

## Chapter Eleven

### **11-Vs. 1: Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.**

Two elements which comprise faith (*pistis*):

1) Assurance (*hupostasis*): for another sense, cf. 1.1: “He reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of his nature.” This noun suggests something under (*hupo*) and therefore stable by reason of its reliability. Here it is used in conjunction with things hoped for (*elpizomenon*; from *elpizo*). By its nature hope is not based in the present, only the future, yet the association of this word with *hupostasis* means the object of hope...it’s nature (the alternate translation of *hupostasis*)...is already present. Actually the indefinite *pragma* (things) are hoped for; *elpizomenon* is an adjective which describes them.

2) Conviction (*elegchos*): alternately as proof, refutation and used by Socrates to evoke the truth through the dialogical process. “But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or outsider enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all” [1 Cor 14.24]. *Elegchos* seems to differ from *hupostasis* in that it is something which demands an account and is more liable to be examined; by reason of its nature, *hupostasis* is more a more hidden, abiding reality upon which *elegchos* rests. In the verse at hand, *elegchos* pertains to things not seen (*ou blepomenon*; from *blepo*, the common word pertaining to sight).

### **11-Vs. 2: For by it the men of old received divine approval.**

“It” referring to faith as *hupostasis* and as *elegchos*. The Greek text literally reads “in (*en*) this,” signifying full presence within.

The author of Hebrews attributes the two-fold nature of *pistis* to men of old or *presbuteros* (singular), an indirect way of contrasting their *pistis* with the relative weakness of his audience. *Presbuteros* can apply to those who presided over the Church: “and they did so, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul” [Acts 11.30].

Received divine approval (*martureo*): the Greek text lacks “divine;” this verb denotes the giving of witness, of being a martyr. In the verse at hand, such illustrious men from Israel’s past which will soon be described in Chapter Eleven, are “borne witness to.”

**11-Vs. 3: By faith we understand that the world was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was made out of things which do not appear.**

Many verses in this chapter begin with the phrase, by faith (*pistei*); as noted with respect to the first verse, it encompasses *hupostasis* and *elegchos* which relate to things invisible.

Here faith leads to understanding (*noeo*, verb) or careful consideration; i.e., it is the application of our nous which connotes a given position to which we owe allegiance. “Let the reader understand” [Mt 24.15]. The object of *noeo*: the world or *aion*, more specifically, a long or particular segment of *chronos*-logical time. “A Son whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world” [1.2]. More specifically, that this world/time was created by God’s word or *rhema*. “Upholding the universe by his word of power” [1.3]: cf. remarks there which distinguishes this term from *logos*.

The world/time under discussion was created (*katartizo*) which has a fuller sense of being outfitted or brought to perfection. “Equip you with everything good that you may do his will” [13.21].

In the second half of this verse note the contrast between what is seen (*to blepomenon*) and those things which do not appear (*me ek phainomenon*, literally “not from those things which have appeared”). The common verb *blepo*—it signifies what is apparent to all—differs from *phainomai* which implies the ability to produce light or to shine. This lack of shining with respect to what is seen suggests the deeper ability of faith to grasp the distinction between seen/unseen.

**11-Vs. 4: By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain through which he received approval as righteous, God bearing witness by accepting his gifts; he died, but through his faith he is still speaking.**

Here the *hupostasis/elegchos* of faith is delineated in the context of Abel’s offering who was the second child of Adam and Eve, that is, after Cain. The Genesis story focuses more upon Cain’s attitude which is summed up in 4.7: “And if you do not do well, sin is couching at the door; its desire is for you, but you must master it.” Here is an interplay between desire and master (*shuq* and *mashal*); the former literally means to run after something. The latter implies making like, the process of assimilation, which here is in connection with that “running” aspect attributed to

desire.

The preposition *para* (besides, by) is used with respect to Cain which sets up a comparison between the two brothers' sacrifice or *thusia* (cf. 8.3). The adjective *pleion* (more acceptable) is used with respect to Abel's sacrifice, i.e., "better."

Received approval (*martureo*): in the same sense as in 11.2 just noted, i.e., "borne by (divine) witness." Abel was a keeper of sheep and Cain, a tiller of the ground. In the context of Hebrews with its detailed descriptions on Old Testament sacrifices to highlight that of Jesus of Christ, the sacrificial offerings (animals) make more sense than anything offered from the ground. It is interesting to note that Cain, despite his being a wanderer upon earth, became the ancestor of sedentary dwellers (cf. 4.17); this same verse says that Cain was the father of Enoch who later in 5.24 "walked with God; and he was not, for God took him." In contrast to Cain, Abel was found righteous or *dikaios*.

God bearing witness (*martureo*): the same verb with respect to "received approval," this second time concerning Abel's gifts (*dorea*) which according to Gen 4.4 are the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. Note that this same verse continues with "And the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering," the Hebrew verb *shahah* connoting a looking towards someone for assistance. In the verse at hand, the prefix *epi* (upon) is used with respect to gifts, i.e., God had regard *epi* such offerings.

The verb *apothnesko* (to die) used concerning Abel does not necessarily refer to his murder by Cain although it is implied. Despite Abel's death, he "still speaks" (*laleo*), more accurately, his blood: "The voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground" [Gen 4.10].

The specific word faith ('but through his faith') is lacking in the Greek text; it reads "through (*dia*) which."

**11-Vs. 5: By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death; and he was not found because God had taken him. Now before he was taken he was attested as having pleased God.**

In the previous verse mention was made of Cain (who slew his brother Abel) being the father of Enoch. Note: "and he built a city and called the name of the city after the name of his son, Enoch" [Gen 4.17]. Perhaps a comparison can be made between this city and the heavenly Jerusalem of Revelation: that is, since Enoch was taken

into heaven without seeing death, so the heavenly Jerusalem is symbolic of immortality.

Taken up (*metatithemi*): used twice in this verse and once as a noun; it alternately means to change, transpose, translate. The literal sense of this verb is a “placing after (*meta*),” a transposition to a place other than the familiar one. Gen 5.24 puts the verse at hand in context: “Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.” Here is a correspondence between walking, was not and taking (*halak*, ‘*eynenu* and *laqach*). The striking ‘*eynenu* almost means that Enoch “was not-ed”...blotted out of existence while he was walking along or living his life. The verb *laqach* does not imply a taking up (*halah*) as with the prophet Elijah in 2 Kg 2.11.

The words “not see death” suggests a blindness of sorts, a blinding of Enoch’s eyes to the reality of human death.

“Was not found” is not in the Hebrew of Gen 4.24; ‘*eynenu* takes its place. To be “found” can mean that people were looking for Enoch but were unable to discover him.

Attested (*martureo*): in other words, “was given witness” which may apply to those persons attempting to find Enoch but could not.

The Hebrew of Genesis’ account with regard to Enoch does not say that he pleased (*euaresteo*) God, that is, except reference in Sirach 44.16: “Enoch pleased the Lord and was taken up.” The only other use of this verb is in 13.16: “for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.”

**11-Vs. 6: And without faith it is impossible to please him. For whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.**

To please (*euaresteo*): as noted in the previous verse with respect to Enoch. This verb which connotes a sense of delight is directly related to *pistis* and therefore casts *pistis* in a pleasing light. The first sentence of vs. 6 may be seen in connection with Wisd 4.10 which also touches upon Enoch: “There was one who pleased (*euarestos*) God and was loved by him, and while living among sinners he was taken up.”

Draw near (*proserchomai*): as in 10.22: “Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith.” Such *pros-erchomai* with respect to God in the verse at hand pertains to an ever closer approach, not necessarily an attainment as this verb

indicates. The requirement for such a *pros*: believe that he exists (*estin*, alternately as “is”) which harkens back to the name of *YHWH* revealed to Moses: “Say this to the people of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you’” [Ex 3.6].

Consequent upon this belief in the divine is-ness, as it were, comes an expected reward or *misthapodotes*, the only occurrence of this noun in the New Testament. It better translates as rewarder.

Seek (*ekzeteo*): note the preposition *ek* (out, from) which indicates a more intense form of searching. Cf. 12.17: “for he (Esau) found no chance to repent, though he sought it with tears.”

**11-Vs. 7: By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, took heed and constructed an ark for the saving of his household; by this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness which comes by faith.**

Here *pistis* is situated in the context of a warning (*chrematizomai*, verb) as in 8.5: “for when Moses was about to erect the tent, he was instructed by God.” Note the two uses of this verb with respect to physical construction: that of a tent and that of an ark.

Events as yet unseen (*medepo blepomenon*) suggest a prophetic side to *pistis*. The Genesis account of this warning on Noah’s behalf is not specifically mentioned. However, God does say (not necessarily to Noah but almost rhetorically): “For I am sorry that I have made them” [6.7]. Again, “I have determined to make an end of all flesh; for the earth is filled with violence through them; behold, I will destroy them with the earth” [6.14]. This second “warning” is directly addressed to Noah as opposed to the first.

“By God” is lacking in the Greek text.

The act of *chrematizomai* as being instructed relates directly to Noah’s construction (*kataskeuazo*, verb) of the ark; note the preposition *kata* (according to), as though Noah followed a divine plan outlined in Gen 6.14-16. This verse is akin to Moses’ instruction by God on Mount Sinai, Exodus 20 ff.

Ark (*kibotos*): as in 9.4: “having the golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold.” The Hebrew for *kibotos* is *tevath* as in Ex 2.5: “She (Pharaoh’s daughter) saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid to

fetch it.” Before constructing/being instructed with respect to the *kibotos*, Noah took heed or *eulabeomai*. For the only other New Testament occurrence, cf. Acts 23.10: “The tribune, afraid that Paul would be torn in pieces by them.” In the verse at hand the sentiment of anxiety contained in this verb pertains to the saving (*soteria*) of Noah’s household (*oikos*). A certain parallel exists between this household and the ark in which it was inserted. The final touch to Noah’s *soteria*, as it were, is when “the Lord shut him in” [Gen 7.16].

The verb act of constructing the *kibotos* was a condemnation or *katakrino* (verb). Note another use of *kata* prefixed to the verb, as if to parallel that of *kataskewazo* (to construct), implying that a plan of sorts were being followed. Such condemnation was not directly evident to Noah’s contemporaries who, according to Mt 24.38, “were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage.” *Kosmos* (world) is the object of Noah’s censure; compare *aion* as world in 11.3.

Righteousness of *dikaiousune* results from faith (‘y or *kata* faith’), a third feature of faith in addition to *hupostasis* and *elegchos* of 11.1. Also note a third use of *kata* in the same verse or an order with regard to faith. More accurately, Noah becomes an heir of such righteousness or *kleronomos*. Cf. 6.17: “So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he interposed with an oath.”

