

The Superior Jesus

An Inductive study of the Hebrews epistle

By

O. William Cooper

The Superior Jesus

An inductive study of the Hebrews epistle

By

O. William Cooper

Copyright November, 2016.
4742 Westbury Drive
Fort Collins, Colorado 80526

The Scripture text of the New American Standard Bible is used by permission of the Lockman Foundation, a corporation, not for profit, LaHabra, California, 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, all rights reserved.

All rights reserved. No part of this text may be reproduced, stored in any retrieval system or transmitted in any form, or by any means: electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording or otherwise.

**This book is intended to be used for the furtherance of the
Gospel of Christ.
It is not for sale or resale.
All rights reserved.**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE AUTHORSHIP	1
THE TIMING OF THE EPISTLE.....	1
THE RECIPIENTS	1
THE NAMES FOR DEITY IN HEBREWS	2
COMMANDS IN THE HEBREWS EPISTLE	3
QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 1	9
STUDY OF CHAPTER 1	11
QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 2	19
STUDY OF CHAPTER 2	23
QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 3	33
STUDY OF CHAPTER 3	35
QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 4	45
STUDY OF CHAPTER 4	47
QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 5	57
STUDY OF CHAPTER 5	59
QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 6	69
STUDY OF CHAPTER 6	73
QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 7	91
STUDY OF CHAPTER 7	95
QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 8	107
STUDY OF CHAPTER 8	111
QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 9	117
STUDY OF CHAPTER 9	121
QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 10.....	133
STUDY OF CHAPTER 10	139
QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 11A	159
STUDY OF CHAPTER 11A.....	163
QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 11B	177
STUDY OF CHAPTER 11B.....	183
QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 12.....	205
STUDY OF CHAPTER 12	209
QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 13.....	235
STUDY OF CHAPTER 13	239

THE AUTHORSHIP

At the beginning of the Hebrews epistle, in the King James Bible, it reports, “Paul’s epistle to the Hebrews.” These words, of course, do not appear in the Greek text. The truth is that we cannot be certain who wrote this epistle. If you look at 13:22-25, it sounds like the closing section of a Pauline epistle. It may not be, but it certainly sounds that way. The epistle reads, “The brethren of Italy salute you.” It seems reasonable to conclude that it was written from Rome and perhaps during the time that Paul was imprisoned there.

There is a field of thought that suggests that Paul wrote this epistle. I cannot agree. There is another field of thought that suggests that Luke wrote this epistle, I cannot agree. There is a long list of words in this epistle that otherwise only appear in the writings of Paul. There is another long list of words, however, that otherwise only appear in the writings of Luke. Paul is noted for excellent logic, but not excellent Greek writing. Luke, on the other hand, is noted for his excellent Greek writing. Only Luke’s gospel record and the book of Acts are as excellent Greek writing as you find in Hebrews.

The format of the writing of this epistle is exactly like that of the book of Romans. Romans chapters 1-11 are a logical presentation of Paul’s theological statement. Romans 12-16 are a practical section. Hebrews chapters 1-11 are a theological presentation. Hebrews chapters 12 and 13 are simply a series of exhortations.

Hebrews chapter 12 begins with the word “therefore” which is a translation of the word (toigaroun). This is a combination of three Greek words – (toi-gar-oun). Putting words together in order to create strong emphasis was a favorite tool of Paul. This word, (toigaroun) can be found in only two other places in the New Testament; Thessalonians and Hebrews.

We know that Luke was with Paul during the imprisonment in Rome. Does this prove anything? Absolutely not. The honest answer is that we do not know who wrote this epistle. Is it possible that Paul dictated and Luke did the writing? It is possible, but no one could honestly defend this position. By the way, if we really believe in inspiration, it does not matter too much, but it is intriguing.

