrews is “solid food” for the mature believer, preparing him to be a capable “teacher” of the things of Christ.

¹⁴³ 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).

¹⁴⁴ The remission of sins (Acts 2:38-39)

¹⁴⁵ See Appendix C

¹⁴⁶ See: 1 Cor. 12:12-13

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of the good proclamation of God¹⁴⁷ and the powerful abilities¹⁴⁸ of the impending age,¹⁴⁹ 6 and yet fall away,¹⁵⁰ are unable to be restored again¹⁵¹ to repentance, crucifying again for themselves the Son of God,¹⁵² 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 briers, it is castaway and soon devoted to destruction, whose destiny is burning.¹⁵³ 9 Yet, we have assumed¹⁵⁴ the better concerning you, beloved, as still possessing these things¹⁵⁵ of the deliverance,¹⁵⁶ 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,¹⁵⁷ 12 so that you may not become lazy, but imitators of those who through faith and endurance inherit the promises.¹⁵⁸

¹⁴⁷ The Gospel

¹⁴⁸ Spiritual gifts

¹⁴⁹ 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).

¹⁵⁰ The "falling away" has primary reference to departure from the doctrine of Christ, the "chief" of God's oracles, to which most of the book of Hebrews is devoted. (See also: Matt. 24:9-13; 2 Thess. 2:3-12)

¹⁵¹ "Restored again" to repentance requires a previous repentance, thus indicating a prior conversion.

¹⁵² Heb. 10:29 also describes the apostate from Christ in similar terms.

¹⁵³ 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 the 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.

¹⁵⁴ A persuasion or supposition, not a fact (see also: Phil. 1:6)

¹⁵⁵ The things listed in verses 4-6

¹⁵⁶ As always in Hebrews, the "deliverance" is eschatological, dealing with "the impending age" (vs. 5).

¹⁵⁷ See Heb. 3:6,14

¹⁵⁸ The Abrahamic Covenant promises are for Christians (Rom. 4:13-16; Gal. 3:16, 26-29; Eph. 2:11-13)

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The Anchor of Our Soul is the Abrahamic Promise

13 For God, in promising Abraham,¹⁵⁹ since He had no one greater to swear by, swore by Himself¹⁶⁰ 14 saying, “Surely, in blessing I will bless you, and in multiplying I will multiply you.”¹⁶¹ 15 And thus, through endurance,¹⁶² 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 promise¹⁶³ the irrevocability of His purpose, confirmed with an oath,¹⁶⁴ 18 so that by two irrevocable actions,¹⁶⁵ which God is unable to falsify, we – the fleeing ones¹⁶⁶ – might have powerful incentive to cling to the hope laying before us,¹⁶⁷ 19 which we have as an anchor of the life, both secure and confirmed,¹⁶⁸ entering into the chamber behind the

¹⁵⁹ 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). 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.”

¹⁶⁰ Gen. 22:16

¹⁶¹ Gen. 22:17-18

¹⁶² 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).

¹⁶³ Christians are the inheritors of the promise to Abraham (see note on verse 12).

¹⁶⁴ 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)

¹⁶⁵ 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).

¹⁶⁶ 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).

¹⁶⁷ 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. 4:9). David also spoke extensively of this hope in Psalm 37, and Jesus quoted it in Matt. 5:5. See Appendix A for the opinion of the early Christians.

¹⁶⁸ This hope was confirmed by the power of the holy Breath in the Apostolic ministry (Heb. 2:2-4).

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veil,¹⁶⁹ 20 where Jesus the prototype¹⁷⁰ over us has entered, having become High Priest for the age according to the Melchizedek arrangement.

Chapter 7

The Son as "Melchizedek"

For this 'Melchizedek,' king of Salem,¹⁷¹ 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,¹⁷² is indeed primarily translated "King of Justice."¹⁷³ After that [he is called] "King of Salem,"¹⁷⁴ 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,¹⁷⁵ He remains a priest¹⁷⁶ for the duration.¹⁷⁷ 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]

¹⁶⁹ The Holy of Holies in heaven, explained further in Heb. 9

¹⁷⁰ 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.

¹⁷¹ 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.

¹⁷² Genesis 14:18-20

¹⁷³ A title of the Messiah (Isaiah 11:1-5)

¹⁷⁴ Josephus writes that Melchizedek was king of "Salem," the city which was later changed to "Jerusalem" (Jos. Antiq. Bk. I, ch. x, ii).

¹⁷⁵ Moses "portrayed" Melchizedek as the Son of God in Genesis 14:18-20 by his use of the following Messianic titles: "King of Justice," "King of Peace," and "Priest of God the Highest"

¹⁷⁶ Melchizedek in vs. 1 is the subject of the sentence, and He is the one who remains a priest for this age, meaning that Melchizedek was actually the Son of God who became Son of Man, Jesus Christ.