**11-Vs. 8: By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place which he was to receive as an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was to go.**

Vss. 8 through 12 relate to Abraham as well as vss. 17 through 19.

With respect to Abraham, there is a correspondence between his faith and obedience (*pistis* and *hupakouo*, verb). I.e., faith primed him, as it were, to listen (this verb’s fundamental meaning) or more specifically, his capacity of “listening under” (*hupo*).

Note: The part which concerns the author of Hebrews is Chapter Twelve of Genesis, that dealing with Abram; his name is not changed to Abraham until 17.5.

Abraham’s “listening under” took the form of migration, of going out (*ex-erchomai*) into (*eis*) an unknown destination or place (*topos*). Even though he was in the process of migrating, Abraham carried with him the *hupo* of *hup-akouo*, as it were, throughout his journey. This *ex-eis* process culminates in Abraham’s inheritance or

“into (*eis*) inheritance” (*kleronomia*). Cf. 9.15: “so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance.”

Abraham goes out (*ex-erchomai* again) without knowing (*epistamai*) his destination; the latter verb implies being acquainted with someone or something, “being *epi*” or upon the object of one’s knowledge. As for this not-knowing, Abraham and his family departed for Canaan, more specifically, Shechem (cf. 12.6), which was a commercial crossroads at the time. That is to say, Abraham did not randomly set off but had many people with him, so most likely he choose a well-established road. Abraham did not “go out” alone but enjoyed the company of family members. Compare with Moses later on who left Egypt with the Israelites but did not see the promised land.

**11-Vs. 9: By faith he sojourned in the land of promise as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise.**

Sojourned (*paroikeo*): literally, to dwell alongside (*para*) of in the sense of having a temporary residence. In the verse at hand, Abraham lives *para*, as it were, with respect to the land of promise which at first glance seems curious because God had given it to him and his descendants as a permanent dwelling.

Land of promise (*epaggelia*): compare a parallel use with 4.1: “Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest remains.” Here rest pertains to the Sabbath rest which was preceded by the six days of creation.

In light of this Sabbath rest, the land of promise is analogous to a foreign land (*allogrios*), the word land not in the Greek. This is an adjective which literally means belonging to another.

The fact that Abraham lived (*katoikeo*) in tents with Isaac and Jacob enhances the temporary aspect of their residence. On the other hand, they were acquainted with this form of living due to their nomadic background. Compare *katoikeo* with *paroikeo*: the former suggests a mode of living more or less permanent or in this instance, a way of life with regard to tents (*kata*: according to...a given mode).

All three patriarchs are heirs (*sugkleronomos*) of the *epaggelia*, the same term used three paragraphs above with respect to the land of promise. The preposition *sug* (or *sun*, with) means fellow heir. “And if children, then heirs, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him” [Rom 8.17].

One important context of the verse at hand is Gen 23.4: “I am a stranger and a sojourner among you,” that is, among the Hittites. In Hebrew stranger is *ger* and sojourner is *toshav* which is derived from a verb meaning to sit or dwell. Refer to an article on this Lectio Divina Home Page entitled “Biblical References Pertaining to the Concept of Exile.”

**11-Vs. 10: For he looked forward to the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.**

Looked forward (*ekdechomai*): alternately, to await expectantly. Note the preposition *ek* prefixed to the verb *dechomai* (to receive, expect), as if Abraham were getting something out of or from his condition as sojourner. The city he anticipates has foundations or *themelios* (cf. below); Abraham and his sons had their own tent city, as it were, without foundations.

Builder and maker (*technites* and *demiourgos*): with reference to God as opposed to a human founder. Note that Enoch was the first person to have built a city (cf. Gen 4.17) discussed in connection with vs. 5. The first term pertains to a craftsman and designer; the second (only occurrence in the New Testament) suggests a public workman.

The verse at hand anticipates the heavenly Jerusalem; if we keep *themelios* as representative of the twelve apostles, Abraham anticipated this city in the person of these founders of the church of Jesus Christ. “And the wall of the city had twelve foundations; and on them the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb” [Rev 21.14]. To Abraham, the twelve apostles have special import as the twelve tribes of Israel from his son Jacob/Israel.

**11-Vs. 11: By faith Sarah herself received power to conceive, even when she was past the age, since she considered him faithful who had promised.**

Attention now shifts to Abraham’s wife in reference to power or *dunamis* which she had received. The verb *lambano* is used; compare with Abraham and his inheritance. The biblical sense of *dunamis* has various shades of meaning from miraculous occurrences to the ability to perform an action.

Conceive (*eis katabolen spermatos*): this phrase consists of two nouns: *katabole* or literally “a casting down” as if to sow seeds; note the use of *eis* (into) as if to indicate

full awareness of the action involved. Cf. 9.26 for another use: “for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world.” *Sperma* or seed which alternately reads descendant as in vs. 18 below.

Age (*kairos*): the particular time in the sense of special event often mentioned in these **Notes**.

Faithful and promised (*pistos* and *epaggello*) go hand-in-hand here. “For when God made a promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself” [6.13]. Since the author of Hebrews uses *epaggello* in conjunction with Abraham, it is easy in this light to see it apply to his wife Sarah.

The context of this verse is Gen 17.19; 18.11-4 and 21.2.

**11-Vs. 12: Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born descendants as many as the stars of heaven and as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore.**

Good as dead (*nekroomai*): “Put to death what is earthly in you” [Col 3.5]. This verb is one half of the paradox, the other half being Abraham’s descendants. The verse has *nekroomai* in the aorist passive as to show the equally passive role of Abraham regarding future generations and as though he were merely the agent. Such passivity is often found in the interaction between God and humans.

For another use of *nekroomai* in the same context of vs. 12, cf. Rom 4.19: “He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead because he was about a hundred years old.”

The verse at hand is largely lifted from Gen 15.5 and 22.17 to form one sentence. The former is preceded by “And he brought him outside and said,” this “outside” being outside a tent which was noted in vs. 9, that is, a temporary dwelling. Vs. 6 completes the sense of vs. 5: “And he believed the Lord; and he reckoned it to him as righteousness.” As for 22.17, vs. 18 similarly amplifies its meaning: “and by your descendants shall all the nations of the earth bless themselves because you have obeyed my voice.”

**11-Vs. 13: These all died in faith, not having received what was promised, but having seen it and greeted it from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.**

In faith (*kata pistin*): as noted several times earlier, *kata* connotes an order which in this verse pertains to belief. “These” are Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Sarah whom the author of Hebrews mentioned thus far in Chapter Eleven.

Received (*komizo*): for another use, cf. vs. 19: “figuratively speaking, he did receive him back.” in the sense of coming into the possession of something which did not happen, better, regarding what was promised (*epaggelia*, noun). Consider this verse in light of vs. 9: “By faith he sojourned in the land of promise.” From one point of view, the claim about the seven persons not having achieved the divine promise is inaccurate. Abel seems to be the only one who suffered the greatest injustice; the others did enjoy actual presence in the promised land even though they had to intermingle with the native inhabitants. Keep in mind that they were present there before the descent into Egypt and hence, the Exodus which in Israelite history was the prelude to possession of the land...possession in the full sense after their experience at Mount Sinai and all this entailed.

Despite not being fulfilled, the seven persons mentioned thus far did have a glimpse of the divine promise. First comes seeing (*oraō*, the simple verb for this action; cf. 9.29, appear) followed by greeting (*aspazomai*); both may be taken in the context of distance, that is, from afar (*porrothen*).

Such vision and salutation at a distance is concomitant with an acknowledgment (*homologeō*, verb) that the seven persons involved here are both strangers and exiles (*xenos* and *parepidemos*). This verb alternately implies a confession as well as a commitment. The latter term is stronger than the former; it is comprised of two prepositions: *para* (besides) and *epi* (upon) prefixed to the noun *demos* (land, district). The significance is that an exile is one living besides native inhabitants as well as “upon” them in the sense of depending on them. Thus a paradox in that exiles are both independent and dependent at the same time.

The verse at hand is specific with regards to *xenos* and *parepidemos*: the earth, rather, “on (*epi*) the earth,” and this earth can include the promised land as well as other locales which are distinct from the land of Sabbath rest.

**11-Vs. 14: For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland.**

People includes not only the seven Old Testament witnesses just recounted by those like them which includes those to whom the Letter to the Hebrews is addressed. To

“speak thus” suggests a permanent, habitual outlook of being a sojourner with regard to earthly existence. Their mode of speech makes clear (*emphanizo*) their intent.

The object of *emphanizo*, as it were, is the search for a homeland (*patris*), alternately, fatherland in the sense of one’s birth place. “He went away from there and came to his own country” [Mk 6.1]. This search (*epizeteo*, verb) is more intense by reason of the preposition *epi* (upon). If we keep in mind the *epi* with regard to par(*epi*)*demos*, this search takes place by reason of exposure to those persons focused upon earthly existence.

**11-Vs. 15: If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return.**

Thinking (*mnemoneuo*; cf. 13.7): better, to remember which intimates innate knowledge with respect to *patris* or homeland; in the context of Hebrews it may be taken as that Sabbath rest. The object of such thinking/remembering: the land from which the seven Old Testament exemplars had left (*ex-baino*). Thus *mnemoneuo* does not focus exclusively upon such “*ex*,” for despite its innate knowledge, remembering is forward looking.

Opportunity (*kairos*): here with respect to returning (*anakampto*). *Kampto* means to bend, to curve; the preposition *ana* (on, upward) suggests a return in the sense of re-appropriation of ways which were left behind. Ex 16.3 conveys the longing for a return but in a different sense: “Would that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt when we sat by the fleshpots and ate bread to the full.”

**11-Vs. 16: But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.**

But as it is (*nun*): alternately, now or the truth is. The author of Hebrews uses *nun* to get at the heart of the matter with regard to these sojourners: their desire (*oregomai*, verb) which is rooted in memory (cf. *mnemoneuo* of vs. 15). I.e., *oregomai* is often associated with longing with regard to lust and gain. The object of desire here is for better (*kreittonos*), country not being used in the Greek text which is contrasted with its opposite adjective, *epouranios* (heavenly), as is used in 8.5: “They serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly sanctuary.” I.e., the downward pull commonly associated with desire is presented in an upward movement, towards heaven.

Ashamed (*aischunomai*): “As it is my eager expectation and hope that I shall not be at all ashamed” [Phil 1.20]. The author of Hebrews averts this sentiment in the verse at hand as it pertains to God.