THE TIMING OF THE EPISTLE

We know that there was some persecution prior to the crucifixion of Christ. This strong opposition peaked at the time of the crucifixion and then waned a bit. It picked up sharply during the ministry of the apostle Paul. Indeed, persecution was a part of the expansion of the church in Acts. The origin of that persecution was Jewish. During that time, if it had not been for the protection of Rome, Paul would never have been able to carry on his ministry. Later, it was the opposition of Rome that devastated the church. If it had not been for his imprisonment in Rome, Paul would not have written many of his epistles. Near the end of the first century and into the second century, the persecution came from Rome and was civil in nature, rather than religious. If the Christians had been willing to simply throw a pinch of incense into a fire before the image of the Caesar, they would not have been killed. They refused, however, because it would have been an act of worshipping the emperor, a Roman deity.

Much of the New Testament was written during the time when religious persecution by the Jews declined and the persecution by Roman authorities increased. 62-64 A.D. was a crescendo of persecution by Roman authorities. Beginning in 64 A.D, Nero was in control. In the Catacombs of Rome there are 174,000 Christian burial places. There are those who claim that nearly 7,000 Christians died during this brief period. It appears that this is the period during which the Hebrews epistle was written.

THE RECIPIENTS

The title of the epistle addresses “Hebrews,” which is a way to identify Jewish people. In chapters 5-10, the author deals carefully with the whole Jewish priestly system without explanation. No other group in that part of the world would have understood everything this author wrote in this epistle. There are 29

direct quotations from the Old Testament and 53 allusions to other passages. A careful reading of the epistle will provide 132 pieces of information about the recipients of the epistle. There are 29 references to the fact that the recipients are Christians though they are spread throughout Galatia rather than all being in one city.

The use of the word “brethren” is a New Testament way to refer to other Christians and appears eight times in the confines of the epistle. Many of these believers had fled Jerusalem when they were sorely pressed for their faith. Now they were going through the same pain again. All of the illustrations in chapter 11 are taken from Jewish history. On 13 occasions, the author referred to the fact that they were suffering for their faith, but they had not shed their blood. Chapter 10:35 is an example of the 19 references to the fact that they were disappointed. They were just tired of hurting. They had lost everything except each other. There are 17 references to the fact that these believers were not faring well in their time of trial. The author reminded them not to forsake the gathering of themselves together. This is because it was risky and they were being extra cautious. These conditions, by the way, are nearly the same as those experienced by the believers in Galatians and Philippians.

THE NAMES FOR DEITY IN HEBREWS

The second person of the Trinity is mentioned in Hebrews by 16 different names for a total of 41 times. Interestingly enough, the first member of the Trinity is mentioned by 15 different names for a total of 84 times. This is a bit surprising in an epistle whose avowed purpose has to do with the superiority of Jesus.

The inclusion of a name for Deity seldom gets our attention, but it was always important to the first century believers. It is not surprising that the name Christ appears nine times while the name “Jesus” appears only seven times in a letter written to recipients in the province of Galatia. The name “Christ” is a translation of the Hebrew word “Meshiah. On the other hand, the name “Jesus” means “savior

The province of Galatia was home-town to a huge host of Gnostic religious devotees. The Gnostics believed that all human flesh was irreparably sinful. If Jesus was, in fact, totally human, then he could not be deity. The use of the name “Christ” or “Christ Jesus” rather than “Jesus” or “Jesus Christ” was a way to confront this huge majority of local citizens.

COMMANDS IN THE HEBREWS EPISTLE

Every epistle in the New Testament contains commands in one form or another. These epistles were written to deal with one or more problems that were disturbing the fellowship. If you carefully study the exhortations or commands in an epistle you will discover at least two things:

A. It will identify the problem(s) that exist within the fellowship.

B. You will discover the reason that the author wrote to these first century believers.

In the Hebrews epistle, there are 74 commands that the author placed upon the believers who received the epistle. We will divide our study of Hebrews into three major sections as the author has presented. The occurrence of these commands throughout the epistle looks like this.

