

Chapter Eight

The adjective *kephalaïos* fundamentally means that which pertains to the head or what is chief. Here it refers to the somewhat convoluted argument our author has made concerning Jesus Christ as high priest, his proper name not being mentioned until vs. 6. So at this point or more than half way through the letter he wishes to sum things up before advancing, again favoring the first person plural so as to make what he presents more inclusive. He starts off in a grand manner, that the office of high priest he attributes to Jesus is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven. *Kathistemi* is the verb last noted in 7.28 as “appoints.”

In the verse at hand the high priest seems to have taken this position on his own, one which literally is *eis* or into the throne, *Megalosune* being an impersonal noun suggestive of preeminence. Not only that, this *kathisemi/eis* is located in (*en*) the transcendent realm of heaven. Judging by use of the verb plus the prepositions *eis* and *en*, we get the impression that our author wants his readers to realize that the high priest is truly a transcendent reality with emphasis upon his priesthood as being the same.

Vs. 2 continues as part of the previous verse where the high priest is called a minister or *leitourgos*, one who serves in the sanctuary. He’s rendered as being with the following two things:

- The adjective *hagios* [-], literally as “of the holy things.”
- The tent (*skene*) which is true, this image suggestive of impermanence as during Israel’s forty years in the Sinai wilderness.

As for the tent, it’s sent up by the Lord and not by men, the verb being *pegnumi* or to fix or stick as into the ground, a sign of making what is transitory at least quasi-permanent.

Vs. 3 has another instance of the verb *kathistemi*, this time as it pertains to the high priest’s duty of offering gifts, *prosphero* being a word applicable to that office, to bring forth or towards (*phero* + *pros-*) with respect to gifts and sacrifices. Obviously to carry out this duty he needs something to offer, *anagkaios* as necessary and *prosphero*. Right after this in vs. 4 our author shifts from this high priest (in heaven) to those on earth. By reason of being there, they make offerings according to the Law, *nomos* [-] or *Torah*. The contrast being made is stronger by *oude* which translates as “(not) at all.” Chances are some if not many of the readers have difficulty grasping this because at the time priests were active in the Jerusalem temple offering both

sacrifices and gifts. Note, however, that gifts (*doron*) are mentioned, not sacrifices, though the two can be taken as interchangeable.

Vs. 5 expands on the just mentioned gifts which are equivalent to both a copy and a shadow of the sanctuary in heaven, *hupodeigma* and *skia*. The former consists of the verbal root *deiknumi* (to show) prefaced with the preposition *hupo-* or under, the idea being to give a glimpse or make a show as well as to infer by teaching. And so *hupodeigma* is an example or pattern not to be simply looked at but to be copied or followed, again, this with respect to gifts in accord with *Torah*. As for *skia*, a shadow always follows the thing or person making it.

Note that the adjective *epouranios* or heavenly translates as “sanctuary,” the **RSV** missing the noun. It’s with the verb *latreuo* or to serve which here applies to religious duties. Moses is mentioned as the one who erects the tent or *skene* [-] where this *latreuo* is to take place, again *skene* implying a movable structure, one that isn’t permanent. Just that fact alone suffices to show that the *hupodeigma* and *skia* are temporary. Moses had been warned by God—*chrematizo* being the imparting of a divine message as through an oracle—with regard to the act of *epiteleo*, literally to finish upon (*epi-*), that applying to the carrying out of instructions.

Vs. 5 continues with a quote from Ex 25.40 which runs in full as: “And see that you make them after the pattern for them which is being shown you on the mountain.” In both the Hebrew and text at hand “see” is both a command and warning for Moses to pay close attention as to what he’s about to undertake. *Tupos* or type is the embodiment of those features belonging to a model or in short, an image. Compare with *hupodeigma*, for the verbal root to this noun is found here, *deiknumi* or to show as noted above. As for *tupos*, the Hebrew is *tavnyth* fundamentally as a structure of a building. Moses is to “build” this structure having one eye on it and the other eye on the *tavnyth* or *tupos*. In this instance it doesn’t mean splitting his vision but of unifying it. Essential to this building is Moses carrying the memory of the *tavnyth/tupos* down from the mountain to a suitable construction site. He takes great care to keep it hidden from prying eyes until its ready.

Vs. 6 begins with *nuni de* which the **RSV** translates as “but as it is” and the **NIV** as “but.” As expected, it signals a shift in emphasis with the Exodus verse (and other verses discussed above) in mind.¹⁵ That is to say, the **RSV** has “Christ” and the **NIV** has “God.” However, the Greek text lacks both. The core of our author’s argument centers around *tugchano* or to attain or to hit upon suggesting that one has reached the object one has had in mind. Here it is *leitourgia* or service which has a formal or

¹⁵ The **RSV** has “Christ” and the **NIV** has “God.” However, the Greek lacks both.

public character (*laos + ergon* or *people + work*). “He” is a mediator of a better (the comparative of *agathos* or good) covenant or that *tupos/tavnyth* just delineated. The reason for this superiority? It is legislated upon (*epi*) promises which are better (the comparative of *agathos* a second time). The verb *nomotheteo* means to function as a giver of the Law (*tithemi + nomos*, - for both) with respect to *epaggelia* [-] or promises, the noun being in the plural.

Vs. 7 continues...if the first covenant (*diatheke* not mentioned but implied: *dia + tithemi*) had been without fault (*amemptos*), there would be no need for a second one. This is rendered literally as “not would have sought a second place,” *zeteo* with *topos* and leads into vs. 8 where “he” (i.e., the Lord) finds fault with “them” or the Israelites, *memphomai* being tied in with *amemptos* or faultless in vs. 7. Thus we have an extended quote from Jeremiah (31.31-34) which runs through vs. 12. It’s presented here in its entirety for the sake of reference and clarity followed by a continuation of the text at hand:

31) “Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, 32) not like the covenant which I made with their fathers when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant which they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. 33) But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it upon their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34) And no longer shall each man teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

Vs. 8 continues as it introduces this excerpt with *idou* [-] or “behold,” a way to get attention just as the Hebrew does with *hineh*. After all, it is the Lord who is speaking throughout these verses. As for the nature of the days at hand, they aren’t specified, but we can presume our author felt his readers—mostly Jews—were quite familiar with this prophetic way of speaking. Also “days” has a special significance in light of the impending destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans although as pointed out a number of times, the Letter to the Hebrews was written just prior to that cataclysmic event. The verb *sunteleo* is composed of the root *teleo* (to complete, fulfill) prefaced with the preposition *sun-* or with and refers to completing something that has been in process. *Sunteleo* is with the preposition *epi*, literally “upon the house of Israel” including “house of Judah.” It’s object is the new covenant or *diatheke* [-]. The Hebrew *karath* or to cut is equivalent to *sunteleo*; *beryth* is the equivalent to *diatheke*.

The covenant presented in vs. 9 is not in accord with (*kata*) the one the Lord made with their fathers, this having direct application to the readers at hand who mostly are Jewish. Reference to the day (compare with the future days of vs. 8) is the Exodus, the Lord using the image of his hand to take them from Egypt. The verb concerning this hand is *epilambano* [-], to take upon (*epi-*); the Hebrew equivalent is *chazaq* or to be strong with the preposition *b-* (in) prefaced to hand. It's followed by the verb *exago* and *ek* (Egypt); i.e., two uses of the preposition *ex-* or from.

Right away or even parallel to this we're introduced to something that will happen repeatedly throughout Israel's history. The small word *hoti* or "for" is key here, setting the stage for the verb *emmeno* or to abide by, to remain fixed. It has the preposition *en-* prefaced to the root followed by the same preposition with regard to *diatheke*. I.e., Israel failed with regard to this double in, if you will, which so early in the game is depressing. Then the Lord adds that he had no regard for the people, *ameleo* also as to be careless, to neglect. The latter two definitions certainly fit in well how the Lord feels at this moment. The Hebrew *bahal* (to loathe, to reject) is just as strong if not more so.

Vs. 10 begins with *hoti* translated as "because" and continues with the same sense of importance as in the previous verse, only showing a new covenant the Lord will make, the verb *diatithemi* being the root for *diatheke*, literally as a placing-through (*dia-*). He will ¹⁶ do this with the house of Israel, the house of Judah as in vs. 8 not mentioned. However, this placing-through will happen only after those days, the same ones as in vs. 8. It will consist in the following two:

-Will place the divine *nomos* [-] or laws into (*eis*) their minds, *dianoia* also as mind as a mode of thinking which consists of the root *nous* (also mind) with the preposition *dia-* or through; i.e., a more comprehensive sense of *nous*. *Torah* is in the Hebrew text.

-Will write the same *nomos/Torah* upon their hearts: the verb *epigrapho* with the preposition *epi*; i.e., two instances of the same preposition. Both are followed by two instances where the preposition *eis* (into) is found: the Lord literally "into their God" and "into my people." The Hebrew text has a number of words with the letter *l* indicative of direction toward-which: *hal-*, *libam*, *lahem*, *le'lohym*, *ly* and *leham* (on, to hearts, to them, to God, to me and to my people).

Vs. 11 starts off with a deliberate negative connotation for effect, that is, it isn't necessary to teach another person to know the Lord, *polites* more specifically as citizen. The reason? Everyone will know the Lord. There are two verbs here, *ginosko*

¹⁶ Note that all verbs from here to the end of the Jeremiah quote are in the future tense.

[-] and *oido* for the Hebrew *yadah*, to know in the intimate sense. The former applies to attaining knowledge of someone or something as well as to acquire information while the latter leans in the direction of understanding, of grasping the meaning of something. *Oida*...not *ginosko*...will apply to applies to everyone without exception.

Vs. 12 concludes this extended citation from Jeremiah with the Lord saying that he will have mercy on the iniquities of Israel and no longer remember their sins. Thus being merciful and not remembering turn out to be one and the same. *Hileos* is the adjective which also means gracious; the Hebrew has the verb *salach*, to pardon or to forgive.

The last verse of Chapter Eight shows how our author sums up the Jeremiah passage just cited, something pretty much expected. Actually it had captured his attention some time ago and made such an impression on him that he wanted to share it with his readers. Since action from vs. 10 through vs. 12 is in the future, surely it can apply to them just as well. In other words, the Lord's ability to intervene is open-ended. So when the Lord speaks of a new covenant, automatically it makes the first obsolete, *palaioo* meaning to be old which implies being worn out. The second sentence of vs. 13 is quite definitive: that which is *palaioo* is not just growing old (*gyrasko* suggests the decay of old age) but getting close to vanishing, *aphanizo*, disappearing which also connotes being destroyed. We can just imagine our author watching the Levitical priests performing their functions in the temple with the Romans drawing close to destroy it all.

Chapter Nine

A brief warning is in order with regard to this chapter as well as the next one which pretty much form a single unit. Both go into considerable detail with regard to the characteristics of Christ's sacrifice and how it ties in with the Jewish ones. As pointed out several times earlier, the sacrifices in the Jerusalem temple are still going on when our author is composing his letter. And so following these details is a formidable task...interesting but at the same time quite involved. The author of Hebrews is unknown, a well-known fact. Nevertheless, the details he provides with regard to Jewish liturgical practices and their references makes you wonder if he had been a former Levite or member of the priestly class, newly converted to the Christian faith.

The first nine verses of this new chapter concern the first covenant, our author desiring to get right down to details as indicated by *men oun*, "now even." Actually

this can be viewed as a kind of put-down that began in the last verse of Chapter Eight. Also it's in preparation to distinguish between two covenants using the words "first" and "last" as a means of describing them. Surely this must have some impact upon his listeners who are accustomed to the first covenant still being observed as centered in the Jerusalem temple. In other words, they were unaccustomed to such a distinction and had to be moved into it gently, not forcefully. We have no idea how it panned out among followers of Judaism.