City (*polis*): a term freighted with Hellenistic connotations; contrast with the tents in which Abraham and his sons dwelt as sojourners (vs. 8+). The general sense of God preparing (*etoimazo*) this *polis* is a central theme to the Book of Revelation, especially 21.11-21. Those expecting its descent may be said to have this vision in mind, even seminally.

**11-Vs. 17: By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was ready to offer up his only son,**

By faith: a resumption of this phrase begun in vs. 3 and interrupted in between vss. 12 and 16; here it gets back to the central figure of Abraham’s test (*peirazo*, verb) by God. Compare with Jesus Christ in 2.18: “For because he himself has suffered and been tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted.”

The temptation consisted in Abraham offering his only son, Isaac as recounted in Gen 22.1-10. After his ordeal, Abraham “called the name of that place the Lord will provide” [vs. 14] or in Hebrew, “the Lord will see (*ra’ah*).” In the next verse he exclaims, “On the mount of the Lord it shall be provided” or in Hebrew, “he will be seen.” Perhaps reference is to the angel’s appearance at the moment when Abraham was about to slay Isaac as well as Abraham’s exclamation in vs. 11, “Here am I,” that is, here am I, ready to be seen.

The verse at hand says that Abraham offered (*prosphero*; cf. 8.3) Isaac but the Genesis account says that he was about to but was prevented by the angel.

Abraham received (*anadechomai*) promises; note the plural which can include Abraham’s (plural) descendants which will be vast as the stars (cf. 15.5). The only other New Testament occurrence of this verb: “the chief man of the island named Publius who received us and entertained us hospitably for three days” [Acts 28.7].

Abraham’s readiness (the adjective ‘ready’ is not used in the Greek text) to sacrifice Isaac is summed up in his words, “Here am I” [Gen 22.1] which in Hebrew is *hineny*, more akin to “behold.”

**11-Vs. 18: of whom it was said, “Through Isaac shall your descendants be named.”**

The conclusion of the sentence begun in the previous verse which shows the importance of Isaac regarding future generations.

The Greek text has the preposition “*en* (in) Isaac;” i.e., future generations are present in him going back to his position on the altar when Abraham was about to slay him. Also, the above mentioned verses from Genesis may be said to be bound up with Isaac: “The Lord will see” and “On the mount of the Lord he will be seen” [22.14].

The quote in the verse at hand is found in Gen 21.12 (cf. Rom 9.7 for this quote as well) which reads in full: “But God said to Abraham, ‘Be not displeased because of the lad and because of your slave woman (Hagar); whatever Sarah says to you, do as she tells you, for through Isaac shall your descendants be named.’” The favor shown towards Isaac is taken in the context of the banishment of Hagar and her son Ishmael who was also destined to be a “great nation” [vs. 18] but one through whom descendants would be blessed by God although differently compared with Isaac.

Descendants (*sperma*): literally, seed. Cf. 11.11: “By faith Sarah herself received power to conceive.”

**11-Vs. 19: He considered that God was able to raise men even from the dead; hence, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back.**

Considered (*logizomai*): implies the careful weighing of evidence, of taking into account the *logos* or heart of the matter. Abraham’s ability to see the *logos* or reason of his near sacrifice of Isaac allows him to figuratively (*en parabole*) receive him back. Cf. 9.9: “which is symbolic for the present age.” I.e., both the substance of a given incident—the *logos* or object of *log(os)-izomai*—is able to be perceived *en parabole*, or better, is explained in this fashion.

*Komizo* (receive back): as in vs. 13, “These all died in faith, not having received what was promised.”

**11-Vs. 20: By faith Isaac invoked future blessings on Jacob and Esau.**

Invoked (*eulogeo*): literally, “to speak well” as in 6.14: “Surely I will bless you and multiply you.”

The context of the verse at hand is Genesis 27. Note that the author of Hebrews imparts blessings on both Jacob and Esau as opposed to Jacob alone which is the theme of this chapter. The blessing upon Jacob reads as follows: “See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the Lord has blessed! 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 everyone who curses you, and blessed be everyone who blesses you” [vss. 27-9]! Such a blessing Isaac mistakenly bestows upon Jacob who disguised himself as Esau. Later Isaac blessed Esau as follows: “Behold, away from the fatness of the earth shall your dwelling be, and away from the dew of heaven on high. By your sword you shall live, and you shall serve your brother; but when you break loose you shall break his yoke from your neck’ [vss. 39-40].

**11-Vs. 21: By faith Jacob, when dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, bowing in worship over the head of his staff.**

Blessed: another use of *eulogeo* as in the previous verse (“invoked”).

The author of Hebrews omits Jacob’s blessing of his twelve sons in Egypt (cf. Gen 49), perhaps because they had maltreated Joseph and were not worthy of mention despite their being patriarchs of the twelve tribes of Israel. Instead, focus is upon Joseph’s sons: “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” [Gen 48.15-6]. Later in vs. 20 Jacob says, “By you Israel will pronounce blessings, saying, ‘God make you as Ephraim and as Manasseh.’” Over Joseph’s objection Jacob prefers Ephraim over Manasseh who is the first-born of Joseph. This incident is reminiscent of Isaac having been deceived by Jacob with help from his mother Rebekah; perhaps Jacob had it mind when preferring Ephraim over Manasseh.

The context of Jacob’s staff is Gen 47.31 which reads in the **LXX**: “Then Israel bowed upon the head of his staff (*rhabdos*).” Cf. 9.4 for another use of this word: “and Aaron’s rod that budded.” The Hebrew is *mitah* (bed) which the **LXX** confused as *mateh*; both are from the same verbal root.

Note that mention of Jacob and his staff occurs before his blessing of Ephraim and Manasseh. The context is his request to Joseph not to be buried in Egypt but with his

fathers. Joseph made a similar request (cf. Gen 49.29), this despite the generosity Egypt had shown to both Jacob and Joseph as well as their descendants there until the time of the Exodus.

**11-Vs. 22: By faith Joseph, at the end of his life, made mention of the exodus of the Israelites and gave directions concerning his burial.**

End (*teleutao*, verb): in the sense of Joseph's life coming to completion (cf. *telos* as in 7.3, etc.). "The patriarch David that he both died and was buried" [Acts 2.29].

In the verse at hand a close connection exists between Joseph's *telos* and the Exodus. Note the verb *mnemoneuo* (made mention) as in vs. 15: "If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out." There was mentioned how *mnemoneuo* pertains to memory, of remembering; it is consistent with Joseph who was endowed with the gift of prophecy.

Chapter Fifty of Genesis first speaks of the death of Jacob, Joseph's father who as noted in vs. 21 along with his son, did not wish to be buried in Egypt but with his fathers.

Gave directions (*entellomai*) as in 9.2: "This is the blood of the covenant which God commanded you." The instructions are found in Gen 50.24-5 where Joseph enjoins his brothers by oath to take his body from Egypt when God visits them. It is fulfilled in Ex 13.19: "And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him." Note that Joseph does not mention Egypt by name but calls it "this land" [50.24] and contracts it with "the land which he swore to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob" [also, vs. 24].

Burial (*osteon*): literally as bone which is consistent with Ex 13.19 just noted. Joseph's bones are placed in a coffin or 'aron, the same word for ark in the sense of ark of covenant (cf. Ex 25.10).

**11-Vs. 23: By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid for three months by his parents because they saw that the child was beautiful; and they were not afraid of the king's edict.**

A display of Moses' faith through vs. 28. The faith here does not pertain to Moses per se but to his parents who were of the house of Levi (cf. Ex 2.1). When it became impossible to hid their son, the mother put him in a basket or *tevah*. Cf. 9.4 which mentions this word in conjunction with Noah's ark, etc.

Beautiful (*asteios*): in the sense of an uncommon loveliness; literally it pertains to what pertains to a city. The only other New Testament reference is Acts 7.20 and again refers to Moses: “At this time Moses was born and was beautiful before God.”

The king’s edict or *diatagma* (only New Testament occurrence of this word) is as follows: “Every son that is born to the Hebrews you shall cast into the Nile, but you shall let every daughter live” [Ex 2.22]. Moses’ parents did obey the edict but in a different sense.

**11-Vs. 24: By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter,**

Despite his having been raised by Pharaoh’s daughter, Moses identified with the Hebrews, the turning point being when he saw an Egyptian maltreating one of the Hebrews (cf. Ex 2.11-15). Note that vs. 11 has “one of his people,” that is, one of Moses’ people.

**11-Vs. 25: choosing rather to share ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.**

The conclusion of the sentence begun in vs. 25.

Share ill-treatment (*sugkakoucheo*): the only New Testament occurrence of this verb, literally, “with-to be evil.” Moses fled Egypt when he slew the Egyptian maltreating a fellow Hebrew; the Exodus text does not say that Moses actually engaged in slave-like toil but was the leader, a different type of *sugkakoucheo* in that he was responsible for the Israelites’ well-being. It is interesting to observe that before God revealed himself to Moses we have this verse by way of preface, “And the people of Israel groaned under their bondage and cried out for help, and their cry under bondage came up to God” [Ex 2.23]. At the time Moses perceived no clear-cut connection between Israel’s distress and the revelation of God’s name.

Fleeting (*proskairos*): note the preposition *pros* (towards, in the direction of) prefixed to *kairos*, last noted in vs. 15 as opportunity. This adjective is used with regard to sin’s pleasures (*apolausis*, singular). The sense of such illicit enjoyment is implied with the option Moses would have had if he remained in Pharaoh’s household where he was raised. The only other New Testament reference: “nor to set their hopes on uncertain riches but on God who richly furnishes us with everything to

enjoy” [1 Tim 6.17].

**11-Vs. 26: He considered abuse suffered for the Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he looked to the reward.**

Considered (*hegeomai*): alternately, to function as a leader. The object of the verb is abuse (*oneidismos*), better, reproach. The English word “suffered” is not in the Greek text; “Christ” is in the genitive case, i.e., “abuse of Christ.”

*Oneidismos* is equated here with its opposite, wealth (*ploutos*) which is set in opposition to Egypt’s treasures (*thesauros*). Again, there is no direct association of Moses with this wealth except for having been raised by Pharaoh’s daughter and all that entails. For a parallel sense, consider how the Israelites despoiled the Egyptians just before the Exodus (cf. Ex 12.35-6).

The author presupposes that Moses knew Jesus Christ; associated bound up with the Second Person of the Trinity is the revelation of the divine name in Ex 3.14, “I am who am.” Also, cf. Jn 5.46: “If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote of me.”