¹⁷⁷ εἰς τὸ διηνεκές is literally "for the duration." The word διηνεκές (duration) only appears 4 times in the New Testament, all occurring in Hebrews (Heb. 7:3, 10:1, 10:10; 10:14) and always in the clause, εἰς τὸ διηνεκές (for the duration). Each time it is in the context of explaining Psalm 110 which describes the delay in Christ's receiving the Kingdom while He waits at God's right hand. (Compare 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 "for the duration" until His enemies are made His footstool. It is clear therefore, that "for the duration" concludes at the beginning of the "Sabbath Rest" (Heb. 4:1-11) when the promises to the Son of His inheritance are to be fulfilled. The "priesthood" of Melchizedek is said to extend from Jesus' ascension until His second coming (Heb. 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 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.

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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 here¹⁷⁸ dying men receive tenths. But there¹⁷⁹ [it] is confirmed that He is alive!¹⁸⁰ 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 Melchizedek arrangement, and not said to be according to the Aaron arrangement?

The Priesthood Superseded means the Law was Superseded

12 For the priesthood being transferred 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 Melchizedek arrangement,*" 16 who has not come according to the Law of a fleshly precept,¹⁸¹ but according to power of a durable life,¹⁸² 17 (for he attests, "*You are a priest unto the age according to the Melchizedek arrangement*"), 18 there is therefore indeed a setting aside¹⁸³ 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.

¹⁷⁸ 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.

¹⁷⁹ In Genesis 14:18-20

¹⁸⁰ 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).

¹⁸¹ A precept of the Law for men of flesh who die and must continually be replaced by successors.

¹⁸² 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).

¹⁸³ This is not the abolishment of the Law of Moses (cf. Matt. 5:17-18), but the setting aside of its jurisdiction over those who embrace the New Covenant, the Law of Christ (Gal. 6:2) and His Melchizedek priesthood. The Law of Moses also contains the curses. Paul stated that unbelieving Israel remains under the curse of the Law, which was the guardian to bring Israel to Christ (Gal. 3:10-13,23-25). Paul then indicated that once "faith" comes "*we are no longer under a guardian*" (v. 25).

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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 Melchizedek arrangement'."* 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 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.¹⁸⁴ 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.¹⁸⁵

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 dominion¹⁸⁶ 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

¹⁸⁴ Becoming superior to the celestial messengers (Heb. 1:3-4; Phil. 2:5-10)

¹⁸⁵ Heb. 2:10; Heb. 5:9

¹⁸⁶ God's dominion over Israel, including His rites performed by the priests, See Appendix C

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promises.¹⁸⁷ 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 covenant, and I ignored them,’¹⁸⁸ says the Master,” 10 since this is the covenant I will be covenanting with the house of Israel after these days,’ the Master says, ‘ingraining My laws¹⁸⁹ into their thinking, and I will engrave them on their hearts.’¹⁹⁰ 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 them¹⁹¹ 12 since I will be merciful to their wrongdoings, and their sins and their unlawful deeds I should by no means continue recalling.”¹⁹² 13 In the declaring “new”¹⁹³ He has made the former old.¹⁹⁴ And what is being made old and growing old¹⁹⁵ is about to become desolate.¹⁹⁶

¹⁸⁷ 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).

¹⁸⁸ The LXX has “I ignored them,” while the Hebrew has “I was a husband to them.”

¹⁸⁹ The LXX has “laws” (plural), while the Hebrew has “law” (singular).

¹⁹⁰ See: Psalm 40:8; Ezek. 11:19; 2 Cor. 3:2-3

¹⁹¹ The complete fulfillment of the New Covenant of Jeremiah’s prophecy will only occur when national repentance takes place (Rom. 11:15-32).

¹⁹² Jer. 31:31-34 quoted by Paul from the LXX

¹⁹³ By referring to the coming “New Covenant” through Jeremiah, God declared the Mosaic Covenant to become “old” or obsolete in Jeremiah’s day. It did not become “old” when the New Covenant arrived. Note that the Mosaic Covenant was still in force upon Israel even after Christ came, which is why Israel is under the curse of the Law predicted in Deut. 28-30, which included the destruction of Jerusalem and a second exile until the end times.

¹⁹⁴ Jeremiah 31:31-34 indicates the removal of the Old Covenant only for those who embrace the New, as does Paul in Rom. 3:19-22 & Gal. 3:10-11,23-25.