As for the word "covenant," it isn't *diatheke* as found above but *latreia* which is both the service and the worship of God and occurs one other time in Hebrews, vs. 6. This covenant or order of worship is the one which came first (another way instead of 'first covenant') and has the following two components:

- Regulations which pertain to correction action or behavior, *dikaioma*.
- A sanctuary or *to hagon*, literally as "the holy" which is described as *kosmikos* or proper to the earth in the physical sense.

Vs. 2 describes *to hagon* as a tent or *skene* noted last in 8.5 as erected by Moses and presented here in terms of having been prepared, *kataskeuazo* [-], to equip or to furnish fully. More specifically this tent is the outer one, *protos* more as the first in the sense of being in front. Within it are the lampstand, table and bread of offering. All this is described in detail in Ex 26.1-30, *mishkan* being the noun or habitation, dwelling place. The last verse is key to all this: "And you shall erect the tabernacle according to the plan for it which has been shown you on the mountain." *Mishpat* is the noun usually taken as judgment but here as something done in accord with a decree. And so vs. 2 concludes with the tent called *Hagia* (neuter plural).

Vs. 3 speaks of a second curtain or *katapetasma* (*petannumi* or to spread out) behind which is a tent or *skene* [-], *Hagia Hagion* or the Holy of Holies. Our author continues to describe its contents which as noted earlier, is familiar to some of his readers but most likely not to others whom he's addressing. As for these biblical details, they may be found in accord with footnotes in the **RSV** or **NIV**. The exposition at hand closes mercifully, if you will, by saying that we (the first person plural) cannot go into details about all this, the phrase being *kata meros* or "according to part."

In a sense, vss. 6-10 refer to what our author had just said, for he goes into some details about how the priests function. He starts off with saying that once the place of worship has been take care of (*kataskeuazo*, -), the priests go continually into the tent which is outer or *protos*, the verb *eiseimi* or to go into with the preposition *eis*. In

other words, we have two examples of *eis*. Such *eis* is marked by *dia pantos* which literally reads “through all” and is translated as “forever.” It is precisely there that they carry out their service or *latreia* [-], *epiteleo* [-], or to finish-upon. And so in one verse we have quite a lot of prepositions which are important to understand what’s being presented.

Vs. 7 is a continuation of the previous verse beginning with “but” (*de*) to contrast between the priests serving in the outer tent and in (*eis*, into) the second which is reserved for the high priest, two references being Ex 30.10 and Lev 16.2, that is, with regard to Aaron. With him he takes blood offered for himself and the errors of the people, *agnoema* meaning a sin committed in ignorance or unintentionally, alpha privative and *agnoeo* [-].

According to vs. 8 such is the manner by which the Holy Spirit (*Pneuma* or breath, -) operates. Note two verbs here: *deloo* or to make clear and *phaneroo*, to make manifest. The first concerns pointing out in a definitive manner and the second, to make known, that is, the entrance into the sanctuary is not open but closed. As for this way or *hodos*, it remained closed as long as the second tent is in existence, *stasis* fundamentally as the act of standing. And as for the tent, it’s symbolic of the present age, *parabole* being a noun which serves as a model or example pointing beyond itself, this with the preposition *eis* or into concerning the time or *kairos* [-] of the present age, *enistemi* literally as to stand in; i.e., an *eis* followed by *en-*.

Vs. 9 continues with a second sentence saying that within the set-up just described (*kata* being used, in accord with it) are gifts and sacrifices which despite being offered, are unable to perfect the worshiper’s conscience. The verb *teleioo* [-] suggests bringing to completion as well as perfection with regard to *suneidesis*, literally a knowing-with or faculty to distinguish right from wrong. Instead of this important fact, vs. 10 says that both gifts and sacrifices are concerned exclusively with baptisms and regulations for the body until the time—the opportune moment or *kairos* [-]—when the new order comes, this being *diorthosis*, the time to set things in proper order.

Vs. 11 represents a shift in emphasis (*de* or but) away from the first covenant, this time in the context of Christ’s appearing, *paragignomai* meaning to draw near in the sense of being beside, *para-*. Such being-beside has taken place and is a reality waiting to be accessed, that is, Christ as high priest who represents good things (*agathos*, -) about to come. How does he go about this? He enters the Holy Place, *eiserchomai* [-] along with the preposition *eis* concerning *Ta Hagia* [-]. That is, a double *eis* or double going into which vs. 11 calls a tent, a greater and more perfect one, the latter as *teleios*

[-] and indicative of completion. The **RSV** puts in parentheses the fact that this tent isn't made with hands which means it doesn't belong to this creation, *ktisis* [-] also as a founding or settling, a pretty good way of describing the current situation.

As for the “double *eis*” of the last paragraph, once in the *Ta Hagia*, Christ offers his own blood as a redemption which is eternal instead of that of animals. The verb is *heurisko* [-], fundamentally as to find but as here, to secure, make present with regard to a *lutrosis* or releasing which is *aionios* [-].

Vss. 13 and 14 present a contrast between the old or still current dispensation and the one brought by Christ which is being introduced while the former is still in existence but clearly on its last legs. It does so by *ei gar* introducing vs. 13 and *poso mallon* of vs. 14, “for if” and “how much more.” Even the casual reader can pick up on the fact that the author favors the latter. The first delineated in Leviticus concerns the Day of Atonement with emphasis on 16.14-16 or where Aaron is to make atonement (*kaphar* for or *hal*, upon) the holy place where the verb means to cover over. Hebrews says that such *kaphar* sanctifies but only with respect to purification of the flesh, the verb *hagiazo* pertaining to *katharotes*. However, flesh (*sarx*, -) clearly limits this purification. While for the moment *sarx* remains a bit fuzzy, it comes into clearer focus in the next verse.

In vs. 14 we have the counterpart to what had been described above in the context of the Leviticus reference verse. The blood of Christ is contrasted with that of goats, bulls and heifers by reason of having offered himself, the verb *prosphero* [-] with the preposition *pros-*, direction towards-which, and is found frequently in Hebrews. He does this not on his own but through the mediation of the Holy Spirit as blameless to God, *amormos*. This Spirit is intimated as a kind of witness to this *pros + phero* and is the only one along with the Father knows how Jesus Christ effects it. The sole image we have consists of the above mentioned animals which are slaughtered ritually, but even that is insufficient. Jesus' blood enables us to purify our consciences, *suneidesis* or our *sun + eido*, knowing together. This *katharizo* or cleansing is from works (*ergon*, -) which are dead literally into serving (*eis* and *latreuo*, -) not just God but God who is living.

Vs. 15 begins with *kai dia touto* (literally, ‘and through this’) or “therefore” which signals what our author considers a successful resolution to his argument on behalf of the priesthood proper to Jesus Christ. In other words, *kai dia touto* heralds a continuation of this theme. He starts with the office of *mesites*, mediator or arbiter, someone who stands in the middle with regard to a new covenant. In other words, Jesus acts as an advocate to effect all that our author has presented thus far about this

covenant. However, people must be tuned into to this mediation which is what he means they have to be called (*kaleo*). If so—and there’s no guarantee that such calling works for everyone—they will receive the eternal inheritance (*kleronomia*: *kleros* + *nomos*, both of which are found earlier) which had been promised.

Note the somewhat impersonal way death is inserted into vs. 15: “since a death has occurred.” It seem to be a way our author prefers in order to draw a parallel between Christ’s death and the offering of animals in sacrifice. His death—not those of animals—redeems those called from transgressions committed under the first covenant. This may be put as follows: “into redemption of trespasses upon the first covenant:” *eis* + *apolutrosis* (i.e., *eis* with regard to *apo*-) followed by *parabasis* [-] + *epi* with regard to *diatheke*. In sum, another example of the way by which prepositions express how divine reality works, if we can put it as such.

Vs. 16 speaks of a will, *diatheke* being the same word as covenant as found elsewhere and implies the death of the person who had drawn it up, *diatithemi* [-] being the verbal root of *diatheke*. Vs. 17 continues to say that such a will/covenant comes into being only at death described as *bebaios* [-], firm, stable. Compare this with the verb *ischuno* which here means to be in force and alternately to have power and applies to the person being alive who makes the will.

Vs. 18 begins with *hothen* [-] translated as “hence.” It ties in with the fact that blood is necessary for ratifying a covenant as is the case with the first one, *egkainizo* fundamentally as giving newness to something, of keeping the first covenant alive and meaningful. Our author gives the example of Moses sprinkling the people and the book although the Exodus account doesn’t mention the latter. However, that book (*sepher*) is associated with the covenant which Moses read literally in the ears of the people (cf. Ex 24.7).

Vs. 20 quotes Moses in vs. 38 with the verb *entello* meaning to enjoin as well as to command with *en-* or in prefaced to the verbal root *tello*, to make arise. As for the quote, it comes from Ex 24.8 and runs in full as “And Moses took the blood and threw it upon the people and said, ‘Behold the blood of the covenant which the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words.’” *Davar* is the noun for word which as noted earlier implies expression, that is, as applicable to the covenant. Moses did the same with regard to the tent and vessels used for worship (*leitourgia*, -). Vs. 22 continues with the observation which is a kind of summary by saying that everything under the Law (*nomos/Torah*) requires purification or *katharizo* [-] by the shedding of blood without which there’s no forgiveness of sin, *aphesis* also as the act of freeing or pardon.

Our author's talk about purification by blood is situated in the context of heavenly realities, the focus of those verses beginning with vs. 23 and runs through the rest of Chapter Nine. He seems the necessity (*anagke*, -) for what he had described as with Moses in terms of copies or *hupodeigma* [-], this word often used as an example of behavior with moral instruction in mind. Here the *hupo-* or under is stressed, if you will, by reason of association with those in heaven, *ouranos* being the adjective used. The two have to be aligned, that is, through purification (*katharizo*, -). Then we have the necessity of heavenly things requiring better sacrifices, this preparing what will come next with respect to Jesus Christ. Note here the two different adjectives pertaining to heaven, *ouranos* as just mentioned and now *epouranios*. The latter has the preposition *epi-* prefaced to it intimating a reality (Jesus Christ) which is *epi-* the heavenly things.

Vs. 24 contrasts the *Hagia* [-] or the plural adjective Holies with the singular noun *ouranos*, both having the preposition *eis* (into) and as prefaced to the verb *eiserchomai* [-]. Christ does not enter the first one which is a copy or *antitupos*, an adjective with the idea of corresponding to something, of making a representation. With regard to the latter, Christ appears literally in the face (*prosopon*) of God on our behalf, *emphanizo* also as to open up to view, the preposition *em-* or *en-* meaning in. As for this *eiserchomai*, nothing is said outrightly as to how Christ did it. Our author assumes from all that he presented that it came about by his death.

In vs. 25 we have a point that must have concerned quite a few readers, whether Christ's suffering had to be repeated endlessly, this not unlike some objections raised today concerning the Catholic Mass. This position is made more acceptable, if you will, by saying that Christ offers himself from the foundation (*katabole*, -) of the world. The verb here is *prosphero* as noted already. However, the *pros-* prefaced to the verbal root dispels any idea of repetition because it intimates continuous direction towards-which.

The idea of Christ suffering constantly is resolved when he appears in a definitive manner at the end of the age in order that his own sacrifice put away sin. The verb is *phaneroo*, to cause to become visible, which suggests that Christ was manifest not unlike the way he had been to his disciples after his resurrection (cf. Jn 21.1). The adverb *apax* conveys this definitiveness, that there's no substitute, for it is literally upon (*epi*) the *sunteleia* of the age. The noun consists of the preposition *sun-* or with prefaced to the root which conveys completion as well as perfection. Note that it pertains to the plural of *aion* [-] conveying a period of existence which can be the inevitable drawing to a close of the Levitical sacrifices and all that involves. There

Christ will put away sin, this indicated by the noun *athetesis* suggestive of a complete removal.