Looked (*apoblepo*): the only occurrence of this verb in the New Testament which literally means “look away from (*apo*)” but also as to look upon. The object of this verb: *misthapodosia* (reward) as in 10.35: “Therefore do not throw away your confidence which has a great reward.”

**11-Vs. 27: By faith he left Egypt, not being afraid of the anger of the king; for he endured as seeing him who is invisible.**

In this verse the author of Hebrews has Moses leaving Egypt; there is no mention of him leading Israel from this land: cf. vs. 29 for a reference but again, no mention of Moses. Since vs. 27 speaks of that which is visible and invisible (this occurs before the theophany to Moses on Mount Sinai after the Exodus), reference to divine transcendence may allude to the revelation of the divine name *YHWH* in Ex 3.14.

Left (*kataleipo*): connotes not just a simple departure but one fully in accord (*kata*) with the notion of leaving, that is, a thorough forsaking of one’s previous dwelling. For another sense of this verb, cf. 4.1: “while the promise of entering his rest remains.”

Anger (*thumos*): Pharaoh had expressed his *thumos* towards Moses and Israel more through hardening his heart as with the ten plagues, for example, Ex 7.13. The culmination is found in 14.17: “And I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they shall go in after them, and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his hosts, his chariots and his horsemen.”

Endured (*kartereo*): the only New Testament use of this term, here with respect to seeing (*horao*) God who is invisible (*to aoraton*, from the same verb, ‘the invisible one’). The Exodus account is full of instances where God is manifest to the people as well as to Moses.

**11-Vs. 28: By faith he kept the Passover and sprinkled the blood so that the Destroyer of the first-born might not touch them.**

Kept (*poieo*): the common verb to make, as if to indicate that the Passover was something actively carried through as distinct from the common understanding of a rite to be observed.

Sprinkled (*proschusis*): noun, the only occurrence of this word in the New Testament and object of the verb *poieo*. The first mention of sprinkling with respect to sacrificial blood is 9.19: “He took the blood of calves and goats with water and scarlet wool and hyssop and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people.” The verb here is *rhantizo*, different from *proschusis*, which connotes a pouring-out or a more thorough dousing. The verb *proscheo* is used in the LXX of Ex 24.6: “And Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and half of the blood he threw against the altar.”

Destroyer (*olothreuo*): literally, “he who destroys,” action being carried out in the present and which is ongoing. In the verse at hand, the Destroyer pertains to a guise assumed by the Lord to slay the first-born (*prototokos*). Note the time, the middle of the night: “At midnight the Lord smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt from the first-born of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the first-born of the captive who was in the dungeon” [Ex 12.29]. *Prototokos* is used in reference to Jesus Christ as in 1.6: “And again, when he brings the first-born into the world.”

Touch (*thiggano*) is also found in 12.20: “If even a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned.” In both instances *thiggano* is equivalent to death and was the final impulse that made Pharaoh drive out Israel from Egypt.

**11-Vs. 29: By faith the people crossed the Red Sea as if on dry land; but the Egyptians, when they attempted to do the same, were drowned.**

Crossed (*diabaino*): literally, “to cross through” which is in accord with Ex 14.22: “And the people of Israel went into the midst of the sea on dry ground, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.” Here the people are presented as having gone into, not crossed, the sea. The Hebrew has *betok* (in the midst) or the very center of the water, as it were, which is emphasized by water piled up on their left and right. Vs. 29 has “as if” whereas the Exodus account omits this in favor of the actual presence of Israel *betok* the Red Sea.

Drowned (*katapino*): literally, to swallow down. The Hebrew of Ex 14.27 puts it interestingly: “And the Lord shook off the Egyptians in the midst (*betok*: the same *betok* as with Israel) of the sea.” The idea of shaking off (*nahar*) the Egyptians suggests a casual throwing off almost in a comical sense.

**11-Vs. 30: By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they had been encircled for seven days.**

Note the passiveness communicated by the two verbs: “fell down” and “had been encircled.” While Joshua and the Israelites were actively involved, the author of Hebrews wishes to impart the fact that God effected Jericho’s fall.

Chapter six of Joshua describes the siege of Jericho where the number seven occurs repeatedly: seven priests, seven trumpets, seven encirclements of Jericho, seven days. Once the city walls fell, Joshua devoted everything to the Lord for destruction (*cherem*: a paradoxical word, in a sense, for it connotes devotion to God by means of destroying something which is of value; cf. vs. 17).

**11-Vs. 31: By faith Rahab the harlot did not perish with those who were disobedient because she had given friendly welcome to the spies.**

Rahab’s faith was rooted in her words, “I know that the Lord has given you the land and that the fear of you has fallen upon us and that all the inhabitants of the land melt away before you” [Jos 2.9]. The Hebrew verb *yadad* used here can refer to intimate knowledge as well as having a more common sense. Rahab seems to have gotten her information from neighboring people who heard about the fact that God delivered Israel into its hands. This occurs early in Joshua; no mention is made about warfare, so perhaps local inhabitants heard reports of Joshua’s address to

Israel which implies hostility: “then you shall return to the land of your possession and shall possess it, the land which Moses the servant of the Lord gave you beyond the Jordan toward the sunrise” [1.15]. Thus Rahab heard the reports circulating in the neighborhood which probably included news about Israel’s exodus from Egypt some forty years prior and how God destroyed the Egyptian army at the Red Sea.

The author of Hebrews calls the (presumed) inhabitants of Jericho disobedient, from the verb *apeitheo*. “So they have now been disobedient in order that by the mercy shown to you they also may receive mercy” [Rom 11.31]. Compare with vs. 8: “By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place which he was to receive as an inheritance.” The verb here is *hupakouo*, literally, a “listening under;” *apeitheo* consists of *peitho* (to persuade) with alpha privative prefixed to it, i.e., the inhabitants of Jericho were not persuaded.

Friendly welcome (*dexamene met’ eirenes*): literally, “having received with peace” those sent by Joshua to spy out the land. Although Rahab was instrumental for Israel’s success, her favorable disposition centered upon her own safety and that of her household. Jos 6.25 says that the spies, having lived up to their oath, allowed Rahab and her extended family to live, “and she dwelt in Israel to this day because she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.”

**11-Vs. 32: And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets—**

Fail (*epileipo*): the only occurrence of this verb in the New Testament. This notion of “failing” with regard to words concerning these Old Testament notables—Jdg 6-8; 4-5; 13-16; 11-12; 1 Sam 16-30; 2 Sam 1-24; 1 Kg 1-2.11; 1 Sam 1-12; 15.1-16.13—is closely related to the lack of time or *chronos*.

Vss. 33-8 describe in some detail the ability of these persons to overcome horrendous obstacles. They are omitted here because their accounts do not pertain directly to the content of these **Notes**.

Vs. 38 says that the “world (*kosmos*) was not worthy” of such persons. Cf. vs. 7 for a similar sentiment: “by this (Noah’s construction of the ark) he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness which comes by faith.” The deserts, mountains, dens and caves of vs. 38 are similar in meaning to Noah floating over the submerged world, that is, both examples demonstrate a distance or detachment from the *kosmos* and parallels the sentiments of sojourner, etc., depicted earlier in

## Chapter Eleven.

**11-Vs. 39: And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised.**

Well attested (*martureomai*): literally, to bear witness here with respect to faith, that faith demonstrated by the Old Testament examples in Chapter Eleven beginning with Abel.

“By their faith:” note the preposition *dia* is used here or “through their faith.”

“Receive what was promised:” a restatement of vs. 13 which reads, “These all died in faith, not having received what was promised” (etc.).

**11-Vs. 40: since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.**

The author of Hebrews states his purpose for having recounted in some detail Old Testament worthies, that is, their relationship to “us” or Christians of his time.

Had foreseen (*problepomai*): the only New Testament use of this verb which bears a certain parallel to Rahab in vs. 31 having foreknowledge of the spies’ mission. This verb consists of *blepo* (to see) prefixed by *pro*, before...i.e., a “seeing before” events. Since this *pro-blepomai* was worked out in the context of Old Testament persons who did not attain divine promises as Hebrews had recounted, their partial completion is deliberate. That is to say, they were not made perfect or *teleioo* apart from us, an indirect way of implying the revelation of Jesus Christ and the foundation of his church.

The contrast between the two different modes of time, *kairos* and *chronos*, are essential for understanding Chapter Eleven. The author’s audience or “us” who live in the present *chronos*—as well as the Old Testament examples who were subject to the same *chronos* by reason of being sojourners and suffering persecution—are lifted from its restrictions into a new dimension or *kairos* which is fulfilled through the priesthood of Jesus Christ, an earlier theme of Hebrews.

## Chapter Twelve

**12-Vs. 1: Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us,**

Not just witnesses (*martus*, singular) but a cloud (*nephos*) of them, referring to those Old Testament examples mentioned in the last chapter. There are two chief examples of a cloud to demonstrate both hidden-ness and revelation:

1) Ex 19.16: “On the morning of the third day there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud upon the mountain.” The Hebrew words here are *hanan kaved*, *kaved* being related to *kavod* or glory.

2) Mt 17.5: “He was still speaking when lo, a bright cloud overshadowed them.” The Greek words here are *nephele photeine*; *nephele* is closely related to vs. 1's *nephos*, the only use of this term in the New Testament which is more suggestive of the oppressive weight of darkness. *Nephele* is the LXX translation of *hanan*.

In the verse at hand, this cloud is so great (*tosoutos*) in the sense of “such a one,” that is, connoting its uniqueness.

Surrounded (*perikeimai*): “we” are the ones so embraced by this cloud which suggests it has greater capability to lead the Christian community into it much like Moses ascending Mount Sinai. For another use of this verb with a different sense, cf. 5.2: “He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward since he himself is beset with weakness.”

The cloud of witnesses allows the author of Hebrews to present two exhortations (“let us”):

1) Lay aside (*apotithemi*): this verb also refers to putting off one’s clothes; in the verse at hand we may associate these clothes with “every weight” (*ogkos*). “Let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light” [Rom 13.12]. The type of burden is not specified, but it is every or pas, that is, all-inclusive with the exception of sin which is noted separately. This is the only New Testament use of *ogkos*. The second object of laying aside is sin which clings closely (*euperistatos*, the only New Testament occurrence). This adjective has a broad meaning: well (*eu*) surrounded, easily avoided, having easy distress. The general idea is an almost natural affinity with sin.