Chap- ters	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	(11)	12	13
com- mands	1	0	6	4	0	6	1	0	0	11	0	28	17
sec- tions	11				18							45	

If you look at the statistics for the first Corinthian epistle, it looks like this:

Chapter	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
commands	5	0	2	4	14	12	31	1	1	16	16	1	0	26	7	15

Obviously, there is a long list of commands in this epistle. Our knowledge of I Corinthians indicates two things:

A. There was a long list of problems that they were facing in the Corinthian fellowship.

B. There was real concern about whether or not the people were going to take the situation seriously.

On the other hand, if you look at the statistics for the Roman epistle, it looks like this:

Chapter	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
com- mands	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	44	21	12	7	37

As you can see in the illustrations above, there are as many commands in I Corinthians chapter one as there in the first eleven chapters of Romans. It appears that the apostle Paul had to use a different approach for both Romans and I Corinthians. Though Paul does not explain this, one possible explanation is that in Romans, Paul anticipated that the recipients would be responsive so he could build the theological basis (chapters 1-11) and then present the commands in the conclusion (chapters 12-16). In I Corinthians, he identified the problem and immediately gave the command.

The 74 exhortations in Hebrews deal with three different areas of concern. You will observe that in some instances there are four or five exhortations in a single verse. The exhortations are as follows:

I. COMMANDS INTENDED TO PROVIDE INSTRUCTION FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH (33 COMMANDS)

“Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,” Hebrews 12:1

“fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Hebrews 12:2

The Superior Jesus

*“For **consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself**, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.” Hebrews 12:3*

*“Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be **subject to the Father of spirits, and live?**” Hebrews 12:9*

*“Therefore, **strengthen the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble**,” Hebrews 12:12*

*“and **make straight paths for your feet**, so that the limb which is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be healed.” Hebrews 12:13*

*“**Pursue peace with all men** and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord.” Hebrews 12:14*

*“**Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord.**” Hebrews 12:14*

*“**See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God**; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled;” Hebrews 12:15*

*“**See to it** that no one comes short of the grace of God; **that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble**, and by it many be defiled;” Hebrews 12:15*

*“**that there be no immoral or godless person like Esau**, who sold his own birthright for a single meal.” Hebrews 12:16*

*“**that there be no immoral or godless person like Esau**, who sold his own birthright for a single meal.” Hebrews 12:16*

*“Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, **let us show gratitude**, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe;” Hebrews 12:28*

*“Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which **we may offer to God an acceptable service** with reverence and awe;” Hebrews 12:28*

*“Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, **let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service** with reverence and awe;” Hebrews 12:28*

*“Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, **by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe**;” Hebrews 12:28*

*“Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which **we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe**;” Hebrews 12:28*

*“**Let love of the brethren continue.**” Hebrews 13:1*

*“**Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers**, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it.” Hebrews 13:2*

*“**Remember the prisoners**, as though in prison with them, and those who are ill-treated, since you yourselves also are in the body.” Hebrews 13:3*

*“**Remember** the prisoners, as though in prison with them, and **those who are ill-treated**, since you yourselves also are in the body.” Hebrews 13:3*

*“**Marriage is to be held in honor among all**, and the marriage bed is to be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge.” Hebrews 13:4*

*“**Marriage is to be held in honor among all, and the marriage bed is to be undefiled**; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge.” Hebrews 13:4*

COMMANDS IN THE HEBREWS EPISTLE

“Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, “I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU,””
Hebrews 13:5

“Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, “I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU,””
Hebrews 13:5

“Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith.” Hebrews 13:7

“Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith.” Hebrews 13:7

“Do not be carried away by varied and strange teachings; for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods, through which those who were so occupied were not benefited.”
Hebrews 13:9

“Do not be carried away by varied and strange teachings; for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods, through which those who were so occupied were not benefited.”
Hebrews 13:9

“So, let us go out to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach.” Hebrews 13:13

“Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.” Hebrews 13:15

“And do not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.” Hebrews 13:16

“And do not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.” Hebrews 13:16

II. COMMANDS INTENDED TO ENCOURAGE THE RECIPIENTS IN THE FRUSTRATION OF CONTINUOUS, PAINFUL PERSECUTION (26 commands)

“Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession;” Hebrews 3:1

“But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called “Today,” so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.” Hebrews 3:13

“Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.” Hebrews 4:14

“Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” Hebrews 4:16

“Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,” Hebrews 6:1

“Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,” Hebrews 6:1

“Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,” Hebrews 6:1

“Now observe how great this man was to whom Abraham, the patriarch, gave a tenth of the choicest spoils.” Hebrews 7:4