Vs. 27 and vs. 28 set up a contrast by means of *kai kath' hoson* and *houtos kai*, “and just as” and “so.” The first pertains to the inevitable or the definitiveness of *apax* (the first of two instances) as above with regard to the course of human life, that is, death as well as the equally inevitable judgment or *krisis*. Inferred is Gn 3.19: “By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken, for dust you are and to dust you will return” (NIV).

With *kai kath' hosos* kept in mind, we can move to *houtos kai* of vs. 28 which is part of the previous verse. That is, Christ had been offered once (the second instance of *apax*) whose offering or *prosphero* leads into or *eis* his *anaphero*. I.e., *pros* + *phero* -> *ana* + *phero* (to bear). His appearance is expressed by the verb *horao* [-], the active nature compared with the more passive *phaneroo* of vs. 26 implies Christ taking direct action. This fits in nicely with the fact that this second time—*hhorao* again compared with *phaneroo*—is for saving persons eagerly waiting for (*eis* or into) his salvation, *soteria* [-]. The verb expressive of this eagerness is *apekdechomai*, the root *dechomai* or to receive prefaced with *apo-* and *ek-* combined, from and out of.

Chapter Ten

This is the second longest chapter in Hebrews consisting of thirty-nine verses. It continues seamlessly from the previous one where our author talks about Christ's sacrifice as being once and for all, the two chapters essentially forming one unit. Vs. 1 is rather long and complicated, starting off with the Law (*nomos* or *Torah*, -) presented as a shadow of good things to come, *agathos* [-] being the adjective. It modifies the verb *mello* representing realities as laying in the future but left somewhat vague. As for *skia* [-], here it's alone whereas in 8.5 we have it with *hupodeigma* or copy. Obviously the Law contains a lot of material and to call it a shadow is a bold—some might say impudent—way of describing something held so dearly. Obviously to view it as a shadow perks interest in the inferred superior of *agathos* which lays in the future and has not yet come into greater clarity.

And so *nomos/Torah* is not the same (*autos*) form of such future goods, *eikon* also as image with regard to *pragma* [-] which is inferred by the adjective *agathos*. Because it is one crucial step away, never can it make perfect anyone who wants to approach it. That is to say, the *pros-* of *proserchomai* (to approach, draw near) is ineffective concerning its end as inferred by the verb *teleioo* [-] with regard to sacrifices offered.

Such offerings are described as being made in two ways, yearly ('according to year') and continuously, *eis* or into with regard to *dienekes* [-], literally as "into without interruption."

Vs. 2 consists of two sentences, the first being a rhetorical question beginning with *epei* or "since." Our author asks aloud about the offerings described as "according to year" and "into continually." That is to say, he'd like to know if they would cease being offered, *prosphero* [-]. I.e., at issue is the need for *pros-* or bringing toward-which. Obviously for him such *pros-* has come to an end.

The second sentence of vs. 2 brings up what can be a sore point for those still adhering to the temple form of worship. Our author doesn't mince words as to its lack of effectiveness as when using the adverb *hapax* or once in a hypothetical situation. That is to say, if those engaged in the temple's liturgical worship (*latreuo*, -) had experienced being cleansed (*katharizo*, -), they would have no awareness of sin, *suneidesis* [-], literally a knowing-with.

Such a statement begs to be answered which is why immediately in the next verse the sacrifices offered in the temple have a yearly reminder of sin. The noun is *anamnesis*, a fuller type of remembrance. For a reference to all this, cf. Lev 16.34: "And this shall be an everlasting statute for you, that atonement may be made for the people of Israel once in the year because of their sins." We can imagine that when coming across the word "everlasting" (*holam*) our author was thinking of Jesus Christ.

Vs. 4 concludes a three verse exposition on the soon-to-be outdated form of Jewish worship with *adunatos* [-], that it's impossible for the blood of animals so offered should remove sin, the verb being *aphaireo*, to cause a state or condition to be removed. This final touch, if you will, introduces the next verse which, in turn, introduces several verses (6-8) from Psalm Forty. The two key words are *eisrchomai* [-] with *eis*, "to come into into," if you will, with respect to the world (*kosmos*).

Before continuing with the Hebrews text, here are the verses quoted from Psalm Forty, that is, from the **RSV**: "Sacrifice and offering you do not desire; but you have given me an open ear. Burnt offering and sin offering you have not required. Then I said, 'Lo, I come; in the roll of the book it is written of me; I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart.'"

In vs. 5 there's a contrast between sacrifices and offerings on one hand and a body (*soma*, -) on the other. To the first belongs the verb *ethelo*, to be willing or be disposed

and to the second the negative of *katartizo*, to prepare or to put in a proper condition. The preposition *kata-* is prefaced to the verbal root indicative of being in accord with a plan, etc.). As for *soma*, it is in the **LXX** whereas the Hebrew has an open ear, one ready to listen which isn't terribly removed from the former. I.e., the overall idea is a willing disposition.

Vs. 6 mentions two types of offerings, those which are burnt and those pertaining to sin. The Lord does not delight in either one of them, *eudokeo* meaning to consider something as good, *eu-* being the adverbial form of *agathos* or good.

Although the psalmist is concerned with sacrifices in the previous verses, vs. 7 has him speaking directly to God or in the context of vs. 5, it is Christ who is speaking despite the verse lacking his proper name, not untypical of our author's approach. Actually vs. 7 is what our author is waiting for, using the words here to bolster his preference for Jesus' sacrifice over the ones still taking place at the Jerusalem temple. Here he uses *idou [-]* or "lo" which corresponds to the Hebrew *hineh*, a way of getting attention. In other words, he's drawing attention to the scroll of the book where it's written of him to do God's will, *thelema [-]*. A footnote in the **NIV** says of this, "the scroll refers to the personal copy of the law that the king is to take at the time of his enthronement to serve as the covenant charter of his administration." The same footnote refers to Dt 17.18-20 as a possible reference where the king is to read from it. In sum, he's to revere the Lord and follow carefully all the words of the law. The two key words are *yare'* and *shamar*, also as to fear and to guard as a watchmen, the object being the *davar [-]* of *Torah*.

Vss. 8 and 9 form one unit and are to be taken as such. First our author hearkens back to Ps 40.6 which in the text at hand is vs. 5, delighting to mention sacrifices, offerings and burnt offerings as now being passé. This delight is emphasized by the words in parentheses (**RSV**), that they are in accord with (*kata*) the law or *nomos [-]*. Next vs. 9 begins with what must be one of his favorites words, *tote* or "then" which shifts attention to "him" coming to do God's will which is cited in vs. 7. Note another instance where he prefers to use the first person singular instead of the proper name.

In a new sentence within vs. 9 our author says with confidence he finds it almost difficult to conceal that "he" abolishes the first covenant in order to establish the second one. The two verbs are *anaireo* and *histemi [-]*, to remove or take away and to stand or set up.

As for the will (*thelema*, -) in vs. 10 which refers to its use in vs. 7, we—again, first person plural where our author includes himself—have been sanctified, *hagiazo* [-] or made holy. This is effected through the body of Jesus Christ and done once and for all, *ephapax* being the crowning achievement or with the preposition *epi-* (upon) prefaced to the adverb *hapax* as noted above (‘once’). With this, our author can turn attention to Christ as priest.

Vs. 11 begins with the conjunctive *kai* or “and” as an introduction to show the contrast between sacrifices of the old dispensation and the one of Christ in vs. 12. First we have mention of priests offering the same sacrifices each day, *kath’hemeran* and *pollakis* (daily and repeatedly) emphasizing that while this is still going on, it is superseded. For good measure he throws in *oudepote* or never with regard to taking away sins, the verb being *periaireo*, the root *aiereo* (to take) prefaced with the preposition *peri-* or around, to remove something that stands around.

Vs. 12 starts off with the tiny but all-important *de* [-] or but which sets up another facet of the contrast being made between the two covenants. While all this is advancing, you can’t help but wonder how readers of this letter are buying into it (or not). In the end, we can only speculate, but as noted several times earlier, some must have expressed exasperation either publicly or privately because the Jerusalem temple was still in operation. Contrast *eis to dienekes* [-] or literally “into without interruption” (i.e., ‘for all time’) with *kath’hemeran* and *pollakis* of vs. 11. In other words, the definitive vs. that which is not definitive; also one sacrifice vs. the multitude of sacrifices.

Upon completion of the once-for-all sacrifice “he” takes a seat at God’s right hand which is a partial quote from Ps 110:1: “The Lord says to my lord: ‘Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool.’” The verb is *kathizo* with the preposition *en*, “in the right of God” which if taken literally, means a presence-in this right of God. As the psalm verse continues, this sitting is temporary; it lasts until God puts “his” enemies under his feet which is what vs. 13 means. In the meantime “he” has to wait or *ekdechomai*, literally to take or to receive from.

Compare the single offering of vs. 14 with the single sacrifice of vs. 12, *prosphora* and *thusia*. By the former “he” has brought to perfection those who are sanctified, *teleioo* [-] connoting bringing them to the end for which they had been destined. Once again we have one of our author’s favorite phrases which connotes a certain sense of the absolute, *eis to dienekes* [-] or “into without interruption.” It applies to those who’ve been sanctified, *hagiazo* [-].

Vs. 15 brings in the Holy Spirit (*Pneuma*, -) by way of the conjunctive *kai*. Even though the current verse continues through vs. 17, *kai* makes it all the more united with what had just been set forth. The Spirit's job is to bear witness, *martureo* for us and does so by speaking the words found in Jer 31.31-34 quoted in reference to 8.10-11. There are differences as follow as the following three show, the first being from Jeremiah itself with 8.10 and 8.12 followed by what we have in 10.16-17:

31: "Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, 32) not like the covenant which I made with their fathers when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant which they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. 33) But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it upon their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34) And no longer shall each man teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

8.10: "This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my laws into their minds and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

8.12: "For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more."

10.16 "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord: I will put my laws on their hearts and write them on their minds."

10.17: "then he adds, 'I will remember their sins and their misdeeds no more.'"

Vs. 18 sums this up by saying that the forgiveness (*aphesis*, -) of sin precludes the need to making offering for sin.

Vs. 19 along with vss. 20-22 consist of one extended sentence. Our author begins by directly addressing those to whom he's writing, calling them brethren, the noun being *adelphos* or brother. He makes it a point to use the first person plural with regard to having confidence to enter the sanctuary by reason of the blood of Jesus. Actually there's no verb which intimates a certain directness, this conveyed by two uses of the preposition *eis* (into), one prefaced to the noun *eisodos* along with the preposition *en* (in), the third as "in the blood of Jesus." This *eisodos* is with respect to *hagios* [-], literally, holy things." The noun *parresia* is tied in with all three, fundamentally an openness or freedom to express oneself as a citizen to a *polis* or city-state.

As noted with regard to the beginning of vs. 19, vs. 20 continues as an extended sentence beginning with “by” and as “which” according the Greek text. This relative pronoun serves to introduced the verb *egkainizo* which means to bestow newness on something. That pertains to a way or *hodos* [-] both new and living, *prospatos* and *zao* (participle, -), the former more as recent and implies previously existing. Such a way leads directly through (*dia*) the temple’s curtain or *katapetasma* [-] which means that which is spread out (*petannumi*). This is the same curtain rent at the death of Christ: “And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom” [Mt 27.51]. Surely our author had this in mind; the same applies to 6.19 and 9.3. I.e., this curtain is the flesh of Christ.

Vs. 21 is the shortest of the extended sentence at hand, almost an interjection, saying that we (again, first person plural) have a great priest over God’s house, *oikos* here no longer the temple but Jesus Christ. It must be difficult for readers to balance the two even if they are persuaded that Jesus Christ is the new *oikos*.