2) Run (*trecho*): i.e., to make haste, again, in the company of this cloud of witnesses. “So run that you may obtain it” [1 Cor 9.24]. Such running is in the

context of a race or *agon* which also means struggle. In the verse at hand, the running is with perseverance (*hupomone*, literally, a standing-under) as noted in 10.36: “For you have need of endurance so that you may do the will of God and receive what is promised.” The race in vs. 1 has not yet been undertaken but is set before us or *prokeimai*; this word is used in the next verse, “for the joy that was set before him.”

**12-Vs. 2: looking to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.**

Looking to (*aphorao*): the object being Jesus; this verb connotes turning away (*aphorao*) from one thing and focusing attention on something else. The only other New Testament use of this word is in Phil 2.23: “Just as soon as I see how it will go with me,” that is, assuming the advent of more accurate knowledge. *Aphorao* has two objects or sees Jesus in two ways; it is used with the preposition *eis* (into) to show that such looking-to involves a full presence-in Jesus:

1) As pioneer (*archegos*) which is found in 2.10: “Should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through suffering.” In the verse at hand, *archegos* is associated with our faith as distinct from their salvation.

2) As perfecter (*teleiotes*) and used in 6.1: “Let us leave the elementary doctrines of Christ and go on to maturity.” Note the use of *archegos* which is closely associated with *arche* (beginning) and *teleiotes* which is related to *telos* (end, completion). It is as though the author of Hebrews were expressing Jesus Christ as Alpha and Omega or the beginning and end (cf. Rev 1.8) of “our faith.”

Joy (*chara*): it is set before or *prokeimai* Jesus similar to the race of the previous verse, thus hinting that the endurance of the cross as a type of race. The text implies a kind of spacial perception of joy through this verb and closely related to endurance (*hupomeneo*, verb; the object of which is the cross)...i.e., a *pro-* conditioned by a *hupo-* or “before” conditioned by “under.”

The preposition *anti* (for, in the sense of for the sake of) is used in conjunction with joy; it implies the making of an exchange or substitution.

Shame (*aischune*): associated with the cross which Jesus did not despise or *kataphroneo*, literally as “to think down (*kata*: according to) something.”

This verse concludes with Jesus seated at the right hand of God's throne; the perfect active indicative of *kathizo* (to be seated) means that he is remains in this position. Compare with 8.1: "We have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven." Thus vs. 2 points to the priestly role of Jesus Christ.

**12-Vs. 3: Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.**

Consider (*analogizomai*): This verb implies careful deliberation, a summing up of one's impressions, and is the only New Testament occurrence. The object his Jesus Christ and his endurance (*hupomeno*, verb) used in vs. 2 with respect to "cross." In the literal sense of this verb, Christ "remained-under" hostility or *antilogia* from sinners. "And in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation" [6.16]. In the verse at hand such *antilogia* is directed "against (*eis*) himself," this preposition implying full penetration of hostility into Jesus.

The application of *analogizomai* is directed towards *psuche* (soul) which is not mentioned in the English translation. I.e., these souls are not to be subject to *kamno* nor *ekluomai*.

**12-Vs. 4: In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.**

Struggle (*antagonizomai*, verb): the only New Testament occurrence of this term which suggests an athletic contest; here it is with regard to sin which puts the struggle in a more positive sense than in English translation. The force of this verb is underscored by the preposition *pros* (against in the sense of towards-which).

Resisted (*antikathistemi*): the only New Testament occurrence of this verb which contains the preposition *anti* (against) as well as *anta(i)gonizomai*.

**12-Vs. 5: And have you forgotten the exhortation which addresses you as sons?—"My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord nor lose courage when you are punished by him.**

The beginning of a quotation from Proverbs 3.11-2 which continues into the next verse.

Exhortation (*paraklesis*) which here is forgotten or exlanthano, the only New Testament use of this word; lanthano is accentuated further by the preposition *ex* (out) to signify a more intense forgetfulness.

Addresses (*dialegomai*): connotes a sense of instructing, of handing over (*dia*, through or a thorough penetration) one's intent to a listener which here are sons.

Discipline (*paideia*): involves a more comprehensive notion of education, that is, as applied to the whole person with the intent of responsible living. The Hebrew word for *paideia* is *mosar* which corresponds more to the English discipline as pertaining to child rearing.

Regard lightly (*oligoreo*): the only New Testament use of this word which pertains to *paideia*; it literally means to make small. The Hebrew is *ma'as* which connotes rejection and condemnation.

Lose courage (*ekluo*): alternately, to be exhausted and literally, to loose from. The Hebrew verb is *quts*, to be weary. The context is with regard to punishment (*elegcho*, verb) which also means to scrutinize, to disapprove; the Hebrew verb is *yakach* which has the sense of reprove and the manifestation of proof.

**12-Vs. 6: For the Lord disciplines him whom he loves and chastises every son whom he receives.”**

The second half of the Proverbs citation begins with the verb *paideuo*, the noun *paideia* having been discussed in the previous verse. The Hebrew verb is *yakach* noted in vs. 5 as being equivalent to *elegcho*.

Such manifestation of divine *paideia* has two objects: 1) the person whom God loves (*agapao/ahav*) and the person whom he chastises (*mastigoo*).

The Hebrew of the second part of vs. 6 reads “as a father (reproves) the son in whom he delights.” The verb here is *ratsah*, to receive graciously. The Greek *paradechomai* (to receive) corresponds to the hospitality connoted by *ratsah*. The preposition *para* (besides) implies a bringing alongside, of placing this son beside (God).

**12-Vs. 7: It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline?**

For discipline reads literally “into (*eis*) discipline” or *paideia* used with the verb *hupomeno* (to endure) as found in vs. 3: “Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility.” That is to say, divine *paideia* requires a “remaining under (*hupo*).”

Treating (*prosphero*): literally, “to carry forward.” This verb is found several times in Hebrews with the alternate meaning of to offer as in 5.1: “For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins.” Perhaps the idea of sacrificial offering is implied in the verse at hand and mirrors Christ’s relationship with his Father.

The verb *paideuo* is used again in a rhetorical manner as being part and parcel of child rearing.

**12-Vs. 8: If you are left without discipline in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.**

Being without (*choris*) *paideia* is comparable to being illegitimate (*nothos*) and not being sons. This adjective, the only New Testament occurrence, connotes birth outside wedlock as well as not enjoying legal status. The author of Hebrews acknowledges that in normal circumstances everyone has participated (*metochos*, noun) in the *paideia* essential to child rearing.

**12-Vs. 9: Besides this, we have had earthly fathers to discipline us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live?**

Besides (*eita*): alternately as “then” as if to supplement God’s *paideia* in the previous verses by human or paternal *paideutes* (discipline, noun). The only other use of this word in the New Testament is Rom 2.20 which applies more to the English concept of discipline as distinct from the more comprehensive notion of *paideia*: “a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of children, having in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth.”

Earthy fathers: literally, “of the flesh (*sarkos*).” These human fathers imparted through discipline respect (*entrepomai*, verb): literally, to turn to. This verb connotes respect, indicating special status towards someone as in Mt 21.37: “They will respect my son.”

Both discipline and the ensuing respect are models for subjection (*hupotassomai*,

verb) concerning God the Father. The fuller sense of this verb is found in 1 Cor 15.27 which is a quote from Ps 8.6: “For God has put all things in subjection under his feet.” It is amplified in vs. 28: “When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things under him, that God may be everything to everyone.”

The author of Hebrews identifies God the Father as being a Father of spirits (*pneuma*) perhaps to contrast his earlier analogy of fathers “of the *sarx*.” Here the connection between subjection and spirit results in true living (*zao*).

**12-Vs. 10: For they disciplined us for a short time at their pleasure, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness.**

“They” of course referring to fathers of the flesh whose *paideuo* is for a short time or literally “for (*pros*) a few days.”

Pleasure (*dokeo*, verb): in the sense of being in accord with what is probable, not necessarily in truth.

The author of Hebrews contrasts human *paideia* with that which is divine: for our good (*epi to sumpheron*) or literally, “upon the best;” even more literally, “with (*sum*) bring together.”

The “upon-ness” of *epi* is carried over to a sharing (*metambano*); it used with the preposition *eis* (into), “a taking-with.” The object is divine holiness or *hagiotēs*, the only other New Testament use of this word being 2 Cor 1.12: “with holiness and godly sincerity, not by earthly wisdom but by the grace of God.”

**12-Vs. 11: For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant; later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.**

Human *paideia* is for the moment or *pros* (in the sense of being directed towards it) to *paron*, another way of saying it is painful (*lupe*, noun) as opposed to pleasant (*chara*, noun), a noun which also means joy.

The “for the moment” nature of *paideia* is contrasted with later or *husteron*. There (to use a special term) is present righteousness’ peaceful (*eirenikos*) fruit. The only other New Testament occurrence is Jms 3.17: “But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, without

uncertainty or insincerity.” Here too good fruit” is identified with peace and by implication, righteousness (*dikaiosune*). Note that in 7.2 *dikaiosune* is associated with Melchizedek, “king of *dikaiosune*” [7.2].

*Paideia* is related to training (*gumnazo*, verb); the perfect passive participle indicates a complete state or condition. This verb applies to gymnastic exercise: “Wo have their faculties trained by practice to distinguish good from evil” [5.14].

### **12-Vs. 12: Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees,**

A quote from Is 35.3 which in the English RSV reads “Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees.” The next verse situates this encouragement in terms of “your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God.”

Lift (*anorthoo*): literally, “set straight (upright) again.” “And he laid his hands upon her, and immediately she was made straight, and she praised God” [Lk 13.13]. The Hebrew verb here is *chazaq* which applies more to imparting strength.

Drooping (*pariemi*): in the sense of letting fall (one’s hands) to the side, presumably which were held aloft in a gesture of prayer or supplication. The Hebrew term is *rapha’*, an alternate definition which applies to healing, perhaps with the idea of relaxing inherent bodily and mental stress.

The verse at hand applies *anarthoo* to knees as well as hands; strengthen is not in the Greek text. The Hebrew ‘*amats* (to make firm) suggests alertness and swift-footedness with respect to standing in an upright position.

### **12-Vs. 13: and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed.**

A continuation of the previous verse quoting from Isaiah. The first part of vs. 13 is a paraphrase from Sir 25.23: “Drooping hands and weak knees are caused by the wife who does not make her husband happy.” Vs. 13 intimates John the Baptist’s call citing Isaiah: “Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight” [Mt 3.3].

In the verse at hand make straight (*orthos*) is with respect to one’s paths or *trochia*, a word which pertains to ruts made by a cart and continues the athletic theme of *gumnazo* (to train) in vs. 11; here the image can apply to a person about to run a course or race. *Trochia* differs from the paths of Mt 3.3 which uses the term *tribos*

and connotes a defined track or route.