The Superior Jesus

“let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.” Hebrews 10:22

“let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.” Hebrews 10:22

“let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.” Hebrews 10:22

“let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.” Hebrews 10:22

“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful;” Hebrews 10:23

“and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds,” Hebrews 10:24

“and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds,” Hebrews 10:24

“not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.” Hebrews 10:25

“not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.” Hebrews 10:25

“But remember the former days, when, after being enlightened, you endured a great conflict of sufferings,” Hebrews 10:32

“Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,” Hebrews 12:1

“Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,” Hebrews 12:1

“Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,” Hebrews 12:1

“fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Hebrews 12:2

“For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.” Hebrews 12:3

“Therefore, strengthen the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble,” Hebrews 12:12

“Therefore, strengthen the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble,” Hebrews 12:12

“and make straight paths for your feet, so that the limb which is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be healed.” Hebrews 12:13

III. COMMANDS INTENDED TO WARN AGAINST SPIRITUAL DECLINE (15 commands)

“For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it.” Hebrews 2:1

COMMANDS IN THE HEBREWS EPISTLE

“DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS AS WHEN THEY PROVOKED ME, AS IN THE DAY OF TRIAL IN THE WILDERNESS,” Hebrews 3:8

“Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God.” Hebrews 3:12

“Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God.” Hebrews 3:12

“while it is said, “TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS, AS WHEN THEY PROVOKED ME.”” Hebrews 3:15

“Therefore, let us fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it.” Hebrews 4:1

“Therefore let us be diligent to enter that rest, so that no one will fall, through following the same example of disobedience.” Hebrews 4:11

“Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,” Hebrews 6:1

“Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,” Hebrews 6:1

“Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,” Hebrews 6:1

“Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward.” Hebrews 10:35

“Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,” Hebrews 12:1

“Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,” Hebrews 12:1

“Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,” Hebrews 12:1

“Do not be carried away by varied and strange teachings; for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods, through which those who were so occupied were not benefited.” Hebrews 13:9

QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 1

HEBREWS 1:1 – 14

1. There are two paragraphs in Hebrews chapter one. On the following table, write a brief summary of eight words or less for each paragraph.

1:1-4	
1:5-14	

2. In Hebrews 1:1-4, the author talked extensively about Jesus.
- A. These verses form a single sentence.
 - 1. What is the subject of this sentence?
 - 2. What is the verb of this sentence?
 - B. There are two contrasts in this sentence. What are these contrasts?
 - C. What does the author say about Jesus in this sentence?
 - D. In this sentence/paragraph, the author summarizes the main idea of the book. What is that basic idea?
3. In Hebrews 1:5-14, there are 18 complete sentences in which the author attempts to prove the assertion he made in 1:1-4
- A. In this paragraph the author quotes from at least seven Old Testament passages.
 - 1. What point was the author trying to make with each quotation?
 - 2. Why would so many quotes be necessary?
 - 3. In 1:1-4, the author summarizes the ministry of angels. What was his conclusion?
 - 4. What do we learn from the fact that the author contrasts Jesus and the angels?
 - B. In 1:5, 6, the author again contrasts Jesus and the angels.
 - 1. In 1:5, the author made two quotations about Jesus.
 - a. He quoted from Psalm 2:7 – What points did he make?
 - b. He also quoted from II Samuel 7:14. What was he stressing in this quotation?
 - 2. In 1:6, the author quoted from Deuteronomy 32:43. What does this verse say about Jesus?
 - C. In 1:7-13, the author assembled several Old Testament quotations in order to make statements about the contrast between Jesus and the angels.
 - 1. 1:7 is a quotation from Psalm 104.
 - a. What is the context of Psalm 104?
 - b. What message does the author wish to convey through this quotation?
 - 2. 1:8, 9, are a quotation from Psalm 45:6 f.f.
 - a. What is the background of this quotation?
 - b. What message does the author wish to convey through the use of this quotation?
 - 3. In 1:10-12, the author quoted from Psalm 102:25 f.f.
 - a. What is the Psalmist talking about in this Psalm?
 - b. What has the Hebrews author told you about Jesus through the use of this quotation?
 - 4. In 1:13, the author drew a quotation from Psalm 110:1.
 - a. Is the author using this passage to talk about Jesus or angels?
 - b. What was he attempting to say with the use of this quotation?
 - 5. 1:14 is a summary of chapter one. How does the author summarize the chapter?
4. Now in light of your study of chapter one, review the summaries you gave to the two paragraphs in this chapter. If there are adjustments to your summaries, record them on the following table.