Vs. 22 is fairly lengthy and concludes the extended sentence with an exhortation to draw near (*proserchomai*, -) but isn’t explicit as to where or to whom. This (with emphasis upon the *pros-*, direction towards-which) is to be done with a heart or *kardia* [-] which, if true as the verse says, suffices to point out the goal of *proserchomai*. Furthermore, it has the fullness of faith, *plerophoria* also as certainty or assurance. What assists this is twofold. Note the difference between *rhantizo* and *louo* or to sprinkle and to wash, the former with scant use of water and the latter with more water:

- hearts (*kardia* again) sprinkled clean from a conscience which is evil, *suneidesis* [-] or a knowing-with from that which *poneros* [-] connoting pain and toil.
- bodies (*soma*, -) washed with pure water.

Vs. 23 is an extended exhortation which continues into the next two verses and begins with *katecho* [-] or to hold down (*kata-*) which also means to restrain, here concerning a confession of hope, *homolgia* suggestive of a statement of allegiance and hope laying in the future, not present at the moment. Our author describes it as without wavering, *aklines* or without leaning. This rests in the fact that “he” who made this promise is faithful, *epaggellomai* or to carry out what one has stated as such.

Vs. 24 continues part two (of three) of the above mentioned exhortation with *katanoeo* [-] literally as to have the mind operate or think in accord with (*kata*) a given plan of attack. Note that the exhortation of vs. 23 also begins with *kata-* or with

regard to *paroxusmos* which means a rousing or provoking. Often it involves a state of irritation, the sense of which is made more intensive being prefaced with *eis*, into. In the verse at hand it pertains to cultivating *agape* [-] and *ergon* [-] or works which are good.

Vs. 25 brings to a conclusion the extended exhortation begun in vs. 23 where those two verses are connected with the conjunctive *kai*. Here our author deals with a practical matter, that is, concerning neglect to attend meetings, the verb *egkataleipo* involving the separation of a connection, that being *episunagoge* which has two prepositions prefaced to the root *agoge* (a bringing to), *epi-* and *sun-* or upon and with. The problem lays with some people where it has become a habit or *ethos* also as custom which could happen if the habit becomes entrenched.

The important word in vs. 25 is *alla* or “but” because our author wants his readers to encourage each other, *parakaleo* [-] or literally to summon beside (*para-*). There’s an urgency to this *para-*ness, if you will, because the Day is drawing closer, *eggizo* [-]. Here *eggizo* suggests a kind of slow-motion approach, giving plenty of warning which hopefully will be heeded. Also it can tie in with a general foreboding about the coming destruction of the Jerusalem temple. As for Day or *Hemera* [-], it isn’t found in Hebrews with the same force as in St. Paul’s epistles. “For you yourselves know well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night” [1Ths 5.2]. Our author may have gotten it from there as well as its source, Am 5.18: “Woe to you who desire the day of the Lord! Why would you have the day of the Lord?”

Vs. 26 through the end of Chapter Ten deals with the questions of sin, punishment and an exhortation for the readers to recall their former days, this having been set in motion in the previous verse. It’s a bit awkward to comment upon since the context is of such a nature as not to lend itself for expansion. Nevertheless, most of it will be considered.

Note the importance of the adverb *ekousios*, deliberately or willingly with regard to committing sin (*hamartano*) in light of receiving (*lambano*, -) knowledge of the truth, *epignosis* literally a knowing upon (*epi-*), a more comprehensive form of knowledge. Following one’s own will as implied with *ekousios* means that no sacrifice for sin remains, *apoleipo* also as to leave off.

Vs. 27 is a continuation of the previous verse, the two forming one extended sentence. *De* or “but” indicates a shift to an expectation or *ekdoche* which by itself is fearful even without the adjective *phoberos* being added, that is, with respect to judgment (*krisis*, -). As for being added, there’s a fury of fire that will consume

adversaries (*huenantios*: *hupo-* or under prefaced to that which is opposite, *enantios*), *zelos* also as zeal.

For a specific reason that will become clear in vs. 29, in vs. 28 our author mentions the Law (*nomos/Torah*), the first time since vs. 9 but here for the first time as identified with Moses. I.e., when a person violates it (*atheteo* also to reject as invalid), he dies without mercy (*oiktirmos*) through the testimony of several witnesses. The full quote of this is Dt 17.6: “On the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses he that is to die shall be put to death; a person shall not be put to death on the evidence of one witness.”

Now in vs. 29 the quote about witnesses is seen in light of one who will receive a greater punishment for having spurned the Son of God. It’s put in terms of an exclamation to show outrage. The verb *axioo* or to consider suitable or worthy is used with the noun *timoria*. As for “Son of God,” this title is found in 4.14, 6.6 and 7.3. Again, not the paucity of direct mention of Jesus Christ though certainly he’s presumed. Also this *timoria* applies to profaning the blood of the covenant and having outraged the Spirit of grace (*Pneuma* and *charis*, -). As for the verb *enubrizo*, it also means to insult.

In vs. 30 our author uses the first person plural as to knowing “him,” the verb being *oido* [-] followed by two quotes with regard to divine vengeance and judgment, the noun *ekdikesis* and the verb *krino*, also as punishment and to pick out, to choose. The quotes run in full and are in consecutive order (Dt 32.35 and 32.26):

-“Vengeance is mine and recompense, for the time when their foot shall slip; for the day of their calamity is at hand, and their doom comes swiftly.” Note the addition of recompense or *shilem*, the only use of the word in the Bible and apparently related to the verbal root for *shalom*. The idea seems to be peace or wholeness.

-“For the Lord will vindicate his people and have compassion on his servants when he sees that their power is gone, and there is none remaining, bond or free.” Another addition to keep in mind with regard to Hebrews, compassion, *nacham* also as to take vengeance, to lament or to grieve.

In vs. 31 our author sums up both with what seems like a biblical quote, perhaps adopting that tone for effect, *phoberos* being the adjective for fearful as in vs. 27. Note the verb *empipto*, the preposition *em-* or *en-* as “in” which is suggestive of a greater fall.

Vs. 32 begins with *de* or “but” to reveal a more positive stance after what our author had outlined in the previous verses. He asks his readers not so much to remember but to recall, *anamimnesko* (verbal root for *anamnesis*, -; the preposition *ana-* or up, upon) being suggestive of a fuller type of memory, that is, recollection. *Anamimnesko* refers to a time when after having been enlightened, there came a hard struggle with suffering. As to the *photizo* at hand, it’s in reference to becoming aware of a transcendental reality which isn’t spelled out. Perhaps our author is referring to some of his readers accepting Jesus Christ as high priest as he had been presenting him thus far in his letter. Anyway, those so enlightened were strengthened to literally stand under (*hupomeno*) their sufferings or bear them.

Vs. 33 is a continuation of the previous verse, the two forming one extended sentence and has two instances of *touto*, one with *men* and the other with *de*, that is, “sometimes.” One refers to an occasion of being exposed publicly to abuse and the other as sharing in it. The two verbs are *theatrizo* or to expose and *anastrepho*, to behavior or to conduct oneself...i.e., two opposites which can be subject to alteration.

Vs. 34 continues the theme of indifference in the face of mistreatment which stems from the fact of having a possession which is better and abiding, the noun *huparxis* also as possession and from the verbal root *huparcho*, literally as to begin from under and connotes presence, of being at one’s disposal. *Meno* [-] or to stay or remain is similar.

Vs. 35 begins with *oun* or “therefore” where our author is working to a conclusion with regard to both his admonitions followed by words of encouragement. He urges his readers to hang on to their encouragement, their *parresia* [-] or freedom to speak their mind because it has a great reward, the somewhat grandiose noun being *misthapodosia* also as recompense. His readers indeed are in need of endurance or *hupomone*, literally as a remaining under. This enables one to do God’s will (*thelema*, -) and receive what is promised, the verb being *komizo* or to come into possession of something which here is *epaggelia* [-].

And so ends a fairly convoluted digression begun essentially in vs. 26 and wrapped up here in vss. 37-38 with a quote from the prophet Habakkuk (2.3-4), the original being as follows: “For still the vision awaits its time; it hastens to the end—it will not lie. If it seem slow, wait for it; it will surely come, it will not delay. Behold, he whose soul is not upright in him shall fail, but the righteous shall live by his faith.” A footnote in the **RSV** says “obscure” as to the last few words.

The following is offered with regard to the Habakkuk verses, taken from **The Minor Prophets** posted on this homepage:

The second word of vs. 3 is *hod* or “still” which means the *chazon* or vision hasn’t been fulfilled but is waiting for the proper time, *mohed* (cf. Hos ch 12) prefaced with the preposition *l-*, “to its time.” Nevertheless, it hastens to its end and will not lie, *puach* also as to pant, to blow. Despite appearing slow to arrive, the vision is advancing to its own end, the verb *bo’* (cf. Jl ch 2) being used twice (‘to come he shall come’) to convey this with regard to ‘*achar*, to be after, to delay.

Vs. 4 has a contrast between a soul which isn’t upright and a righteous person, *yashar* and *tsadyq* (cf. Mic ch 2 and ch 1). As for the first, it’s associated with *psuche* or soul which in the Hebrew text is puffed up, *haphal* also as to swell. As for the second, he will live in faithfulness, ‘*emunah* (cf. Hos ch 2).

As for the Habakkuk text in Hebrews, note three dimensions of time: a little while, coming and shall not tarry. The second and third are the verbs *erchomai* [-] and *chronizo*, to come and to delay, the latter being the verbal root for conventional time, *chronos* [-].

In vs. 38 the righteous one (*dikaios*) identified as “my” or the Lord’s will live literally “from (*ek*) faith.” However, a condition applies. Should this person shrink back, the Lord’s soul won’t have pleasure in him. *Hupostello* or to draw back consists of the root *stello* (to set in order) prefaced with the preposition *hupo-*, under. *Psuche* [-] or soul is the Lord’s very own self, if you will, which means he’s earnest about what he is saying here, hence the verb *eudokeo* [-] in the negative, to consider something as good.

And so Chapter Ten concludes with *de* or “but” where our author uses the first person plural in a certain boastful way, that “we” do not shrink back (the noun *hupostole*, also as timidity) nor suffer destruction or *apoleia* (destruction) which is made worse by the preposition *eis*, “into destruction.” Our author belongs to “we” who have faith and keep their souls, the noun *peripoiesis* consisting of the verbal root *poieo* (to make, to do) prefaced with the preposition *peri-*, around. In sum, it connotes the experience of security with regard to *psuche*. It’s found here with the preposition *eis*, “into the possessing of soul.”

Chapter Eleven

This is the longest chapter in the Letter to the Hebrews consisting of forty verses. It's a radical shift from all that had come before though indeed there is a connection. It's almost as though the letter consists of two separate books, the second starting here as a presentation of notables from the Bible concerning their faith. Another way to look at it is that all that comes before is an extended introduction of sorts. As for the chapter at hand, it in turn, sets the stage for Chapter Twelve which then shifts to Jesus Christ and the concluding chapter which follows. Perhaps our author had in his mind an echo of his opening words, *polumeros* and *polutropos* rendered as "in many and varied ways." There he attributes the prophets speaking in this way to our fathers who in actuality may have had in mind some or all those enumerated in this chapter. Regardless, the two adverbs are well suited to describe the various manifestations of faith found in this chapter.

Vs. 1 begins with *de* translated as "now" which is a kind of lame way to introduce this second part of Hebrews, wishing to get down to business as quickly as possible. Here we find a definition of faith (*pistis*, -) most likely with 10.38 in mind: "but my righteous one shall live by faith." Let's say this verse had caught our author's attention and launched him in that direction. And so he presents faith in two parts:

-The assurance of things hoped for, *hupostasis* [-] or literally a standing under with regard to *elpizo* with this verb intent upon things laying in the future.