¹⁹⁵ Notice that becoming old and obsolete was a process over a long period of time, not a single event when Christ brought the New Covenant. It will not become entirely obsolete for Israel until the Kingdom arrives (Matt. 5:17-18)

¹⁹⁶ 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, and make His land “desolate.” He did this when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem, and He did it again in AD 70 when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem. This placed unbelieving Israel under the ultimate curse of the Mosaic Covenant, exile from the land (Deut. 29:25-28). Yet restoration is still promised (Deut. 30:1-6; Zech. 13:1; Rom.11:25-32). The Greek word here ἀφανισμός (translated “desolate”) is used only here in the New Testament, but it was used at least 33 times (LXX) in reference to the “desolation” of Jerusalem and the Temple during the Babylonian Exile, mostly in Jeremiah and Ezekiel. The Jewish readers of Hebrews were well aware of what this meant, a second destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple just as Isaiah, Daniel, and Jesus predicted (Isa. 28-29; Dan. 9:26; Matt. 23:34 –

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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-stand¹⁹⁷ 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 constantly¹⁹⁸ [enter] into the front tabernacle performing the divine service. 7 But only the high priest went into the second tabernacle, once a year,¹⁹⁹ never without blood, which he offered for himself and the peoples' ignorant failures.²⁰⁰ 8 Concerning this the holy Breath illustrates that the path of the holy things was not yet to have been made visible²⁰¹ with the front tabernacle still having standing.²⁰² 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,²⁰³ 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,²⁰⁴ 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

24:2).

¹⁹⁷ The seven-branch menorah

¹⁹⁸ The priests entered this room daily throughout the year.

¹⁹⁹ On Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement.

²⁰⁰ The Greek word means to fail due to ignorance, misunderstanding, or inattentiveness.

²⁰¹ 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.

²⁰² The front tabernacle, called 'the holy place,' was temporary.

²⁰³ The "impending good things" refers to the things of the Kingdom.

²⁰⁴ The goats and bulls were offered once a year on Yom Kippur (Lev. 16).

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purification of the flesh, 14 how much greater the blood of the Anointed, who offered Himself flawless to God through the age-enduring Breath,²⁰⁵ will²⁰⁶ cleanse your conscience from dead acts²⁰⁷ unto what is to be²⁰⁸ divine service to the living God! 15 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,²⁰⁹ those having been called may receive the promise of the permanent inheritance.²¹⁰ 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,²¹¹ since it has no force at such 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

²⁰⁵ Many ancient manuscripts have “holy Breath” instead of “age-enduring Breath.” Christ’s entire human experience was empowered by the holy Breath, including His conception (Luke 1:35), His baptism (Luke 3:21-22), 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 “age-enduring” here because of accompanying the Son continuously, “without measure” (John 3:34) throughout His earthly life, through which God raised Him from the dead to age-enduring life (Rom. 8:11).

²⁰⁶ 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 “Melchizedek arrangement” is not only one priest, but will become many in the Kingdom. “*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)

²⁰⁷ The dead acts of service according to the Law of Moses, which became obsolete (Heb. 8:13)

²⁰⁸ 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).

²⁰⁹ Christ’s atonement cleansed all of the Old Testament saints by means of the New Covenant being retroactively extended to them also.

²¹⁰ The permanent 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.

²¹¹ The slaying of an animal victim was always used to confirm the covenants. (See Gen. 15).

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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.”*²¹² 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 dominions²¹³ 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 world²¹⁴). Yet now, once, at the completion of the ages,²¹⁵ He has been made apparent²¹⁶ for the cancelling of sin by the sacrifice of Himself. ²⁷ And accordingly as much as it is reserved to man once to die 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 sin²¹⁷ for the deliverance.²¹⁸

²¹² Exodus 24:8

²¹³ 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 C.

²¹⁴ This expression refers to the curse put upon creation due to Adam’s sin.

²¹⁵ 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.

²¹⁶ *πεφανέρωται* – to make apparent that which has been concealed in the past. Notice that this statement is in juxtaposition to the clause *“suffer repeatedly since the casting down of the world.”* He was concealed after Adam sinned, since previously He spoke to Adam face to face. (Gen. 3:8-19; 1 Pet. 1:20).