1:1-4	
1:5-14	

STUDY OF CHAPTER 1

JESUS, GOD’S ETERNAL SON

HEBREWS 1:1 - 14

There are only two paragraphs in Hebrews chapter one. On the following table you will find a brief summary for each of these paragraphs.

1:1-4	God Spoke
1:5-14	Jesus Is God’s Son

HEBREWS 1:1-4 GOD SPOKE

“God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways,” Hebrews 1:1 “in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.” Hebrews 1:2

Verses one and two form a single complete sentence. The subject of this sentence is “God.” The verb of this sentence is “spoke.” Everything else in this sentence modifies these two words. There is also a contrast in this sentence. The contrasted elements are:

- A. God spoke “long ago to the fathers in the prophets.”
- B. In these last days has spoken to us in a Son.”
- C. This is a way to strongly emphasize the difference between “then” and “now.”

When the author wrote of “God spoke to the fathers,” it was almost always a reference to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Observe also that the author does not single out a prophet, but deals with several.

“IN MANY PORTIONS”

The word translated “portions” literally means ways. God taught about Himself in the plagues of Egypt, but also gave us insights into His nature when He allowed Israel to be taken captive.

“IN MANY WAYS”

The word translated “many ways” literally means “much turning.” This is the kind of thing God did with Hosea. The author is trying, with great difficulty, to describe the multitudinous ways in which God has communicated with His creation.

“IN THESE LAST DAYS HAS SPOKEN TO US IN HIS SON”

By “Last days,” The author certainly means at a time following the resurrection of Christ. It is not clear just how long after the resurrection he is pointing to. The author is saying that Jesus is first and foremost a message from God. It is interesting that the author speaks of the second person of the Trinity as “SON.” In that era, much of the time, the “son” who is to take the father’s place would act and speak on his behalf while he was still living. This is the kind of thing the author has in mind in this usage. There is a dramatic shift in the direction of this sentence. The balance of the sentence, (verses one and two), is given to a strong portrayal of the “SON.”

“WHOM HE APPOINTED HEIR OF ALL THINGS”

This is a first century cultural statement. Every father would choose the son whom he felt was most capable to be the family leader when father was no longer able to do so. Father made that announcement by presenting that son with a beautiful robe with long sleeves. This is what Jacob did to Joseph in Genesis 37.

The author used this image to describe the Father’s actions. As Creator, He possessed all things. He placed all that He controlled in the care of His Son, Jesus.

“THROUGH WHOM ALSO HE MADE THE WORLD”

As we saw in chapter one, though the Father was Creator (Genesis 1), still it was the Son who carried out the actions of the creation. The inclusion of this statement, here, is a way of placing strong emphasis on this message.

“And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,” Hebrews 1:3

Verses 3 and 4 form a single complete sentence.

“AND HE IS THE RADIANCE OF HIS GLORY”

The word translated “radiance” means to shine forth. It describes one who accurately reflects the glory of the Father.

“AND THE EXACT REPRESENTATION OF HIS NATURE”

The word translated “exact representation” comes from the carving trade. The carver uses “gouges” which have a very specific shape. When the gouge is driven into the wood, the shape of the carved wood matches the shape of the gouge that made the incision. Just as the shape of the incision in the wood matches exactly the shape of the gouge, so the nature of Jesus matches the nature of the Father exactly.

“AND UPHOLDS ALL THINGS BY THE WORD OF HIS POWER”

The word translated “upholds” is (φέρω) and means to carry a burden. It is to support, to keep something from falling apart. Everything that is, is held together by the word of Christ’s power. All that the Father created, Christ sustains. Again, if Christ did not sustain all creation, all heavenly bodies would no longer hold their orbit, but would crash into each other.