-The conviction of things not seen, *elegchos* as directed toward the scrutiny (also disproof, refutation) of things (*pragma*, -) which remain invisible or *blepo* [-] with the negative, to see in the sense of having the power of sight. Again, this is in reference to Hab 2.4 as quoted in 10.38; the person who is *tsadyq* (also just) lives literally in (*b-*) 'emunah or faith.

Vs. 2 is short but succinct. Our author is quick to speak of the "men of old" or *probuteros* which in this instance applies to ancestors. I.e., after relentlessly showing the inferiority of the contemporary Jewish temple worship still going on, he singles out notable examples of those from the past or those who lived both before and during the time when such sacrifices were being offered. All without exception received divine approval, *martureo* [-] or to bear witness, this time the verb being applicable to persons instead of to God.

Vs. 3 shifts gears with regard to faith but immediately afterwards our author using the first person plural when he speaks eloquently of those noteworthy for it. Such faith or *pistos* [-] enables "us" to understand or *noeo*, this verb meaning to comprehend or gain insight into the fact that the word God created the world. *Aion* [-] is the noun conveying a period of existence and hence time as applied to such

creation or *katartizo* [-] and inferring preparation or to put in a proper condition. This fits in well with *pistos*, giving it a broader application than just making an assent. After all, it is dealing with God's *rhema* [-] which is more along the lines of a spoken word compared with *logos* and thus fits in well with the Genesis narrative where God speaks things into creation.

The second part of vs. 3 is connected by *eis*, usually as “into,” which the **RSV** translates as “so that.” It's connected with *noeo* (to understand in the context of faith) or to realize that anything visible comes from those things that do not appear. Here we have two verbs related to sight, *blepo* as in vs. 1 with regard to the power of sight and *phaino*, to become visible, to appear and connotes a passage from not being manifested to manifestation.

From vs. 4 onward we have a marvelous account of five biblical persons and their faith starting with Abel (Enoch, Noah, Abraham and Sarah succeed him), offspring of our first parents of whom nothing is said. At that early stage, that is, before their expulsion from the Garden of Eden, there was no need for faith, if you will. Actually the words “faith” or “to believe” don't make their appearance until later, the first with regard to Job and the second with regard to Abraham. That means what we take as a normal, even essential ingredient in our relationship with God, isn't even brought up. Something else was operative at that stage of human development. What, then, is it? We can detect it—not explain it in the conventional sense—laying behind the scene, if you will, when reading those chapters of Genesis before Abraham. Perhaps it had to do with something along the lines of awareness though that's not recorded nor should we expect it to be as such. Awareness, then, is simply inferred. And so this special time can be kept in the back of our minds as we advance forward in Genesis and beyond or through the rest of the Bible.

And so our author associates faith with Abel though biblically it isn't present. It should be noted that all five examples are prefaced, if you will, with the words “by faith.” You wonder if he was aware of this. Let's say yes, and that he's speaking of faith in the context of the first instance of sacrifice, one made by him who himself had been sacrificed, as it were, by his brother Cain. Abel is presented as his sacrifice (*prosphero*, -) being more acceptable than his brother Cain. The sacrifice consists of “fruits of the soil,” ‘*adamah* being the very earth from which his father had been formed [Gn 4.3] compared with the firstborn of the flock by Cain. Actually “firstborn” proves to be an important element in later sacrifices, so the Lord who foresaw this must have found making the decision difficult. Nevertheless, Abel's sacrifice was approved as being righteous, *martureo* and *dikaios*, both words found

earlier. The Hebrew verb is *shahah*, to look around or to pay attention as used with the offerings of both brothers.

Vs. 4 concludes with the fact that while Abel died though the verb *apothnesko* doesn't mean outright murder which certainly was the case. In fact, our author doesn't bring this up, being more focused upon the offerings involved because they tie in with the overall theme of his letter. Also he says that through his faith Abel is still speaking (*laleo*, -). Compare this *laleo* with the more expressive *tsahaq* (to cry out) by Abel's blood from the 'adamah or ground, the same source of his offering as noted above.

Vs. 5 jumps ahead to the end of those generations which is at the threshold of the worldwide flood where our author speaks of Enoch (not Cain's son by the same name). In other words, he passes over a whole bunch of Adam's ancestors, wanting to get to this crucial turning point. At the same time he's aware of the increase of evil, and that the Lord will have to remedy it somehow in the near future. However, we have next to no information about Enoch whose only claim to fame is being the father of Methuselah, the oldest recorded biblical figure and grandfather of Noah. Starting with the expulsion of our first parents from the Garden of Eden the human life span decreases gradually. At the same time...though it isn't explicit...evil increases. As for Enoch, his claim to fame is according to Gn 5.24 where "walked with God, and he was not, for God took him." As for this walking (*halak*), literally it reads "he walked God," no "with" in between the two. That's a perfect lead-in to Enoch being "not-ed" which results from God having taken (*laqach*) him.

As for the Hebrews verse, the verb *metatithemi* means to take up, literally as a placing after, a *tithemi* which is *meta-*. Such action done by God precludes Enoch from seeing death and hence not found, *heurisko* being the equivalent to 'eynenu ('he was not-ed').

Vs. 6 is comprised of two sentences, the first that faith is absolutely necessary to please God, *euaresceo* where the adverbial preface *eu-* stands for the adjective *agathos*, good and prefaced to *aresko*, to make good. The nice part about this verse is that it puts faith in a joy-filled context which at times can be forgotten.

The second sentence can come across as a bit awkward. That is to say, faith can be taken as something contrived, that we make up to produce God. First, our author takes into consideration that his readers wish to draw near to God, that they're motivated by the *pros-* of *proserchomai* [-]. Attention to this small yet significant matter helps take off the edge of this contrivance. Automatically it results in accepting that God is, that he exists (*hoti estin*). The consequence? A reward for those seeking him while the noun *misthapodotes* is the person who bestows the reward to

those seeking him, *zeteo* [-]. This verb is prefaced with the preposition *ek-* (from) which intimates a more intense form of seeking. So the reward is greater the more intense the *ek-*, if we could put it that way.

The second example is Noah described in vs. 7 who is situated at the threshold of two worlds, the one worn out by sin and the new one after the flood. As we all know, the second didn't turn out to be better but far worse if we take into consideration up to the present time. Also physically both are of the same order but covered by water. God had warned Noah of the cataclysm about to happen put in terms as "concerning events as yet unseen," one of the greatest understatement in the entire Bible. *Chrematizo* is the verb here which means to impart a divine message with regard to what is not seen, *blepo* [-].

One can only surmise Noah's response...shock, really...where the verb *eulabeomai* implies respect or reverence with regard to *chrematizo* and results in his going ahead with construction of an ark, *kataskeuazo* [-]. Such an ark or *kibotos* (generally, a wooden box) is to save Noah's household, the noun *soteria* [-] prefaced with the preposition *eis*, "into salvation" as it pertains to Noah's *oikos* [-] or house. *Oikos* obviously includes more than family; associated with it are others such as slaves and hired workers. As for the act of *kataskeuazo*, God gives just the barest of details in Gn 6.14-16, but that was sufficient. In a very real way Noah was gifted with a similar way by which Moses received instructions to build the tabernacle on the mountain. There (Chap 26 +) in comparison with Noah we have an abundance of details. The main point in all of this? In an instance Noah received full knowledge as what to do as well as the strength to do it. According to the text, he built the ark on his own. As 6.22 puts it succinctly, "Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him."

The second part of vs. 7 begins with "by this" (*d' hes*) referring to Noah's construction of the ark, the very process of its assembly itself being a condemnation of the world. That is to say, his *kataskeuazo* was effecting a *kataprinō* or to pronounce a sentence against the world; i.e., two examples of *kata-* with opposite meanings. Surely Noah must have attracted attention far and wide but not as much as we'd expect. The reason? He was working in accord with divine revelation which greatly sped up his work. We can assume that the Lord kept crowds away not unlike he would do later at Mount Sinai, keeping the people away from the base of the mountain. Even during this construction period Noah was aware of being an heir of that righteousness (*dikaiosune*, -) derived by faith, *pistos* [-] which has *kata* before it, "according to faith." And his house or *oikos*? We have no mention of them, but they must have been looking on right from the start. At the same time they didn't know

exactly what Noah was doing except that he was doing it in accord with what God wanted and that they would be involved.

Vs. 8 has the fourth and for all practical purposes, the very archetypal example of faith, Abraham. Note the interaction between three prepositions here: *hupakouo* [-], *exerchomai* [-] and *eis* or to obey or to listen-under, to go forth and into. With regard to faith, it isn't mentioned in conjunction with the inferred reference. As for the first encounter with the Lord, Abram (as he was called then) was told to leave his country for a land the Lord will show him. Gn 12.1 puts real emphasis on this with the preposition *min* (from) prefaced not only to country but to his kindred and father's house. The next thing we know is that Abram went; no mention of believing or faith, just a matter-of-fact departure. In fact, any mention of it doesn't occur until Gn 15.6: "And he believed the Lord; and he reckoned it to him as righteousness."

The place to which Abram (and Lot) goes is one which he will receive as an inheritance, *kleronomia* [-] being Canaan with the preposition *eis*, "into inheritance." As for his ignorance, the verb is *ephistemi*, literally to set or to place upon (*epi*-). Actually the cited context above has no indication that Abram was troubled by such a lack of *ephistemi*. After all, he was a nomad and simply packed up with his extended family and possessions. To him one place was as good as another. So in one sense, faith is really no big deal as far as this goes. It will come into play later on where in a certain sense, God is toying with him.

Vs. 9 has the verb *paroikeo*, literally to live or to have one's *oikos* [-] or house alongside (*para*-) together with the preposition *eis*, "into the land of promise" or *epaggelia* [-], the word also applicable to Isaac and Jacob yet to be born. This mood of *para* + *oikos* is to be seen in light of the small word *hos* or "as." In other words, the whole enterprise is with regard to *allotrios*, that which belongs to another person or not one's own. Although living in tents suggests an air of impermanence or waiting for something to happen or somewhere to go, it was a way of life Abram was accustomed to follow as a nomad.

Vs. 10 has Abram looking forward to a city with a foundation, *ekdechomai* [-], literally to take or to receive from another (*ek*-, from). This seems to be a contradiction, given that Abram is a born nomad ('I am a stranger and a sojourner,' Gn 23.4). Our author seems to be inserting his particular view, Abram in a sense representing the old dispensation and the city, the new dispensation. Furthermore, this city has foundations, its builder and maker being God. Note the two divine roles. First is *technites* and second, *demiourgos*, the former implying craftsmanship and design while the latter leans more toward construction though elements of the

former are present as well. To Abram this makes dwelling in a city with the firmness of foundations more acceptable. If the two weren't mentioned, chances are he'd stay away, preferring to dwell in his tent.

Vs. 11 mentions the fifth and final example of faith, Abraham's wife Sarah. According to Gn 17.19, she will bear Isaac in her extreme old age, this shortly after the two had their names changed (Abram -> Abraham and Sarai -> Sarah). So despite being ninety years old, she received *dunamis* [-], also power or capacity to conceive. The reason? As vs. 19 puts it, God wishes to establish his covenant with Isaac and with descendants afterwards. As our author remarks, Sarah considered (*hegeomai*: literally to go before, to lead) the Lord to be faithful for having made this promise, *pistos* [-] and *epaggello* [-].

Vs. 12 continues with Abraham though without mentioning his name, quoting in part Gn 15.5-6 (references also are 22.17 and 32.12) which runs in full as "And he brought him outside and said, 'Look toward heaven and number the stars if you are able to number them.' Then he said to him, 'So shall your descendants be.' And he believed the Lord; and he reckoned it to him as righteousness." Two points of emphasis: the innumerable descendants from Abraham and belief reckoned as righteousness, this being quoted within the context of vs. 8 above. The verb in the Hebrew text is *chashav*, also as to think or to impute. And so our author is in conformity with Jewish tradition holding Abraham in great esteem. The same, of course, applies to his readers.