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

²¹⁸ Deliverance here is eschatological, as in Heb. 1:14 & Heb. 2:3-5

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Chapter 10

The Law is Unable to Bring Israel to the Inheritance

For the Law, having a shadow of the impending good things²¹⁹ [which is] not itself the image²²⁰ of the things, those same sacrifices which they are offering accordingly each year²²¹ are not able to complete the worshipers for the duration.²²² 2 Otherwise, would they not have ceased offering since 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.²²³

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

4 For the blood of bulls and goats is unable to remove sins. 5 This is why, coming into the world²²⁴ He says: "*Sacrifices and offerings You did not desire, but a body you fit to Me. 6 In burnt offerings and [offerings] for sin, You have no pleasure. 7 Then I said, 'Look! I come! In the volume of the scroll it has been written about Me, the one to do Your will, O God!'"*²²⁵ 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 has said, "*Look! I come, ... the one to do Your will, O God!*" He [thus] removes the first²²⁶ so that the second may stand,²²⁷ 10 by which "*will*" we are 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,²²⁸ officiating and offering the same sacrifices many times, which are unable to remove²²⁹ sins. 12 Yet He, offering one sacrifice over sins, seated Himself at the right side of God for the duration,²³⁰ 13 the remainder being received when His enemies should be placed under His feet.²³¹ 14 For by one offering He has perfected for the duration the ones being set apart. 15 But the holy Breath also testifies to us. 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,*"²³² 18 the holy Breath is also testifying to us – wherever there is remission from these, there is no longer offering over sin.

²¹⁹ The festivals of the Law pointed to the ordinances of the coming Kingdom. See: Col. 2:16-17.

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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),²³³ 21 and [having] a High Priest over the house of God, 22 we may approach with a true heart, in complete confidence of faith, our hearts having been sprinkled²³⁴ from a wicked conscience, and the body having been bathed²³⁵ in pure water.²³⁶

²²⁰ A shadow may give an outline of a thing, but an “image” gives a very detailed representation.

²²¹ 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)

²²² The clause, εἰς τὸ διηνεκές (for the duration) 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 for the age [εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα] according to the Melchizedek arrangement’.” 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 Melchizedek arrangement.

²²³ Each year on the Day of Atonement

²²⁴ cf. Heb. 1:6

²²⁵ 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.

²²⁶ The entire Levitical priesthood and worship of God offered according to the Law

²²⁷ The New Covenant (Heb. 8:5-13)

²²⁸ According to the instructions regarding the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16)

²²⁹ The Greek word means to remove from all around – from one’s presence.

²³⁰ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα for the duration of His being seated at God’s right hand until the remaining promises in Psalm 110 (dealing with His reign as King) are fulfilled.

²³¹ The remainder of the promises in Psalm 110:2-7, and in Psalm 2:6-9

²³² Again quoting Jer. 31:31-34 LXX, as in Heb. 8:8-12

²³³ 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.

²³⁴ Exodus 24:8; Heb. 9:19

²³⁵ Similar expressions referring to baptism as being bathed are found in the following passages: 1 Cor. 6:11; Eph. 5:26; Titus 3:5.

²³⁶ Exodus 29:4; Leviticus 8:6

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The Real Danger of the Coming Apostasy

23 We should clutch the profession²³⁷ of the Hope²³⁸ unrelaxed,²³⁹ for the one who promised²⁴⁰ is faithful. 24 And we should watch out for one another to stimulate love²⁴¹ and virtuous deeds, 25 not according to the habit of some – abandoning²⁴² the gathering together²⁴³ of ourselves – but encouraging [one another] and more urgently as you observe ‘the Day’²⁴⁴ nearing. 26 For our²⁴⁵ determined continuance in sin,²⁴⁶ after acquiring the full knowledge²⁴⁷ 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.”²⁴⁸ 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 apart²⁴⁹ like an unclean thing, and has outraged the Breath of grace? 30 For we have observed²⁵⁰ the one who said, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, says the Master,” and again, “the Master shall judge His people.”²⁵¹ 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.²⁵²

²³⁷ The “profession” is made at baptism, the acknowledgment that Jesus is the “Anointed” King to sit upon the Throne of David, Ps. 2 & 110.

²³⁸ The “hope” is that we will share in His inheritance (Ps. 2:12; Ps. 110:3).

²³⁹ The Greek word for “recline” or “lean” (against something) with the negative particle prefixed.

²⁴⁰ Psalm 2:6-9; Psalm 110:1

²⁴¹ “Love” needs to be encouraged, or it will “grow cold” in the last days (Matt. 24:9-13).

²⁴² That is abandoning the pursuit of the Hope (v. 23)

²⁴³ τὴν ἐπισυναγωγὴν the gathering of the entirety of the elect at the resurrection and return of Jesus (2 Thess. 2:1, cf. Matt. 24:29-31, Heb. 12:22-23)

²⁴⁴ The Day of the Lord (2 Thess. 2:1-3)

²⁴⁵ 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.

²⁴⁶ The sin is apostasy, the total abandonment of the narrow path and pursuit of the inheritance.

²⁴⁷ ἐπιγνωσις – full discernment, acknowledgement (Strong’s #1922)

²⁴⁸ 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).