Lame (*cholos*) suggests miracles performed by Jesus: “the blind receive their sight and the lame walk” [Mt 11.5]. Vs. 13 does not situate *cholos* in terms of walking but in preparation for it and can apply to other bodily limbs. The verb *ektrepotomai* (to put out of joint) literally means “to turn away” as in 1 Tim 1.6: “Certain persons by swerving from these have wandered away into vain discussion.”

The Greek *iaomai* (to be healed) can correspond to the Hebrew *rapha*’ noted in vs. 12.

**12-Vs. 14: Strive for peace with all men and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.**

Strive (*dioko*): suggests hunting, eager pursuit and continues the theme of healing and athletic imagery just noted. “I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” [Phil 3.14]. Upward (*ano*) is in reference to a spiritual contest as opposed to one that is athletic or physical. In the verse at hand, this vertical dimension also has a horizontal dimension, peace with all men.

The second object of *dioko* applies more to that which is upward: holiness or *hagiasmos*; compare with *hagiotēs* in vs. 10.

In the verse at hand, holiness is the condition for seeing the Lord (*Kurios*). The common verb *orao* is used here; the upward nature of this athletic contest bears a certain parallel with Moses’ ascent to Mount Sinai where he did not directly see the Lord except his back (cf. Ex 33.23).

**12-Vs. 15: See to it that no one fail to obtain the grace of God; that no “root of bitterness” spring up and cause trouble, and by it the many become defiled;**

See to it (*episkopeo*): alternately, to watch over (*epi*) as though divine grace or *charis* were situated below, an aerial view if you will. The only other New Testament occurrence of this verb is 1 Pt 5.2: “Tend the flock of God that is your charge.” In the verse at hand, such an exhortation with regard to *epi* is that (literally) people are not “lacking from (*apo*) the grace of God.”

Reference to the root of bitterness is from the LXX of Dt 29.18: “Lest there be in you a root springing up with gall and bitterness.” The Hebrew reads: “Lest there be

among you a root bearing poisonous and bitter fruit.” The context is Moses’ third address to Israel.

Cause trouble (*enochleo*): *ochlos* translates as crowd, thus giving the image of a multitude (i.e., the ‘root of bitterness’) on the threshold of riot. The only other New Testament use of this verb is Lk 6.18: “and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured.”

The verb *phuo* (to spring up) refers to the growth of plants, etc. The only other New Testament occurrence is Lk 8.6 as well as vs. 8, the parable dealing with various seeds which fell to earth: “And some fell on the rock; and as it grew up, it withered away because it had no moisture.”

Such (vegetative) growth causes defilement (*miaino*, verb).

**12-Vs. 16: that no one be immoral or irreligious like Esau who sold his birthright for a single meal.**

A continuation of the previous verse’s theme where the author of Hebrews exhorts his listeners not fail to “obtain the grace of God.” Here as well as in the next verse, the author centers upon the example of one person, Esau.

Esau is both immoral ( *pornos*) and irreligious ( *bebelos*); the former connotes sexual immorality, also noted in 13.4: “Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled; for God will judge the immoral and adulterous.”

Reference is to Gen 25.29-34; evidence to Esau being  *pornos* and  *bebelos* does not seem present here, rather, the text speaks of gluttony and indifference regarding his birthright. “Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field, while Jacob was a quiet man, dwelling in tents” [Gen 25.27].

Birthright ( *prototokia*): the only New Testament use of this term which corresponds to the Hebrew  *berokah*: “He took away my birthright; and behold, now he has taken away my blessing” [Gen 27.36]. There is a play on the words  *berokah* and  *berakah*, the latter meaning blessing.

**12-Vs. 17: For you know that afterward, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no chance to repent, though he sought it with tears.**

“For you know” points to the audience’s familiarity with the story of Esau and Jacob including the Old Testament as a whole. The context of this verse is Gen 27.30-40.

Inherit (*kleronemeo*) with regard to Esau who had sought a blessing or *eulogia* from his father Isaac, this term literally meaning “a saying well,” that is an oral blessing. Cf. 6.7: “For land which has drunk the rain...receives a blessing from God.”

The verb *thelo* (to desire) is used here with respect to blessing; it pertains more to a willing as opposed to an ardent longing.

Rejected (*apodokimazo*): the verb *dokimazo* (pertains to something examined carefully) prefixed with the preposition *apo* (away from). “The very stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner” [Mt 21.42 quoting Ps 118.22-3]. In the case at hand, such rejection by Isaac was effected by feeling the skin of both Esau and Jacob.

Repent (*metanoia*, noun): despite his tears, Esau plotted to kill Jacob after his father’s death: “The days of mourning for my father are approaching; then I will kill my brother Jacob” [Gen 27.41]. *Metanoia* is a classical New Testament term, one of many examples being Mt 3.11: “I baptize you with water for repentance.”

The verse at hand says that Esau sought (*ekzeteo*) Isaac’s blessing/inheritance yet failed to obtain it even though Jacob deceived his father. Contrast the example of Esau with 11.6: “that he rewards those who seek him.”

**12-Vs. 18: For you have not come to what may be touched, a blazing fire and darkness and gloom and a tempest,**

The author of Hebrews switches themes to Moses and Mount Sinai (cf. Ex 19.12-22); it is interesting to keep in mind that the verses above which pertain to Esau come just before Jacob’s dream at Bethel in chapter 28.

Have come (*proserchomai*): noted several times in Hebrews as 4.16: “Let us with confidence draw near to the throne of grace.” Presumably this throne may be touched, the verb being *psalaphao* which also connotes handling, as if to feel the ripeness of a piece of fruit. Compare with the touching of Jesus Christ: “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 of life” [1 Jn 1.1]. The Sinai episode uses touching with respect to the mountain: “Take heed

that you do not go up into the mountain or touch the border of it; whoever touches the mountain shall be put to death” [Ex 19.12]. The Hebrew verb *nagah* also applies to drawing near as well as touching.

The author of Hebrews gives four characteristics of Mount Sinai:

1) Blazing fire: corresponds to “the Lord descended upon it in fire; and the smoke of it went up like the smoke of a kiln” [19.18].

2) Darkness (*gnophos*): the only New Testament use of this word which corresponds to the Hebrew *choshek*: “And when you heard the voice out of the midst of the darkness” [Dt 5.23].

3) Gloom (*zophos*): usually applies to the nether world; there is no LXX use of this word. “For them the nether gloom of darkness has been reserved.”

4) Tempest (*thuella*): the only New Testament use of this term. “And you came near and stood at the foot of the mountain burned with fire to the heart of heaven, wrapped in darkness, cloud (*hanan*, Hebrew) and gloom” [Dt 4.11].

**12-Vs. 19: and the sound of a trumpet and a voice whose words made the hearers entreat that no further messages be spoken to them.**

The conclusion of the sentence begun in vs. 18 and following the revelation to Moses on Mount Sinai.

Trumpet (*salpigx*): a term which connotes the immediate presence of the Last Day. *Salpigx* may be related to the Hebrew *sophar* as used with regard to Mt. Sinai: “And as the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him in thunder” [Ex 19.19]. Also cf. Rev 1.10: “I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet.” A trumpet is a musical instrument only, but in the verse at hand it is associated with words (*rhema*); cf. 1.3 for a discussion regarding the meaning of this term.

Contrast the two verbs *paraiteomai* and *prostithemi* (to entreat and to be spoken): the first has the preposition *para* (besides), as if those making supplication were already present with God. The second has the preposition *pros* (towards) in the sense of messages (*logos*; compare with *rhema*) being addressed in their direction. This second verb literally means to place to, to add to.

**12-Vs. 20: For they could not endure the order that was given, “If even a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned.”**

Order (to *diastellomenon*; from the verb *diastello*): perhaps associated with the trumpet/*rhema* noted in the previous verse. “And he charged them to tell no one” [Mk 7.36].

The divine order is found in Ex 19.13: “No hand shall touch him, but he shall be stoned or shot; whether beast or man, he shall not live.” This same verse contains the sentence “When the trumpet sounds a long blast, they shall come up to the mountain.” The author of Hebrews singles out beast (*therion*) as opposed to humans. This word which connotes something wild is applied to the Anti-Christ in Rev 11.7: “And when they have finished their testimony, the beast that ascends from the bottomless pit will make war upon them and conquer them and kill them.”

Touch (*thiggano*): cf. 11.28, and compare with *psalaphao* in vs. 18.

Stoned (*lithoboleo*): For another reference, cf. Mt 21.35: “And the tenants took his servants and beat one, killed another and stoned another.”

**12-Vs. 21: Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, “I tremble with fear.”**

Sight (to *phantazomenon*; from the verb *phantazomai*): the only New Testament occurrence of this verb; the noun *phantasma* derived from it means an apparition (cf. Mt 14.26).

Reference to the words of Moses is 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.” The Greek for fear in the verse at hand is *ekphobos* (adjective), the preposition *ek* (out, from) intensifying this sentiment. Note that anger in the Deuteronomy verse is used with hot displeasure or *chemah*. The only other New Testament occurrence of *ekphobos*: “For he did not know what to say, for they were exceedingly afraid” [Mk 9.6].

Moses trembles (*entromos*, adjective). “And when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling” [Lk 8.47].

**12-Vs. 22: But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering,**

The first of three comings (*pros-erchomai*, as in 7.25, etc.) which are enumerated

through vs. 24. The verse at hand contains three as distinct from Mount Sinai: Mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem and angels. Perhaps Zion embraces the other two as well as “the assembly of the first-born” (vs. 23) and “Jesus” (vs. 24).

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

Innumerable (*urias*) angels: “The voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands” [Rev 5.11]. Compare with 11.12: “descendants as many as the stars of heaven and as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore.” Here the word is *anarithmos*, innumerable in the literal sense of the term.

Festal gathering (*paneguris*): the only New Testament use of this term, originally used in the context of an athletic contest, again reminiscent of the heavenly Jerusalem of Revelation.

**12-Vs. 23: and to the assembly of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven, and to a judge who is God of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,**

The second of three comings, this one continued from the previous verse and lists three groups:

1) Assembly (*ekklesia*): the familiar New Testament word meaning church. In the verse at hand, assembly consists of first-born or those who are *prototokos* as noted in 1.6: “And again, when he brings the first-born into the world.” This *ekklesia* differs from the earthly one (‘in heaven’); those in it are enrolled or *apographo*, literally, to write off.

2) Judge (*krite*) who is God. “You do not seek my own glory; there is One who seeks it and he will be the judge” [Jn 8.50].