Vs. 13 sums up the five examples who died literally "according to (*kata*) faith." Emphasis is upon the death of each person which translates into them not having received what was promised, *komizo* [-] meaning they haven't come into possession of the *epaggelia* [-]. However, they received a consolation that involves more than what appears. That is, they had seen (*eidon* also as to behold) this *epaggelia* and not just greeted it but did so from afar, *aspazomai* also as to greet with *porrothen*. I.e., these five people established a way for future generations to behave with regard to *epaggelia*. The adverb used obviously involves distance which in all five instances are temporal, not spacial. The same applies to our author's readers.

Also in vs. 13 the five persons our author has singled out acknowledged that they are strangers on the earth, *homologeō* (*homos* = like and *legō*, to say, to speak) being the verb which means to commit oneself to do something. The words are *xenos* and *parepidemos* which make them naturally *porrothen* from their desired goal. The first refers to that which is foreign, even alien. The second has two prepositions prefaced to the root *demos* usually referring to the people of a given country. *Para-* and *epi-*

suggest being beside as well as upon this *demos*...on one hand affiliated but on the other, a bit alien. Both are tinged with a certain lonesomeness while at the same time retain a unique type of comfort, comfort at a distance if it can be put that way. Although the text doesn't mention it, we can assume that at one point or another that which is promised or *epaggelia* will in turn see and greet them.

Vs. 14 puts this acknowledgment of distance from what they perceive as their ultimate homeland in clearer perspective. It's significant because people following in the footsteps of the five examples have to freedom to speak as misfits in the society in which they live. Perhaps all weren't like that but became so over a period of time. Their whole lives are colored by this feeling of not being at home which means they can't help but eat, sleep, work and worship accordingly. In sum, being *porrothen* is a life style. Clearly (*emphanizo*, to make visible; *em-* or *en-* as 'in' suggestive of a more intense form of the verb) these five people and those imitating them are in the process of seeking or *epizeteo* a homeland. This verb, like *emphanizo*, with a preposition *epi-* serving to intensify the root, implies a seeking-upon. As for that object of *epi-*, it's *patris* which is a specific area with respect to one's familial connections (*pater* as father). So to seek one's place of origin is almost a contradiction.

Vs. 15 brings up a practical matter. Those who left their native land could return at any time they wished but did not. However, this doesn't preclude each of them longing to return or being tempted to do so, especially when confronted with hostility from the local inhabitants. *Mnemoneuo* is the verb to remember in the sense of keeping in mind. Note it's use with regard to the prepositions *aph'* or from and *ek-* as in the verb *ekbaino*, to go from, *ek-* more in the sense of going out of. Such a "double from-ness" is that to which *mnemoneuo* is susceptible. However, the five examples set forth for those whom our author is addressing reject the opportunity of returning, *anakampto*. That is, they paid no attention to the *kairos* [-] or special occasion which presented itself. As for *anakampto*, it means to bend back and suggests not fully returning but inclining in that direction which in and by itself can be quite painful. So to reject this bending-back was no mean feat.

Vs. 16 contains two sentences, the first beginning with *nun de* which the **RSV** translates as "but as it is" or literally "but now" to show that while the five at hand may have been tempted to return to their homelands, their desire for a better place ('country' not mentioned) superseded this. The verb is *orego* meaning to seek to accomplish a particular goal, that put in terms of an adjective, *epouranios* [-] where the preposition *epi-* is prefaced to the root making it more intense.

The second sentence of vs. 16 begins with *dio* or “therefore” to show a shift in direction from the first sentence. That is, it pertains to God who reciprocates by saying in an outright fashion that he isn’t ashamed to be called their God. Note the two verbs with the preposition *epi-* or upon prefaced to them, *epaischunomai* and *epikaleo*, to shame-upon and to call-upon. In fact, God went straight ahead to prepare a city for them, *hetoimazo* also to be ready and *polis* which fundamentally means a city-state.

Vss. 17 and 18 form one extended sentence and returns to the ur-patriarch Abraham who was mentioned first in vs. 8 and is prefaced “by faith” as is the case with the other four examples. Because the Letter to the Hebrews deals with Christ’s sacrifice in light of earlier biblical ones, it comes as no surprise that our author examines Abraham’s offering (*prosphero*, -) of his son Isaac. This is presented as a test, *peirazo* [-], also meaning to tempt. Although Abraham had received (*anadechomai* also to accept) the promises (note plural of *epaggelia* which can imply future generations), he was ready to give this up and offer (second occurrence of *prosphero*) his son Isaac. As in the original account and here, the position of Isaac as first-born is stressed so it can be applied to Jesus Christ. The Hebrew verb *nasa’* also means to prove. However, this *nasa’* was accomplished right from the start when Abraham responded *hineny*, “Here I am.” God wasn’t quite sure what to make of such spontaneity but was bound to follow through anyway. As for Abraham, he sensed this having been taken aback and similarly went ahead with offering Isaac knowing full well it wouldn’t happen.

Vs. 18 completes the extended sentence begun with vs. 17, a partial quote of Gn 21.12 which runs in full as “But God said to Abraham, ‘Be not displeased because of the lad and because of your slave woman; whatever Sarah says to you, do as she tells you, for through Isaac shall your descendants be named.’” This brings up three unmentioned characters (in Hebrews) Hagar and her son Ishmael whom Sarah bade Abraham to send away. Nevertheless, the Lord concurred with Sarah and is quick to add that through Isaac his name will be great. In sum, this shows a dark side to all this.

Vs. 19 describes the return of Isaac to Jacob, that is, the near-offering which an angel had prevented. Any reader of Hebrews can’t but recall that the beginning of this letter went into some detail about such heavenly beings. By this action Abraham considered that God could raise men from the dead and that the recent near-offering was a sign of it. The verb is *logizomai* or to reckon, to give an evaluation. Here it suggests a certain coolness on Abraham’s part and can tie in with intuiting that God was bluffing from the get-go as to the offering of his son. Hence the word *parabole* [-]

translated as symbol along with the verb *komizo* [-] which means to get or to receive, often with regard to something of one's own.

Vs. 20 shifts abruptly yet in line with the previous section by turning attention, albeit briefly, to Isaac. Briefly is appropriate insofar as of the three patriarchs he has the least said of him. Actually apart from Abraham offering him, the only thing said of him is that he invoked future blessings on Jacob and Esau, *eulogeo* [-] being the verb which suggests a blessing. This, of course, refers to Rebekah taking the initiative to have her favored son Jacob be blessed, not Esau. As for the blessing in full, it runs in Gn 27.28-29 in full as "May God give you of the dew of heaven and of the fatness of the earth and plenty of grain and wine. Let peoples serve you, and nations bow down to you. Be Lord over your brothers, and may your mother's sons bow down to you. Cursed be every one who curses you, and blessed be every one who blesses you!" In the end, Isaac hands the blessing to Jacob over Esau and continues to live a considerable time later (cf. Gn 35.28-29) but with nothing of him said in between. In other words, what he had done here is his mission.

Vs. 21 moves on to the death of Jacob, bypassing his accomplishments. Like Isaac's blessing above, he puts emphasis upon one bestowed upon Joseph's sons which is quoted in part here but in full runs as "And he blessed Joseph, and said, 'The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, the God who has led me all my life long to this day, the angel who has redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; and in them let my name be perpetuated and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.'" [Gn 48.15-16].

As for Joseph, he proves to be crucial in Israel's history, being responsible for bringing his father and brothers to Egypt where they remained for some four hundred years or until the Exodus. Despite this much longer than expected stay, vs. 22 says that when near death, Joseph spoke of Israel's departure, the verb being *mnemoneuo* [-] or to remember in the sense of keeping in mind. That is, at the very end of Genesis Joseph gives direction to his brothers to bring his bones from Egypt. The verb is *entello* where the preposition *en-* (in) prefaced to the root *tello* (to accomplish) infers giving details about all this. We can assume it involved the Egyptian practice of embalming, of mummification as the last verse of Genesis recounts. So despite all the benefits that country had showered upon him and his people, it was not home. Another reference to this is Ex 13.19: "And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him." Though not mentioned in these two quotes, Joseph uses the verb *paqad* with respect to God visiting his people, this verb also as to pay heed as well as to must. Thus it has a certain military tone.

Moses is the next example in line, he being presented in vs. 23 with the familiar phrase “by faith.” This is worth pointing out because of all the examples in Hebrews Moses has this phrase associated with him the most, that is, four times. As for the one at hand, in a way it doesn’t apply to him but to his parents (Amram and Jochebed, cf. Ex 6.20) who hid him for three months. Later (again ‘by faith’) Moses preferred to share in his people’s. The verb reflecting this choice is *sugkakoucheomai*, the only use of this term in the Bible consisting of the root for evil and prefaced with the preposition *sug-* (or *sum-*), “with.” In contrast to this is the transitory pleasure (*apolausis*) of sin associated with the Egyptian court, *proskairos* being the adjective which consists of *kairos* (time as occasion) prefaced with the preposition *pros-*, indicative of direction towards-which and here suggestive of the moment and all its transitory-ness.

In vs. 26 our author has Moses seeing the future abuse (*oneidismos* also as disparagement) which Christ will suffer as being far superior to Egypt’s treasures. The verb *hegeomai* [-] as to consider also means to lead or to go before which fits in well with what Moses intuitively. Thus his *hegeomai* anticipates the act of looking forward to a reward. The verb is *apoblepo*, literally as to look away from (*apo-*), one’s focus on one end alone which literally is “into (*eis*) the reward” or *misthapodosia*. This consists of *apodidomai* (a second word with *apo-*) prefaced with *misthos*, to give, to restore + wages, pay.

Vs. 27 has the third use of the phrase “by faith” attributed to Moses, the verb *kataleipo* or to leave behind, *kata-* intimating “down” and appropriate with regard to Egypt. I.e., only Moses is associated with this, not the people, nor do we have formal mention of the Exodus which you’d think our author would mention. Perhaps he had no need to, it being central to the faith of many of those whom he’s addressing. Note the contrast between *phobeo* and *kartereo*, to fear (i.e., the lack of it) and to endure, the latter also as to continue without wavering. And so throughout this ordeal put as a *kataleipo*, Moses saw him who cannot be seen, *horao* vs. *aoratos*, this adjective being derived from the verb at hand.

Vs. 28 has the fourth and final “by faith” as it pertains to Moses with respect to Passover (*Pascha*), our author taking care to mention the sprinkling of blood to keep away the Destroyer of the first-born. For him this ties in with the blood of offerings contrasted with that of Jesus Christ. *Olothreuo* is the participle for Destroyer, one who brings to utter destruction. Giving this greater force and terror is the verb *thiggano* (to touch) which uses the genitive, “of them” or the first-born. The more specific reference is Ex 12.23: “For the Lord will pass through to slay the Egyptians;

and when he sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the Lord will pass over the door and will not allow the destroyer to enter your houses to slay you.”

In this important verse we have two verbs relative to the Lord’s transit, *havar* and *pasach* working hand-in-hand, to pass over and going through with the intent to spare. Both pertain to the Lord and *nagaph*, the verb to slay which also means to send a plague. I.e., what the Lord does now will reverberate down the ages. Note that he does this while being assisted by the destroyer (better as the noun destruction) is a kind of angel of death as in 2Sam 24.16: “And when the angel stretched forth his hand toward Jerusalem to destroy it, the Lord repented of the evil.” More precisely, the Lord will not enter but his destroyer: “he will not allow the destroyer to enter your houses to slay you.”