²⁴⁹ 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.

²⁵⁰ 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.

²⁵¹ 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.

²⁵² 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

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Encouragement to Persevere in the Coming Great Tribulation

32 Now recollect the former days in which, having been illuminated,²⁵³ 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,²⁵⁴ and you accepted with joy the confiscation of your possessions, knowing within yourselves to have a better and permanent possession [in the skies].^{255, 256} 35 Therefore you should not throw away your confidence,²⁵⁷ 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.²⁵⁸ 37 For there remains “a little season.”²⁵⁹ The “coming

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.

²⁵³ See note on Heb. 6:4

²⁵⁴ This refers to Paul's imprisonment at Caesarea, (cf. Acts 21:8-15 & Acts 24:23-27)

²⁵⁵ The earliest copies do not contain this clause, however 1 Pet. 1:4 states: “undecaying inheritance, unspoiled, undiminished, having been guarded in the sky for you.” 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).

²⁵⁶ 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).

²⁵⁷ The “confidence” flows from Christ's sacrifice, and having our hearts sprinkled with His blood and our bodies washed in baptism, (vss. 19-21).

²⁵⁸ 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

²⁵⁹ 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.” (Isaiah 26:20-21 LXX). This prophecy concerns faithful Christians going into the place(s) of hiding for divine preservation during the great tribulation. (See Rev. 12).

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one will arrive, and will not stay long.”²⁶⁰ 38 Yet, “the just shall live²⁶¹ from²⁶² faith,” and, “If he should ever withdraw, my life is not well-pleased in him.”²⁶³ 39 Now we are not of the “withdrawal” unto damnation,²⁶⁴ but of “faith” unto acquisition of soul.^{265, 266}

Chapter 11

All Justified from the same Faith & share the same Hope & Promises

Now faith is the supporting structure²⁶⁷ of anticipation, the persuasion of unseen ventures, 2 for in this the elders were documented. 3 In faith²⁶⁸ we recognize that the ages²⁶⁹ have been organized by the declaration of God, resulting in what is being observed not having transpired from what is apparent.²⁷⁰ 4 In faith Abel offered to God

²⁶⁰ 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 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. 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. The “coming one” is also described in Daniel 9:26-27, along with the abomination of desolation in the midst of the 70th week. The “fleeing” to the place(s) of safety occurs at that time, (Matt. 24:15-28; Luke 17:22-37; Rev. 12:6,14-17).

²⁶¹ “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).

²⁶² The preposition ἐκ literally means “out from,” thus indicating the origin or source by its object, “faith.” That is, “faith” is the source which then results in life through the resurrection.

²⁶³ 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).

²⁶⁴ 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)

²⁶⁵ ψυχή (soul) this often-misunderstood term refers to a whole living person.

²⁶⁶ 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 from 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 from faith.’” That is, the resurrection (shall live) is not obtained through the Law, but from faith. The “acquisition of the life” refers to the resurrection of the body described in Ezekiel 37:1-14.

²⁶⁷ ὑπόστασις – what stands beneath.

²⁶⁸ 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.”

²⁶⁹ See 1 Cor. 2:6-7 & Heb. 1:2. According to Heb. 4:3-11 the coming Kingdom is the “Seventh Day,” the “Sabbatical” for the people of God. This requires six previous “Days,” which are millennia (2 Pet. 3:5-10; Rev. 20:1-4). Thus, from the curse put on the earth until the arrival of the Kingdom is six millennia. The solar system is a clock, counting down to the seventh-day Sabbath Rest.

²⁷⁰ This verse deals with God’s invisible hand directing the course of human history throughout the Millennial Week. This 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.

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a greater sacrifice than Cain, through which he was documented to be just when God testified over his offerings.²⁷¹ Through this, having died, he still speaks.²⁷² 5 In faith Enoch was transported²⁷³ to avoid seeing death,²⁷⁴ and was not located²⁷⁵ because God transported him. For before his transporting he was documented to have fully pleased God.²⁷⁶ 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 Him²⁷⁷). 7 In faith Noah, being apprised about what was as yet unseen,²⁷⁸ being reverent,²⁷⁹ constructed an ark for the saving of his household. Through this he condemned the world and became an heir²⁸⁰ of the justice according to the Faith.²⁸¹ 8 In faith Abraham, having been called, obeyed,²⁸² migrating to the place which he was expecting to receive as the inheritance.²⁸³ And he left not knowing where he was going.²⁸⁴ 9 In faith he lodged in the Land of promise as a foreigner, living in tents with

²⁷¹ Gen. 4:4

²⁷² 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).