“WHEN HE HAD MADE PURIFICATION FOR SINS”

The word translated “purification” is “katharismos” (καθαρισμός) which means to cleanse something that is unclean. It is to cleanse from the guilt of sin. It is to no longer be held guilty/responsible for wrongdoing. This, of course, is the task of the priest.

“HE SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE MAJESTY ON HIGH”

This is the picture of a first century throne room. Only the privileged have the permission to sit in the presence of the king. All others must stand out of respect. The person who sits at the right hand of the king is his most trusted advisor. He has the ear of the king. He can ask for whatever he wishes and is certain to receive all his requests. Part of the task of the priest is to intercede before God on behalf of the people. Here, again, the author has described another priestly function that Jesus performs. In the midst of their suffering, these believers need to know that they have an intercessor who has the ear of the Father who will be heard and His requests will be granted. When the author used the image of the “majesty on high” he was talking about God the Father.

“having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.” Hebrews 1:4

“HAVING BECOME AS MUCH BETTER THAN THE ANGELS”

Verse four is the closing section of the sentence which is comprised of verses three and four. At this point in the life of the church in that area, a discussion of the place of angels was most appropriate. Indeed, there was a lot of angel worship going on in that province and on occasion, even in the church. This was sufficiently poignant that the author had to detail the fact that Jesus was indeed greater than the angels.

“AS HE HAS INHERITED A MORE EXCELLENT NAME THAN THEY”

Unlike our time and place, in that era, one’s name was the symbol of their authority. To say that Jesus had a more excellent name than the angels was to say that He had greater authority than the angels had. Observe

STUDY OF CHAPTER 1

that it states that Jesus “inherited” a more excellent name than the angels. The word translated “inherited” means to receive something that was given and not earned. This was always the initiative of the Father in the family as you will see in the story of the birth of John the Baptist.

HEBREWS 1:5-14 – JESUS IS GOD’S SON

There are 18 complete sentences in the 10 verses of this paragraph. There are four complete sentences in Hebrews 1:5.

“For to which of the angels did He ever say,” Hebrews 1:5A

“FOR TO WHICH OF THE ANGELS DID HE EVER SAY”

This paragraph is a continuation of the contrast between Jesus and the angels. As previously indicated, this is due to the fact that angel-worship was becoming an increasing problem in the community and in some cases the church as well.

As you look at the two sentences in 1:5, it seems awkward. Nevertheless, it is not awkward in Greek. The author is asking a question. When we encounter this, we should immediately ask what the anticipated answer should be. In this case, the anticipated answer would be “none.” It is one more way to establish the fact that Jesus is far greater than the angels that people were worshipping.

“YOU ARE MY SON, TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN YOU”? Hebrews 1:5B

This is about more than paternity in that culture. If one is Son, it is incumbent upon Him to be absolutely obedient to the Father in every respect. He would focus his life on furthering the Father’s interests in everything. The Father’s complete lifestyle, values and nature would find its mirror reflection in the life of the Son.

“And again, Hebrews 1:5 C

This is an exclamation that serves to indicate that what follows is a part of what has just preceded. It should be noted that this question is a direct quotation from Psalm 2:7. There are important reasons for the repeated quotations from the Old Testament in this epistle:

1. This is a form of argumentation that Jesus used repeatedly and they were emulating His style, as did Peter, Paul and John.
2. If someone argues with your statement, which included an Old Testament quotation, they would be arguing with Scripture.
3. According to the Old Testament, truth is established by two or three witnesses:

““A single witness shall not rise up against a man on account of any iniquity or any sin which he has committed; on the evidence of two or three witnesses a matter shall be confirmed.” Deuteronomy 19:15

“I WILL BE A FATHER TO HIM AND HE SHALL BE A SON TO ME”? Hebrews 1:5D

“I WILL BE A FATHER TO HIM”

This statement is also a quotation from Psalm 2:5. Again, this quotation affirms the claim that Jesus is the Son of God. The Gnostics, in this area, would take violent exception to such a claim. Observe that this sentence is a quotation from both Psalm 89:26 and II Samuel 7:14 where Nathan proclaimed the message of the Lord to David that Jesus is God’s Son. Obviously, no angel could make such a claim. This is just one more piece of evidence that Jesus is greater than the angels. Observe also that this sentence contains a double emphasis – one from the Father’s perspective the other from that of the Son. Both the Father and the Son have privilege and responsibility. The Father’s privilege is that the Son must obey implicitly and follow exactly his nature and character. The Father’s responsibility was to protect the Son; provide for Him and focus the direction of His life.