3) Spirits (*pneuma*): here, not only of the just but the just who have been made perfect or *teleioo*, a word along with its variations often noted in Hebrews which first occurs in 2.10: “should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through suffering.”

**12-Vs. 24: and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks more graciously than the blood of Abel.**

The last of the three comings, this one having two aspects:

1) Jesus as mediator (*mesites*): for another reference to this covenant, cf. 8.6: “The covenant he mediates (noun) is better since it is enacted on better promises.”

2) Sprinkled (*rhantizmos*, noun) blood: not just blood that was shed but that which was sprinkled or applied on the altar and people according to the Mosaic law. “By faith he kept the Passover and sprinkled the blood so that the Destroyer of the first-born might not touch them” [11.28].

The author of Hebrews compares this sprinkled blood with that of Abel (presumably sprinkled) which is endowed with the ability to speak in the sense of giving witness: “The voice of your brother’s blood is crying to me from the ground” [Gen 4.10].

**12-Vs. 25: See that you do not refuse him who is speaking. For if they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less shall we escape if we reject him who warns from heaven.**

Refuse (*paraiteomai*): cf. vs. 19: “and the sound of a trumpet and a voice whose words made the hearers entreat that no further messages be spoken to them.” A sound not unlike Abel’s blood just noted; present active participle of speaking to indicate continuous addressing by God.

The author of Hebrews presents two forms of escape (*ekpheugo*):

1) Israel or when God had warned (*chrematizo*) them, that is, on earth. This verb connotes the impartation of a divine message as well as giving a name or title. “For when Moses was about to erect the tent, he was instructed by God” [8.5].

2) The that which pertains to the present (*polu mallon*, much less) or from heaven. Compare Israel’s refusal (*paraiteomai*) with the rejection (*apostrepho*) existing in the present; also note the two prepositions *para* (besides, that is, on earth) and *apo* (away from, that is, from heaven), the latter considered worse by reason of the greater revelation.

**12-Vs. 26: His voice then shook the earth; but now he has promised, “Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heaven.”**

Another comparison between heaven and earth, Israel and the Christian church.

“And the whole mountain quaked greatly” [Ex 19.18]: note that it was Sinai, not the earth as a whole, that quaked.

Two Old Testament verses are in mind here:

1) Jdg 5.4 (the Song of Deborah after having slain Sisera): “Lord, when you went forth from Seir, when you marched from the region of Edom, the earth trembled, and the heavens dropped, yes, the clouds dropped water.”

2) Ps 68.8: “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.”

The words “yet once more” do not occur in both Hebrew verses; both tremble/quake before God passively, as it were, as opposed to being caused directly by God.

**12-Vs. 27: This phrase, “Yet once more,” indicates the removal of what is shaken, as of what has been made, in order that what cannot be shaken may remain.**

The author of Hebrews find importance in the phrase yet once more (*eti hapax*) and defines it in terms of a removal or *metathesis*; 7.12 uses this word in reference to a change in priesthood. Its focus is upon what is and is not shaken (*saleuo*) or Mount Sinai and heaven (i.e., Jesus Christ). The image resembles a sifting of that which is unstable to obtain that which remains (*meino*). Compare the use of *saleuo* here with Lk 22.31: “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat.”

**12-Vs. 28: Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship with reverence and awe;**

The Greek for “let us be grateful” reads “let us have gratitude (*charis*).” It is received or *paralambano*; compare the use of *para* here with *para-itemomai* (to refuse) in vs. 25.

The author of Hebrews is clear in this verse with respect to that which is not subject to *saleuo*, i.e., a kingdom or *basileia*.

Worship or *latreueo* (verb): cf. another use of this verb in 8.5: “They serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly sanctuary.” In the verse at hand such worship is acceptable or *euarestos*, literally, “well pleasing.” “To present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship” [Rom 12.1].

Such worship involves reverence (*eulabeia*: “and he was heard for his godly fear,” 5.7) and awe (*deos*, the only use of this word in the New Testament), both terms suggesting a careful approach not unlike Israel at Mount Sinai.

### **12-Vs. 29: for our God is a consuming fire.**

A verse connected with the previous one almost by way of footnote yet intended to communicate the awesomeness of divine revelation from vss. 18 onward. The author of Hebrews obviously has in mind Mount Sinai.

These words are taken from three Old Testament verses:

- 1) Dt 4.24: “For the Lord your God is a devouring fire, a jealous God.”
- 2) Dt 9.3: “Know therefore this day that he who goes over before you as a devouring fire is the Lord your God; he will destroy them and subdue them before you (etc.).”
- 3) Is 33.14: “Who among us can dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us can dwell with everlasting burnings?”

In the verse at hand, the verb *katanalisko* is used, the only New Testament occurrence. It used in the Deuteronomy verses (LXX) and is equivalent to jealousy.

## **Chapter Thirteen**

### **13-Vs. 1: Let brotherly love continue.**

A statement just as brief as the concluding verse of Chapter Twelve.

*Philadelphia* is the term used here composed; it has the verb *phileo* which connotes the showing of affection. For another use of the noun, cf. 1 Pt 1.22: “Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere love of the brethren, love one another earnestly from the heart.” This verse contains the preposition *eis* (into), i.e., “into *philadelphia*.”

Continue (*meno*): as in 10.34: “...since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one.”

### **13-Vs. 2: Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have**

### **entertained angels unawares.**

Hospitality (*philoxenia*): note the use of *phileo* as with *philadelphia* in the previous verse, this time shown towards those who are strangers (*xenos*), the adjective being contained in the same noun. Cf. Rom 12.13 for the only other New Testament occurrence: “Contribute to the needs of the saints, practice hospitality.”

Neglect (*epilanthanomai*): as in 6.10: “For God is not so unjust as to overlook your work (etc.).” Note the use of the preposition *epi* (upon) which intensifies the verb *lanthanomai*.

Unawares (*lanthano*): the same verb as *epilanthanomai* as used just above minus the preposition *epi*. In the verse at hand, showing hospitality is taken for granted as part of the culture; the author of Hebrews thus shows that this gesture may include entertaining (*xenizo*) angels. The most common example is Gen 18.1-21, the three men whom Abraham receives. Note that after this hospitality they set off for Sodom and Gomorrah which is later destroyed. The Genesis text does not refer to Abraham entertaining them as angels.

### **13-Vs. 3: Remember those who are in prison as though in prison with them; and those who are ill-treated since you also are in the body.**

Vss. three through five contain a series of exhortations; it is helpful to keep them in mind with allusion to the angels vis-a-vis Sodom and Gomorrah noted in the previous verse.

Remember (*mimnesko*): here equivalent to being in prison with (*sundeo*: literally, to bind with) those who are actually in prison. I.e., this form of remembrance centers upon *sun* (with) and keeps both parties on the same plane.

*Mimnesko* also has a *sun* in union with persons who are ill-treated or *kakoucheo*. The only other use of this verb is in 11.37: “Destitute, afflicted, ill-treated.” It occurs towards the end of this chapter which gives examples from that cloud of witnesses who suffered *sun* much like those of the present time.

The author of Hebrews acknowledges that imprisonment and suffering ill-treatment are part of being in the body (*in somati*).

### **13-Vs. 4: Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be**

**undefiled; for God will judge the immoral and adulterous.**

The second exhortation, this one pertaining to marriage which should be held in honor (*timios*).

Marriage bed (*koite*): for another definition: “Let us conduct ourselves becomingly as in the day...not in debauchery and licentiousness” [Rom 13.13].

Object of divine judgment: the immoral (*pornos*) and adulterous (*moichos*).  
“Be sure of this, that no fornicator (*pornos*) or impure man or one who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God” [Eph 5.5]. For a reference concerning *moichos*: “Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God?...neither the immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers nor sexual perverts” [1 Cor 6.9]. Note that both passages are situated within the context of inheritance and this with regard to the kingdom of God.

**13-Vs. 5: Keep your life free from love of money and be content with what you have; for he has said, “I will never fail you nor forsake you.”**

A third exhortation with regard to greed.

Life (*tropos*): more accurately, “manner of life” which involves a comprehensive moral stance in light of Christian teaching.

Such a *tropos* is two-fold:

1) Free from money (*aphilarguros*): that is, not having a *philos*...friendship...with money. For the only other New Testament use, cf. 1 Tim 3.3: “no drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, and no lover of money.”

2) Content (*arkeomai*): “Be content with your wages” [Lk 3.14]. In the verse at hand, such contentment is with regard to what you have or *tois parousin*, better, “with those things that are present.”

The quotation is from 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.” The context is God’s address to Moses just before he entrusted Joshua with care of the people. Note the two verbs: *aniemi* or to fail (literally, ‘to go up’) and *eykataleipo*, to desert. They are to be kept in mind as coming at the end of the Book of Deuteronomy just before Joshua leads Israel into

the Promised Land.

**13-Vs. 6: Hence we can confidently say, “The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid; what can man do to me?”**

Confidently (*tharreo*): present active participle; cf. Moses’ words to Joshua just after the quote from Dt 31.6 in vs. 7: “Then Moses summoned Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel, ‘Be strong and of good courage.’” The object of *tharreo* is based upon a quote from Ps 118.6: “With the Lord on my side I do not fear. What can man do to me?” In the verse at hand, helper (*boethos*) is the only New Testament occurrence of this noun. The Hebrew reads literally, “The Lord is “to (*l-*) me” or “in the direction towards me.”

**13-Vs. 7: Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God; consider the outcome of their life, and imitate their faith.**

A fourth exhortation, this with remembrance (verb: *mimnesko* again; cf. vs. 3) towards leaders or *hegeomai* (verb) or those in entrusted with governing the Christian community. Cf. vs. 17: “Obey your leaders and submit to them.” In the verse at hand, such leaders were responsible for speaking God’s word or *logos*. “The life was made manifest, and we saw it, and testify to it, and proclaim to you the eternal life which was with the Father and was made manifest to us” [1 Jn 1.2].

Consider (*anatheoreo*): literally, “have *theoria* back upon” which is closely related to a fuller sense of *mimnesko*. For the only other New Testament use, cf. Acts 17.23: “For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship.” The object of *anatheoreo* in the verse at hand is the *ekbasis* (outcome) of the leaders’ lives (*anastrophe*), better, “the manner of life.” *Anastrophe* involves conduct of one’s life according to certain principles as in Gal 1.13: “For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it.”

Imitate (*memomai*): here with reference to the leaders’ faith. “Be imitators (noun) of me as I am of Christ” [1 Cor 11.1]. In the verse at hand, the Greek lacks “their:” “imitate the faith.”