²⁷³ That is, relocated (cf. 1 Acts 8:39). 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 in peace and walking with God. In any case, he did not ascend to heaven, since Jesus is the only one to have done so (John 3:13).

²⁷⁴ Enoch was transported to spare his life. This does not mean he never died. Verse 13 says, "*these all died according to faith.*" Josephus indicates that Seth's descendants remained separate from the rest of the population and continued to be righteous through the seventh generation (Enoch's), but that the next generation turned away from God and became wicked and violent (Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Bk. I, ch. 2-3). This may explain why Enoch's life may have been in danger.

²⁷⁵ The imperfect tense of the verb suggests that a search for Enoch took place over a period of time, implying that those searching for him believed he was somewhere still on the earth.

²⁷⁶ Genesis 5:22

²⁷⁷ Deut. 4:2-30; 1 Chron. 28:9; Jer. 29:13-14

²⁷⁸ Gen. 2:5-6 It had never rained before.

²⁷⁹ Having the fear of the Lord which generates reverence and respect.

²⁸⁰ Cf. Rom. 4:13

²⁸¹ κατὰ πίστιν "*in accord with the Faith.*" This clause appears only three times in the New Testament, always referring to the body of doctrine which Paul calls "*the Faith of God's chosen ones,*" and "*the common Faith*" (Titus 1:1,4). This shows that all of the people of faith listed in Hebrews 11 shared in "*the common Faith,*" which has been consistent from Abel to the very last faithful Christian. The same idea is found interwoven throughout this chapter by the fact that all of these people "*died according to the Faith*" (v. 13) and that all of them were looking forward to the fulfillment of the same "*promises*" (v. 39) which are rooted in the permanent inheritance of the Land.

²⁸² Acts 7:2-5

²⁸³ Genesis 13:14-18; 17:8

²⁸⁴ Genesis 12:1

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Isaac and Jacob, the co-heirs of the same promise.²⁸⁵ 10 For he was waiting for the city having foundations,²⁸⁶ whose designer and fashioner is God.²⁸⁷ 11 In faith Sarah herself received power for the overthrowing of a seed,²⁸⁸ and with the appointed season of age, gave birth, since she deemed faithful the one promising,²⁸⁹ 12 though which also, even this of having become dead,²⁹⁰ were begotten from one [man] according as the constellations of heaven in multitude and like sand beside the seashore, innumerable.²⁹¹ 13 These all died according to the Faith,²⁹² not having received the promises, but observing them far ahead,²⁹³ and being persuaded and embracing [them], also acknowledged that they were aliens and foreigners in the Land.²⁹⁴ 14 For those saying

²⁸⁵ Genesis 26:1-5; Genesis 28:13-14; Genesis 35:9-12 (See Appendix B)

²⁸⁶ Isaiah 54:11-12; Rev. 21:14,19. Restored Jerusalem is the "New Jerusalem" in Revelation. See vs. 16

²⁸⁷ 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. 12:22-24, Paul called Jerusalem, "Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem," then immediately quoted from Isaiah 66:10-13 (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.

²⁸⁸ 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 by Sarah's birthing Isaac is also shown by the fact that God referred to Isaac as Abraham's "only-begotten son" (cf. vs. 17 & Gen. 22:2).

²⁸⁹ 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).

²⁹⁰ Sarah's womb was "dead" (Rom. 4:19).

²⁹¹ Sarah is the mother of all Christians (Rom. 9:6-10; Gal. 3:16,26-29; Gal. 4:31)

²⁹² κατὰ πίστιν "in accord with the Faith" (see note on v. 7).

²⁹³ This statement proves that the future inheritance for believers is the fulfillment of the Abrahamic Land promise. Compare vss. 39-40.

²⁹⁴ 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)

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such things demonstrate that they are yearning for the father-land.^{295, 296} 15 And indeed, if they were meditating on [the land] they left behind, they had every opportunity to go back.²⁹⁷ 16 But now they crave the better [homeland], that is, of heavenly dominion.²⁹⁸ Because of this, God is not ashamed of them, to be called their God,²⁹⁹ for He has prepared a city for them.³⁰⁰ 17 In 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,”*³⁰¹ 19 considering that God was also able to raise the dead, from where, in allegory, he did recover him. 20 In faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning the impending [promises].³⁰² 21 In faith Jacob, when dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and bowed over the end of his cane.³⁰³ 22 In faith Joseph, when dying, remembered [the prophecy] about the exodus of the sons of Israel,³⁰⁴ and gave instructions concerning his bones. 23 In faith Moses, being born, was

²⁹⁵ πατρίδα lit. “father-land.” This term appears only once in the Law of Moses (Lev. 25:10), where it refers to returning to the land-inheritance of one’s fathers on the Year of Jubilee.