This destroyer or *mashchyth* (better as the noun destruction) resembles an angel of death as in 2Sam 24.16: “And when the angel stretched forth his hand toward Jerusalem to destroy it, the Lord repented of the evil.” Here the verb *shachat* (as regarding slaying the Passover lamb) forms the root for *mashchyth*. And so the image is of the Lord first engaged in *havar* followed by (hopefully) *pasach* or sparing...not alone but accompanied by *mashchyth* who will “slay you” or *nagaph* (i.e., will plague you).

Now the phrase “by faith” shifts from Moses to the Israelites the Red Sea, *diabaino* or to pass through which is more accurate according to the account. Our author is careful to add “dry land” which concurs with Ex 14.21, that their passage wasn’t through marsh or any type of muck. Then as everyone knows, the Egyptians went after them and drowned. Compare this with the clogging of the Egyptian chariots in vs. 25, the Hebrew more along the lines of binding.

The next “by faith” pertains indirectly to the people who aren’t explicitly mentioned in vs. 29 but obviously are involved. Here faith caused the walls of Jericho to fall down after which in vs. 31 we have the example of Rahab the prostitute who had sheltered the spies. Note that the inhabitants of Jericho are called disobedient, *apeitheo* or having no *peithomai* or to be persuaded. However, there’s nothing specific in the Book of Joshua as to this. Jericho is singled out for destruction because it’s a major city and in a way, representative of Canaan and standing in the way of the Israelites to possess the land.

So by now or having spent much energy detailing the faith of important forebears of faith, in vs. 32 our author puts his attitude in the form of a rhetorical question, that is, “What more shall I say?” He admits to having no time (i.e., no space in his letter)

to speak of other examples whose faith enables them to do innumerable wonders. They are listed through vs. 38 and amount to some twenty-one various afflictions. One stands out, that is, those who refused to accept release from torture in order “to rise again to a better life” [vs. 35]. The verb *tugchano* [-] suggests to attain or to hit upon and that one has reached the object one has had in mind.

Before the next-to-last affliction in vs. 38 our author inserts the observation that the world wasn't worthy of them, *axios* also as having a high degree of worth. So despite their witness of faith (*martureo*, -), they didn't receive the promise, *komizo* and *epaggelia* [both -], not the verbal form as in the **RSV**. The reason? While they may not have known it, God foresaw something better, *problepo* also as to look forward (*pro-*). Note that the first person plural is used so as have the readers identify with these witnesses. Without that, there would be no reason to mention all these biblical examples.

Vs. 40 contains the small but important word *choris* or “without.” Without us these people would not be made perfect, *teleioo* [-]. That *teleioo* is present in seminal fashion through those who have seen and greeted what was promised as noted in vs. 13.

Chapter Twelve

Toigaroun is the first word beginning this new chapter, a unique triple compound consisting of *toi*, *gar* and *oun* which can be rendered literally as “through for then” or as the **RSV** puts it, “therefore.” Our author favors it because he's in the process of wrapping things up before giving a series of exhortations and warnings he feels are necessary for his listeners. He wouldn't take on this task unless he had first hand experience with them, this making one wonder what his actual relationship was in the first place.

Note how he identifies those whom he had so eloquently digressed upon as a cloud of witnesses (*martus*) using the first person plural with the verb *perikeimai* or to lie round about (*peri-*). The present tense is in effect meaning that this cloud is enveloping “us” right now. In contrast to both the lightness and obscurity of a cloud we have two opposites:

1) Heaviness or *ogkos*, that which causes hindrance and here is generic in nature, most likely referring to behavior that is not morally acceptable.

2) Sin, which similarly is heavy and clings closely, *euperistatos* consisting of the adverbial form *eu-*, the preposition *peri-* and the verbal root *histemi* [-].

In this same verse our author reverts to the swiftness associated with running but as done in conjunction with perseverance (*hupomone*: literally, a remaining-under, -) which is in the context of a race. However, such a race has already been predetermined, *prokeimai* or to lay before. Presumably God has done this which means it's tailored for each person.

Vs. 2 continues this extended sentence with the verb *aphorao*, the root *horao* (to see, to look) prefaced with the preposition *apo-* or from...to look away from one thing and focus attention on another. It's an apt verb in this circumstance, again in the present tense. This means we're to have *aphorao* focused *eis* or into the following two: *archegos* and *teleiotes* or one who has a preeminent position such as a leader and one who brings something to a successful conclusion. Faith in Jesus, of course, applies to both.

Vs. 2 doesn't stop here but speaks of how Jesus as pioneer/perfecter endured the cross, *hupomeno* [-] being the verb (see *hupomone* above), that is, standing under. Note that Jesus did this for what can be mistaken as a selfish reason, for the sake of joy laying in the future, *chara* also delight. Putting it this way is more suggestive and intriguing with regard to what Jesus was thinking. Such *chara* thus enabled Jesus to despise any shame associated with the cross, *kataphroneo* fundamentally as to look down (*kata-*) on someone or something. Obviously *chara* is tied in with Jesus seated at (*en* or *in*) the right of God's throne. "The Lord says to my lord: 'Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool'" [Ps 110.1].

Now the stage is set for the rest of the Letter to the Hebrews where our author presents a whole bunch of exhortations, warnings and encouragements. Admitted it can be boring but in his mind, necessary. And so vs. 3 begins with *analogizomai* or a desire to have his readers use careful deliberation with regard to "him" (Jesus Christ) for having endured hostility. Again the verb *hupomeno* is used with regard to *antilogia* or a speaking against coming from sinners. Such *analogizomai* is directed against a tendency to become faint of heart. This is rendered by the verbs *kamno*, to be weary and *ekluo* literally to loosen from with regard to *psuche* [-] or soul..."no being weary to souls which are fainting."

In vs. 4 note the two types of resistance with regard to sin through the prepositions *pros-* (direction towards-which), *anti-* prefaced to *antikathistemi* and *antagonizomai*.

The first verb is to set up against and the second, to struggle against with regard to blood.

With this in mind, in vs. 5 our author comes off with a rhetorical question, that is, he reminds his readers of an exhortation in Prov 3.11-12 which runs through vs. 6. He's primarily interested in not having his readers be forgetful of the Lord's discipline or *paideia* as discussed in the next paragraph. The verb *eklanthano* or to forget is strong in that it's prefaced with the preposition *ek-*. In other words, we have here a thorough forgetfulness applied to *paraklesis* [-] or encouragement, literally as a summoning beside (*para-*). Joined with *eklanthano* is the verb *dialego* is the verb with regard to the Proverbs quote addressing its audience as sons. Fundamentally it means to pick out (*dia-*, through) and introduces the Proverbs verses which run in full as "My son, do not despise the Lord's discipline or be weary of his reproof, for the Lord reproves him whom he loves as a father the son in whom he delights."

As for the version at hand, the verb is *oligoreo* or to have little esteem as not belonging to *paideia* or education and guidance at the service of responsible living for the Lord. Similarly *ekluo* as noted above or not to loosen-from with regard to being courageous while being punished, *elegcho* fundamentally means to scrutinize or examine carefully. As for the *paideia* at hand, vs. 6 has the verbal form pertaining to each son the Lord receives, *paradechomai* also to place by his side (*para-*).

As for the Hebrew text of Proverbs, the following from **Expansion on the Book of Proverbs** is offered, that document being posted on this same homepage:

"*Ma'as* is the verb for despise which connotes a sense of rejection. The object of *ma'as* or what should not be rejected is the discipline of the Lord or *musar*. *Tokachath* is the object of the verb "be (not) weary" or *quts*, the only use in Proverbs. *Quts* also means to fear and to be aroused. As for vs. 12, *yakach* is the verb to reprove which means to argue down, to convict. The object of this verb is the person who the Lord loves or '*ahav*. This divine-to-human reproof is mirrored in the father-to-son one where the father delights in his offspring, *ratsah* especially involving delight in social relationships."

Vs. 7 essentially contains two sentences, the first being short and simply saying that discipline (*eis* with regard to *paideia*) requires endurance, *hupomeno* [-] or to remain-under. The second sentence has God treating the readers of Hebrews as sons, *prosphero* [-] which here means to carry oneself toward or *pros-*. The third sentence is rhetorical where our author is speaking about a father's duty to discipline his son, *paideuo* again.

Vs. 8 introduces some rather strong words with regard to discipline right on through vs. 11. Again, *paideia* is more than this; it represents a kind of holistic training from one's youth to the threshold of adulthood. Chances are in practice it was done by an educated slave or slaves. With this in mind, to be without *paideia* is to be without guidance for life. As our author puts it, one would be illegitimate, *nothos* as to be born out of wedlock and hence a bastard.

Vs. 9 modifies the relative harshness just put forth opening with *eita* or "thereafter" (also 'moreover,' NIV) to introduce earthy (the noun *sarx*, -) fathers who impart *paideuo*. Such overall training is in return for the respect owed them, *entrepo* literally to turn in, *en* suggestive of giving full attention. This leads to the next sentence which is a rhetorical question concerning being subject to the Father, *hupotasso* or to place under. Compared with a father of *sarx*, the Father here is one of spirits, *pneuma* [-] which can apply to angels as presented at the beginning of this letter.

Vs. 10 sets up a comparison between the two fathers. The one of *sarx* engages in discipline or *paideuo* for a short time, *pros* with "a few days" whereas the Father of *pneuma* does it for our personal good, *to sumpheron* (*sumphero*, to bring together or with, *sum-*), this prefaced with the preposition *epi* or upon. It's followed by the preposition *eis* or into with respect to our sharing in (*metalambano* or to receive with, here with the genitive) the Father's holiness (*hagiotēs*).

In vs. 11 we have the general observation that all *paideia* which is *pros to paron* or literally "to the present" (*pariemi*) is painful instead of pleasant, *chara* [-] and *lupe*, the latter also as grief. However, at a later time—and our author doesn't spell it out—it yields (*apodidomai* implies a giving back) fruit which is peaceful as belonging to righteousness (*dikaioyne*, -). That is, it's for those who've been trained in it, *gymnazo* or to exercise in the physical sense and thus bears a parallel with *paideia*.

Vs. 12 shifts gears (*dio* or 'therefore', -) where our author offers a series of encouragements running through vs. 17:

- lift drooping hands and strengthen weak knees
- making straight paths
- strive for peace and holiness
- that everyone obtains God's grace and avoids any root of bitterness
- that no one be immoral or irreligious like Esau

The first (vs. 12) is lifted from Is 35.3: “Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees.” The second (vs. 13) is from Prov 4.36 (the LXX): “Make straight paths for your feet and order your ways aright.”

The final one pertains to Esau (cf. 11.20) where he’s treated the same as Jacob but obviously his rejection is inferred, the verb *apodokimazo* contrasted with *metanoia* [-] or repentance. The verb suggests a thought casting out (*apo-* or from). Implied but not explicit is, of course, Jacob.

After these encouragements vs. 18 moves on to what our author does best, using biblical examples to back up his insights into Jesus as mediator of a new covenant (cf. vs. 24). To do this requires some sophisticated training, he perhaps being a member of the priestly class still function in the Jerusalem temple. He starts out on the negative, if you will, that “you” or his readers have not come to (*proserchomai*, -)...with emphasis on the *pros-*...to Mount Sinai with its dramatic theophany. As for the verb touch, it’s forbidden as noted in Ex 19.12: “Take heed that you do not go up into the mountain or touch the border of it.” The verb is *pshlaphao* which involves handling. It’s not unlike picking up a piece of fruit to determine by feel whether it’s suitable or not. For an interesting counterpart, cf. 1Jn 1.1: “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands, concerning the word (*logos*, -) of life.” As for this *logos* of life, compare with vs. 19, “that no further messages (singular of *logos*) be spoken to them.” Note the prepositions prefaced to the two verbs *paraiteomai* and *prostithemi*, that is, no *para-* to be made *pros-* (to beg from and to place to).