**13-Vs. 8: Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.**

This sameness is to be understood in the context of the above mentioned exhortations and the church leaders who preached the *logos* of God. Vs. 8 lacks the future

dimension and instead has forever or *eis tous aionos*, “into the *aion*” or into an indefinitely long period of time.

Same (*ho autos*): note that the Greek text has this with respect to the temporal dimensions of yesterday and today and does not apply it to “forever.”

**13-Vs. 9: Do not be led away by diverse and strange teachings; for it is well that the heart be strengthened by grace, not by foods, which have not benefitted their adherents.**

A fifth exhortation taking place after the interlude, as it were, proclaiming Jesus Christ’s sameness.

Led away (*parapheromai*): literally, to carry along, lead away. Note the preposition *para* (besides), as though such strange teachers ran parallel but not in accord with those of the Church. For another use of this verb: “Father, if you are willing remove this cup from me” [Lk 22.42].

Diverse and strange (*poikilos* and *xenos*): in contrast to those which pertain to Jesus Christ.

Well (*kalon*): in the broader sense of *kalos* (beautiful). The author of Hebrews situates this well-ness in terms of the (singular) heart being strengthened (*bebaioomai*) by grace. Contrast the singular *charis* (grace) with the multiple foods (*broma*) which are equivalent to the “diverse and strange teachings.”

Adherents (*peripateo*): literally, “to walk about.” For another use of this verb: “But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea” [Mt 14.25], that is, almost as though Jesus were taking a stroll on the sea.

**13-Vs. 10: We have an altar from which those who serve the tent have no right to eat.**

Altar (*thusiasterion*): cf. 7.13: “For the one of whom these things are spoken belonged to another tribe from which no one has ever served at the altar.” In the verse at hand, altar is closely related to persons (presumably priests) serving in the tent. The verb *latreuo* (to serve) as in 10.2 applies to worshipers: “If the worshipers had once been cleansed, they would no longer have any consciousness of sin.”

Those engaged in service/worship with regard to the tent (*skene*) belong to the Mosaic

order of priesthood as distinct from that of Jesus Christ as noted in 8.2: “a minister in the sanctuary and the true tent which is set up not by man but by the Lord.”

Right (*exousia*): in the sense of being legal or lawful. “He has delivered us from the dominion of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son” [Col 1.13].

**13-Vs. 11: For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin are burned outside the camp.**

A contrast between “into the sanctuary” and “outside the camp.” The first has two instances of *eis* (into): as a preposition by itself and prefixed to the verb brought (*eisphero*). The second is outside (*exo*) the camp (*parembole*).

In the verse at hand, blood is extracted and allowed *eis*, whereas the bodies from which it came are placed *exo*. Reference to this practice is Lev 16.27: “And the bull for the sin offering and the goat for the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the holy place, shall be carried forth outside the camp; their skin and their flesh and their dung shall be burned with fire.” The Hebrew for atonement—the reason for this regulation—is *kiphuryim*; from the verb *kaphar*, to cover.

**13-Vs. 12: So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood.**

The natural New Testament response to vs. 11 and keeping in mind Jn 19.17: “So they took Jesus and he went out (*ex-erchomai*) bearing his own cross to the place called in Hebrew Golgotha.” The verse at hand mentions gate (*pule*) as opposed to camp in the previous verse; the same preposition *exo* (outside) is used. A gate suggests the presence of a city as opposed to the temporary notion of a camp.

Note the intimate connection between suffered and sanctify (*pascho* and *hagiazō*). “For because he himself has suffered and been tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted” [2.18]. “For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified have all one origin” [2.11]. Blood is that which binds the two together.

**13-Vs. 13: Therefore let us go forth to him outside the camp and bear the abuse he endured.**

A verse reminiscent of Mt 16.24: “If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.”

Go forth (*exerchomai*): note the preposition *ex* (from) prefixed to the verb in conjunction with outside (*exo*). Both are used with another preposition to (*pros*, direction-towards-which) or *pros* Jesus Christ. Here *parembole* (camp, as in vs. 11) is used instead of the implied city (cf. *pule*/gate, vs. 12).

Abuse (*oneidismos*): as in 11.26: “He considered abuse suffered for the Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt.”

**13-Vs. 14: For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city which is to come.**

This verse is reminiscent of 11.10: “For he looked forward to the city (*polis*, that is, not a camp) which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.” The verb for lasting is *meno* which also means to remain.

Seek (*epizeteo*): as in 11.14: “For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland.” *Patris* is the word for homeland which is more familial compared with *polis*. Such a city is fulfilled in Rev 21.2: “And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God.”

**13-Vs. 15: Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name.**

This “through (*dia*) him” sacrifice (*thusia*) takes place outside the camp (cf. 13). “To put away sin by the sacrifice of himself” [9.26]. In the verse at hand, *thusia* is one of praise which is continually (*dia pantos*) which literally means “through all.” Note the second use of the preposition *dia*, the first being with respect to “him.”

Fruit of lips is reminiscent of Hos 14.2: “Take with you words and return to the Lord; say to him, ‘Take away all iniquity; accept that which is good and we will render the fruit of our lips.’” In this verse the Hebrew for “fruit” reads “bulls.”

Acknowledge (*homologeō*): with respect to God’s name. “If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord” [Rom 10.9].

**13-Vs. 16: Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.**

A sixth exhortation, the last one being in vs. 5.

Neglect (*epilanthanomai*): note the preposition *epi* (upon) prefixed to the verb which intensifies the meaning, that is, the sense of forgetting; cf. vs. 2: “Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers.” The object of this verb is two-fold:

1) To do good (*eupoia*, noun): the only New Testament occurrence of this word.

2) To share (*koinonia*, noun): a classic New Testament term to demonstrate the fellowship enjoyed by the Christian community, this being the only time it occurs in Hebrews. “What you have” is missing in the Greek text.

Pleasing (*euaresteo*): the only other New Testament use is 11.5: “Now before he was taken he was attested as having pleased God.” The object of this verb is sacrifices or *thusia* as used in the previous verse.

**13-Vs. 17: Obey your leaders and submit to them; for they are keeping watch over your souls as men who will have to give account. Let them do this joyfully and not sadly, for that would be of no advantage to you.**

A seventh exhortation, this one with respect to leaders (*hegeomai*, verb) as in vs. 7, again possibly referring to leaders of the Christian community.

Keeping watch (*agrupneo*): in vs. 7 the leaders “spoke the *logos* of God.” It is precisely because of this diligence that the author of Hebrews exhorts his audience to obey and submit to them. Note that the leaders exercise *agrupneo* over souls (*psuche*) as opposed to government in the conventional sense. They have a strict relationship between their account (*logos*) which ties in with their other function of speaking the *logos* of God just noted.

Joyfully (*charis*): literally, “with joy.”

Not sadly (*me stenazo*): literally, “not groaning.” “Groan inwardly as we wait for adoption as sons” [Rom 8.23].

No advantage (*alusiteles*): the only occurrence of this term in the New Testament.

**13-Vs. 18: Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a clear conscience, desiring to act**

**honorably in all things.**

Pray (*proseuchomai*): note the preposition *pros* (towards) used with the other preposition *peri* ('for us'), as though such direction-towards-which surrounded (*peri*) us.

Conscience (*suneidesis*): literally, a “knowing-together” (*sun* or with) as noted in 10.22: “our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience.” In the verse at hand, such conscience is clear or *kalos* (alternately as beautiful).

To act (*anastrepho*): as noted in 10.33: “and sometimes being partners with those so treated.” In the verse at hand, this verb is used with the adverb honorably or *kalos* which parallels the adjective “clear.”

**13-Vs. 19: I urge you the more earnestly to do this in order that I may be restored to you the sooner.**

Urge (*parakaleo*): note the use of this verb (*para-* or beside) with more earnestly or *perissoteros* which has the prefix *peri*. “But exhort one another every day” [3.13].

Restored (*apokathistemi*): “Elijah does come first to restore all things” [Mk 9.12]. In the verse at hand, such restoration is done to the author of Hebrews, that is, passively.

**13-Vs. 20: Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant,**

This blessing continues into the next verse. Note the parallel between God of peace and shepherd (*poimen*) of the sheep. “I am the good shepherd” [Jn 10.11].

Brought again (*anago*): the notion of “again” is misleading which would almost imply that the Lord Jesus already had been among the dead. This verb means a leading from a lower to a higher point.

Eternal covenant (*diatheke*): first noted in 7.33: “This makes Jesus the surety of a better covenant.” *Eionios* is the adjective for eternal.

**13-Vs. 21: equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in you that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever**

**and ever. Amen.**

Equip (*katartizo*): as in 11.3 which has a different meaning: “By faith we understand that the world was created by the word of God.”

Will (*thelema*): that is, of God. “So that you may do the will of God and receive what is promised” [11.36]. In the verse at hand, *thelema* is involved with doing which in the Greek reads “into (*eis*) the doing.”

Do and working are from the same verb *poieo*: the former is active by persons and the latter is effected by God.

Pleasing (*euarestos*): alternately as acceptable as in 12.28: “and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship.”

Forever and ever (*eis tous eionas [ton aionon]*): literally, “into the ages [of ages].” Thus glory is presented as a dynamic element lasting for an indefinitely long period of time.

**13-Vs. 22: I appeal to you, brethren, bear with my word of exhortation, for I have written to you briefly.**

The last verse brought to an end this letter judging by the fairly typical conclusion. Vss. 22-5 form an appendix, as it were.

Appeal (*parakaleo*): as in vs. 19 (urge). The object of this verb is the author’s “*logos* of exhortation” (*paraklesis*), a noun derived from the same verb.

**13-Vs. 23: You should understand that our brother Timothy has been released with whom I shall see you if he comes soon.**

Released (*apoluo*): obviously from prison or some type of custody. This verb has a wide variety of meanings in the New Testament, most of which have to deal with sending from one place to another, usually with a moral understanding.

One reference among several pertaining to Timothy: “A disciple was there named Timothy” [Acts 16.2]. Timothy had a Jewish mother and Greek father (also, cf. vs. 1).

**13-Vs. 24: Greet all your leaders and all the saints. Those who come from Italy send**

**you greetings.**

Greet (*aspazomai*): “but having seen it and greeted it from afar” [11.13]. The object here are leaders (*hegeomai*) and “saints,” the former as in vss. 7 & 17.

**13-Vs. 25: Grace be with all of you. Amen.**

Grace (*charis*): the verb “to be” is lacking in the Greek text which reads literally, “the grace with all you.”

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