²⁹⁶ 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.

²⁹⁷ 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.

²⁹⁸ ἐπουρανίου lit. “of heavenly covering.” The land God promised the patriarchs where they lived as foreigners and aliens was covered by the dominion of the Canaanites and other nations (Acts 7:2-5). The patriarchs longed for the fulfillment of God’s promise, when this land would be their permanent inheritance covered by the dominion of heaven.

²⁹⁹ 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. 22:31-32). 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).

³⁰⁰ 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

³⁰¹ Genesis 21:12; Romans 9:7

³⁰² 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. 10:37; Heb. 13:14).

³⁰³ Genesis 49:1,10,18 – a “last days” prophecy

³⁰⁴ Genesis 15:13-16 LXX

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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 In 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. 26 He considered the disparagement of the Anointed one³⁰⁵ to be greater riches than the wealth in Egypt, because he was forward looking unto the reward. 27 In faith he left Egypt, not fearing the anger of the king. For he persevered as though seeing the Invisible One.³⁰⁶ 28 In faith he has appointed the Passover and the application of blood [to the doorposts], so that the executing of the first-produced³⁰⁷ [sons] would not affect them. 29 In faith they walked through the Red Sea, as though dry land. The Egyptians, attempting the same, were swallowed up. 30 In faith the walls of Jericho fell, being circumnavigated for seven days. 31 In 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 in 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.³⁰⁸ 39 Yet all these, having been documented through faith, did not attain the promise, 40 God having provided in advance that better thing³⁰⁹ for us, so that they would not be made complete without us.³¹⁰

³⁰⁵ Moses had knowledge of the Christ, having prophesied about Him. (Deut. 18:15-19; John 5:46; Acts 3:22-23)

³⁰⁶ 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

³⁰⁷ Num. 3:13; Heb. 12:23

³⁰⁸ The faithful remnant of Israel has lived just like Abraham, as a foreigner in the Promised Land.

³⁰⁹ Verse 16. The same permanent homeland and city for which Abraham craved is to be our inheritance also.

³¹⁰ Notice that the righteous, from Abel to us, have the same Faith, Hope, and destiny (cf. Psalm 37).

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Chapter 12

Perseverance to the end "by Faith"

Certainly, we also, having such a massive cloud of witnesses surrounding us,³¹¹ tossing aside every excess load and plaguing sin, should run with endurance the grueling course³¹² lying ahead of us,³¹³ 2 looking unto the Founder and Finisher of the Faith³¹⁴ – Jesus. Who, instead of [choosing] the calm delight lying ahead of Him,³¹⁵ [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."³¹⁶ 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 winds³¹⁷

³¹¹ The witnesses are the people of faith in the previous chapter. That they are "surrounding" us (περικείμενον) refers to the graves of the righteous scattered around the Promised Land and their testimony recorded in the Scriptures which was easily accessible in the synagogues. (cf. Heb. 11:4; Rom. 15:1-4; 1 Cor. 10:1-12).

³¹² The Greek word ἀγῶνα is the source of our English word, "agony." It refers to intense tribulation and persecution (Phil. 1:29-30; 1 Thess. 2:2). While no doubt referring to all persecution, it especially refers to the prophesied great tribulation mentioned in Heb. 10:37-39.

³¹³ Again, "the grueling course lying ahead of us" points to a specific prophesied period of great tribulation where endurance is necessary to safely navigate it.

³¹⁴ Jesus is both the "Founder" as well as the "Finisher" of "the Faith" to which all those listed in the previous chapter belong. This indicates not only His interaction even before Abel (Heb. 11:4; 1 Pet. 1:20), but also His shepherding "the Faith" since the very beginning, not only after His incarnation. Many translations omit the definite article and substitute the pronoun "our" which seems to limit the scope to merely the New Testament, effectively destroying this important connection to the common Faith practiced by all the righteous since Abel.

³¹⁵ Phil. 2:5-8; 2 Cor. 8:9

³¹⁶ Proverbs 3:11-12

³¹⁷ The Father of the four winds refers to the *Valley of Dry Bones* prophecy of Ezekiel. "And he said to me, Prophecy 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).

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and live?³¹⁸ 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.

Discipline will bring either Reform or Apostasy

12 Therefore, “*Straighten the hands which have become limp, and the knees which have become weak.*”³¹⁹ 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. 15 Watch over [each other], that no one exhausts the grace of God, that no growing “*root of bitterness*”³²⁰ 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!³²¹

Our common Hope, the Universal Assembly in Restored Jerusalem

18 For you have not approached toward the mountain³²² that could be touched, which has been burnt³²³ 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

³¹⁸ This is a reference to the resurrection. (See notes on Heb. 4:12).