Vs. 20 gives a quote with regard to the Israelites not being able to bear (*phero*, -) what was commanded of them. *Diastello* is the giving of orders in the strict sense, *dia-* or through prefaced to *stello* [-] suggestive of this. The command in Ex 19.12-13 runs in full as “And as the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him in thunder. And the Lord came down upon Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain, and the Lord called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up.”

Another quote relative to this theophany (the participle *phantazo*, to become visible) is in vs. 21 which is lifted from Dt 9.19: “For I was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure which the Lord bore against you, so that he was ready to destroy you. but the Lord hearkened to me that time also.” In direct contrast to this vs. 22 takes a gentler note with regard to “you.” That is to say, a *proserchomai* [-] with respect to the following which are listed through vs. 24 and are reminiscent of what’s said in the Book of Revelation:

-Mount Zion

-city of the living God

-heavenly Jerusalem. “And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband” [Rev 21.2].

-innumerable angels in festal gathering. “Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels” [Rev 5.11].

-festal gathering or *paneguris*. This word is found with the angels just above.

-assembly of first born, *ekklesia* [-], often used as church

-a judge or God himself

-spirits of the just made perfect, *pneuma* [-] and *teleioo* [-]

-Jesus who is mediator of a new covenant, *mesites* [-]. His blood speaks more eloquently than that of Abel (cf. vs. 4), the comparative *agathos* [-] being used.

Vs. 25 comes off with a warning, not to refuse the one who is speaking (*laleo*, -). The verb *paraiteomai* means to make a request with the intent of the person being beside (*para*-) oneself. Failure to do this can result in us (again, first person plural) not being able to escape. Reference is to God and more specifically his heavenly dwelling place described in vss. 22-24 though in those verses there's no mention of him speaking.

In the second sentence of vs. 25 we have two verbs with two different prepositions prefaced to them, *ex*- and *apo*- (out of and from): *ekpheugo* and *apostrepho*. The former applies to the Israelites and echos 2.3 where the same verb is used. Both instances have a warning, *chrematizo* [-] involving a divine message with the first upon (*epi*) the earth and the second from (*apo*) heaven.

As for the voice which utters this warning or *chrematizo*, it shook the earth and will do so again along with heaven. Note two different verbs for this action, *saleuo* and *seio*. The former connotes making a disturbance while the latter, commotion or setting in motion. Two references are quoted here in part, Ex 19.18 and Ps 68.7-8. They run in full as “And Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke because the Lord descended upon it in fire; and the smoke of it went up like the smoke of a kiln, and the whole mountain quaked greatly.” “God, when you went forth before your people, when you marched through the wilderness, the earth quaked, the heavens poured down rain at the presence of God; yon Sinai quaked at the presence of God, the God of Israel.”

Vs. 27 cites the phrase *eti hapx* or “once more” as in the quote from Ex 19.18 (it isn't in the LXX) from the previous verse. It indicates the removal of those things which are

made (*poieo*, -) and hence liable to being shaken (*saleuo*). The purpose of this *saleuo* is to leave remaining (*meno*, -) whatever isn't subject to it. Such emphasis upon shaking as a testing or warning leads to the next to last verse of Chapter Twelve, namely, that we should be grateful (*charis* with *echo*, literally 'to have grace,' both -) for receiving a kingdom not liable to being shaken, the verb being *paralambano*, to receive alongside or *para*-. *Charis* enables us to offer acceptable worship to God with reverence and awe, the verb being *latreuo* [-] as applicable to liturgical or public worship. The two characteristics are *eulabeia*, *eu*- being the adverbial form of *agathos* (good) prefaced to the verbal root *aresko* meaning to be pleasing.

As for the concluding verse, it's part of vs. 28 and very short stating simply that our God (emphasis again on first person plural) is a consuming fire. It's a partial quote of Dt 4.24: "For the Lord your God is a devouring fire, a jealous God." The Hebrew *qana'* (to be jealous) is similar in that it's just as all-consuming as the verb '*akal*, to eat, to devour.

Chapter Thirteen

Throughout this letter our author has inserted various exhortations, etc. and now concludes with a whole slew of them, totaling to fifteen of them. They are listed accordingly:

#1 of vs. 1: Let brotherly love continue, *philadelphia* containing *philos* or one who is on intimate terms or close to another person. It differs from *agape* in that the latter is more universal. Perhaps use of *philadelphia* shows that our author has a close relationship with many of those to whom his letter is addressed as well as for sharing. He wishes *philadelphia* to continue, *meno* [-] or to remain which infers that at one time it may have been in jeopardy, the reasons for which are simply inferred. Note the succinctness of this verse; it can be taken as an easy way to have those involved remember.

#2 of vs. 2: Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers. This is the second time in a row where *philos* is used or prefaced to the root *xenia* or hospitality, implying that the *philos* of *philadelphia* is extended to others. An example is offered more or less in general fashion, but it's assumed that most people know it. "And the Lord appeared to him (Abraham)..he lifted up his eyes and looked and behold, three men stood in front of him" [Gn 18.1-2]. Four obvious points are worth pointing out: the singular Lord, the three anonymous men, Abraham the ur-patriarch and this incident taking

places before the three men bring about the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. In the verse at hand we have the verb *epilanthano* with the negative which can read something as “do (not) do not continue being unmindful.” Given the example, such forgetfulness would have severe ramifications.

#3 of vs. 3. *Mimnesko* [-] or remember which focuses on two groups: 1) those imprisoned. Such memory is made concrete as though those doing it are similarly imprisoned. 2) Those suffering ill-treatment, *kakoucheo* consisting of *kakos* [-] and the verb *echo*, to have. Being in the body (*soma*, -) is a way of identifying with them which intimates the distinction between it and *pneuma* or spirit.

#4 of vs. 4. Marriage to be held in honor, *timios* being the adjective and connotes something of great worth.

#5 of vs. 4. Marriage bed to be undefiled, *amiantos*, *miano* meaning to stain. God will pass judgment on those who are immoral and adulterous, the former being *pornos* also related to deviant sexual behavior.

#6 of vs. 5. *Tropos* [-] or course, way is applicable to how one lives and is modified by the adjective *aphilarguros*. This is another word with *philos* in it or as related literally to silver.

#7 of vs. 5. Be content or *arkeo*, also to be sufficient with what is beside (*para-*) you, if you will, the verb being *pareimi*. Our author quotes in part Dt 31.6 which reads in full: “Be strong and of good courage, do not fear or be in dread of them; for it is the Lord your God who goes with you; he will not fail you or forsake you.” These are words of Moses to the Israelites toward the end of his life, encouraging them to possess the land of Canaan under the leadership of Joshua. As for the verse at hand, two verbs are singled out, *aniemi* and *egkatalipo*, to send back or to let go and to separate or abandon, *kata-* suggestive of being down.

Vs. 6 throws a Psalm verse in this list by way of encouragement. It reads in full as “With the Lord on my side I do not fear. What can man do to me” [Ps 118.6]? Now back to the list.

#8 of vs. 7. *Mimnesko* [-, cf. vs. 3] or to remember leaders or the participle of *hegeomai* [-] who aren't specified but could be early bishops. They are noted for speaking (*laleo*, -) the *logos* [-] of God and whose lives are to be held up as examples. The verb for this consideration is *anatheoreo*, the root *theoreo* [-] with the preposition *ana-* (on,

upon) prefaced to it. It has two objects: 1) *ekbasis* or literally a coming out of their lives, the singular *anastrophe* (another word with *ana-* prefaced to it) more as a manner of life. 2) *Memeomai* or to imitate their faith.

Vs. 8 doesn't contain an exhortation but the simple, forthright statement that Jesus Christ is the same for three periods of time: past, present and future.

#8 of vs. 9. The verb *paraphero* means to lead astray; also as to lead beside. It's applicable to teachings described as diverse and strange, *poikilos* and *xenos*. Also in this verse our author claims that it's better for the heart to be strengthened by grace (*charis*, -) instead of foods, this *bebaioo* [-].

In vs. 10 our author makes the claim that "we" (first person plural again) have an altar which parallels the one in the Jerusalem temple, those using the latter having no right to eat anything sacrifices from the former which can refer to the Christian Eucharistic sacrifice. Compared with this are the sacrifices for sin to be burned outside the camp where Jesus himself had suffered and sanctified the people. Although this is not new to us, for those reading the letter it is radical because as noted several times before, the Jewish sacrifices were being offered at that same time.

#9 of vs. 13. An exhortation to leave the camp and bear the same abuse of Jesus, *oneidismos* [-] being the noun. The *ex-* (from) or *exerchomai* [-] and *exo* (outside) the camp re-enforce this outside-ness. *Parembole* or camp also means barracks or military headquarters.

Vs. 14 has the small but important *hode* or "here" which refers to this present life but an apply to being outside the camp. Being there brings home clearly the realization that "we" have no lasting city, one that remains or *meno* which is in contrast to another to come, *mello* [-]. It is this latter city "we" are seeking, *epizeteo* [-] where the *epi-* or upon can be associated with heaven as above.

#10 of vs. 15. *Anaphero* [-] or to offer up with regard to a sacrifice of praise which acknowledges God's name, the verb being *homologeo* [-].

#11 of vs. 16. *Epilanthano* [-] or that forgetting-upon isn't to apply to doing good and sharing what one has, these being sacrifices pleasing to God. I.e., once again our author stresses the importance of memory.

#12 of vs. 17. Our author asks his readers the following with regard to leaders: 1) *peitho* [-] being the verb to obey and generally means to persuade and 2) *huphiemi* fundamentally to let down, to lower. Apparently such men as *hegeomai* (participle) are tied in with the Christian community (cf. vs. 7) because they are watching over (*agrupneo*, also to be alert) those entrusted to them. After all, they must give an account (*logos*, -) of their watch, *apodidomai* [-]. Such authority figures are to do this joyfully and not with sadness, *chara* [-] and *stenazo* or to groan. If they opt for the latter, they'd be of no value, *alusiteles* also as harmful.

#13 of vs. 18. The author of Hebrews asks prayers (*proseuchomai*, fundamentally as to petition) for "us" and continues immediately by claiming to have a clear conscience, *suneidesis* [-] or a knowing-with which is *kalos* [-], literally as beautiful. Such *kalos* compels action *kalos* (adverb), the verb being *anastrepho* [-].

#14 of vs. 19. Our author urges his readers, *parakaleo* [-]...to summon them beside or *para*-...in order that he be restored to them, *apokathistemi*. This verb is composed of two prepositions (*apo*- and *kata*- or from and according to) prefaced to the root *histemi* (to stand) and implies changing to an earlier good state or condition. Most likely this means he was delayed for some reason or other which he doesn't spell out.

Vs. 20 is a kind of prayer or benediction toward the end of the letter with reference to the God of peace who restored from death to life Jesus Christ, this put in terms of the verb *anago* as to lead up or to bring in again (*ana*-). Here he identifies Christ not just as a shepherd but one who is great which ties him in with the earlier part of the letter as offering himself.

#15 (and last exhortation) of vs. 20. This and the previous verse form one extended sentence. *Katartizo* [-] is the verb which infers preparation or to put in a proper condition and applies to every good (*agathos*, -) to do God's will which according to the Greek text is working (*poieo*, -) "in us." Such is pleasing to him, *euairetos* with the adverbial form *eu*- [-] prefaced to the root *airetos*, acceptable.

In vs. 22 note two words beginning with the preposition *para*-: 1) *parakaleo* [-]...a summoning to his side, if you will...2) to bear his *logos* [-] of *paraklesis* or again, summoning to his side. Then follows mention of Timothy who had been released from prison and greetings passed on to both leaders and those who've come from Italy.

Vs. 25 concludes the Letter to the Hebrews succinctly with mention of *charis* [-] or grace which our author wishes to all his readers.

+