³¹⁹ 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)

³²⁰ 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.

³²¹ Genesis 27:34-38

³²² Mount Sinai, Exodus 19

³²³ The perfect tense implies that the results of this burning of Mt Sinai could still be seen in Paul’s day.

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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 and shaking."*³²⁴ 22 But you have approached toward Mount Zion, the city of the living God,³²⁵ Jerusalem of heavenly dominion,³²⁶ and tens of thousands of messengers,³²⁷ 23 toward the universal congregation³²⁸ and assembly³²⁹ of first-produced ones³³⁰ having been preregistered in the skies,³³¹ and toward God the Judge of all, and toward the breaths³³² 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.³³³

³²⁴ 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).

³²⁵ Mt Zion, the city of God, is always Jerusalem (Psalm 48)

³²⁶ Isaiah 65:17-25; 66:10-18, restored Jerusalem under heavenly dominion, see Appendix C

³²⁷ 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)

³²⁸ 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 66:10-13 LXX*).

³²⁹ Psalm 22:22 & Heb. 2:12 refers to the great "assembly" at Jesus' return (cf. Heb. 10:25).

³³⁰ 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).

³³¹ In the Book of Life (Luke 10:20)

³³² See notes on Heb. 4:12 & 12:9.

³³³ Abel only looked forward, through the symbolism of the animal sacrifices, to the remission of his sins necessary for securing the permanent inheritance and immortality. (See: Heb. 11:4). Yet, the blood of the New Covenant is retroactively applied to all of the people of faith including Abel (Heb. 9:15).

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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,³³⁴ much more we [will not escape – that is] those who turn away from the one [speaking] from the skies.³³⁵ 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.”³³⁶ 27 Yet this [statement], “Yet once more...,” reveals the replacing³³⁷ of what is being shaken³³⁸ (as those which have been constructed³³⁹) so that the unshakable thing should remain.³⁴⁰

The Glorious Kingdom Inheritance

28 Through this³⁴¹ unshakable Kingdom which we are receiving,³⁴² we may possess grace through which we may offer divine service³⁴³ pleasing to God with reverence and fear. 29 For our God is a consuming fire.³⁴⁴

³³⁴ The voice speaking from Mount Sinai

³³⁵ Matt. 3:17; Matt. 17:5; John 12:27-30

³³⁶ 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. (Hag 2:6-9).

³³⁷ The transferring of a thing or state (cf. Heb. 7:12 & 11:5)

³³⁸ “*What is being shaken*” refers to the Temples and Levitical Priesthood of the Mosaic Covenant.

³³⁹ 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.

³⁴⁰ 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).

³⁴¹ The word “this” must refer back to Haggai’s prophecy of the greater Kingdom & Temple.

³⁴² 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)

³⁴³ In the Kingdom, the Priesthood will consist of Christians (Col. 2:16-17; 1 Pet. 2:4-5; Rev. 20:6)

³⁴⁴ Deut. 4:24

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Chapter 13

Final Exhortations

Retain brotherly love. 2 Do not forget hospitality, for by this some have lodged messengers³⁴⁵ 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.³⁴⁶ 5 Your manner [should] not be fondness for silver,³⁴⁷ [but] being content with what you have. For He has said, *"I will certainly not ignore you or abandon you."*³⁴⁸ 6 Therefore, we have the courage to say, *"The Master is my helper, and I will not fear! What can anyone do to me?"*³⁴⁹ 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, yesterday and today, [is] the same one also unto the ages. 9 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 benefited.

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."*³⁵⁰ 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"*³⁵¹ carrying His ridicule. 14 For we do

³⁴⁵ 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.

³⁴⁶ Rev. 2:18-29

³⁴⁷ Exodus 16:16-20; James 5:1-6

³⁴⁸ 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).

³⁴⁹ Psalm 118:6 LXX

³⁵⁰ Exod. 29:14

³⁵¹ 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 the pillar of cloud to meet with Moses *"face to face, as a man speaks to his friend"* (Exod. 33:11, cf. John 1:18). The earliest Christians understood this to be the Son of God (Justin, Dialogue with Trypho, ch. xxxviii).

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not possess a permanent city now, but we yearn for the impending one.³⁵² 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,³⁵³ Amen!³⁵⁴

³⁵² Heb. 11:14,16,40 (cf. Isaiah 54 & Gal. 4:21-28; Isaiah 62 & Rev. 21:2,9-10)

³⁵³ Paul's signature statement in all of his letters written in his own handwriting (2 Thess. 3:17-18)

³⁵⁴ Some manuscripts add: "Written to the Hebrews from Italy through Timothy."