“AND HE SHALL BE A SON TO ME”

The privilege of the Son is that the Father will provide for Him and protect Him. The responsibility of the Son, as previously mentioned, is to obey the Father and emulate His nature and character.

“And when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says, Hebrews 1:6A “AND LET ALL THE ANGELS OF GOD WORSHIP HIM.”” Hebrews 1:6 B

This is one complete sentence. Once more, there are two facets to this sentence. There is subtlety in the words of this verse. If, indeed, the angels worship the Son; if they are His messengers, then He is far greater than they are. Observe that the author quotes God as speaking of Jesus as His “First born.” In our culture, the one designated “first born” means only that he came into being before any of the other sons. In that culture, however, it meant that the Father had chosen to place the entire family responsibility upon this Son when the Father was prepared to relinquish it.

The author continued the quotation by presenting the Father’s instruction for the angels to worship the Son. Again, if the angels are to worship Jesus, this becomes evidence that He is far greater than they are. This, of course, is the theme of the first section of the epistle – Hebrews 1-4.

“And of the angels He says, “WHO MAKES HIS ANGELS WINDS, AND HIS MINISTERS A FLAME OF FIRE.”” Hebrews 1:7

The words of this verse form a very loose quotation of Psalm 104:4. In this Psalm, David used this sentence to emphasize that the power of God is great. The author was using this great truth to show that Jesus is far greater than the angels that some of the recipients were worshipping.

“But of the Son He says, “YOUR THRONE, O GOD, IS FOREVER AND EVER, AND THE RIGHT-EOUS SCEPTER IS THE SCEPTER OF HIS KINGDOM.” Hebrews 1:8

The use of the word “but” indicates that we are in the midst of a very strong contrast. The contrasted elements are as follows:

A. In verse 7, he described the ministry/position of the angels.

BUT

B. In verse 8 he described the greatly superior ministry of Jesus.

This verse is a quotation from Psalm 45:6. This is an emphatic way to claim biblical support for his position about the superiority of Jesus over the angels.

Observe that the author prefaced the quotation by addressing it to the “Son.” In so doing, he has made three statements about the Son:

A. He is the king

B. He is God

C. He is eternal

Obviously, none of these statements could be made about an angel.

In this quotation from the Psalms, the author spoke of “the scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Thy kingdom.” In so doing, he has identified the quality of character of Jesus’ rule. It is a righteous rule which they knew was most unusual.

“YOU HAVE LOVED RIGHTEOUSNESS AND HATED LAWLESSNESS; Hebrews 1:9A

There are two complete sentences in verse nine. This sentence is a quotation from Psalm 45:7. The phrase “loved righteousness” describes an unconditional form of love – to love righteousness just because you love righteousness – no strings attached. The form of this “love” is aorist tense which adds serious emphasis to the statement.

By the same token, the word translated “hated” means a strong detesting of lawlessness. It is not surprising that this word is also in the emphatic aorist tense. It is interesting that the author made this claim for Jesus. We know that royalty is usually quick to claim the privilege of exception to the law.

STUDY OF CHAPTER 1

THEREFORE GOD, YOUR GOD, HAS ANOINTED YOU WITH THE OIL OF GLADNESS ABOVE YOUR COMPANIONS.”” Hebrews 1:9B

The word “therefore” does not appear in the Greek text. Indeed, the Greek text is much more emphatic than our English translation. It reads, “Through this, THE God, THE God of you, anointed you with the oil of gladness among your companions.”

The way the author has written this is exactly the way Paul, in other epistles, confronted the Gnostics – by speaking directly of Jesus as deity as he does here.

The author does not hesitate to deal with the complexity of the Trinity. First, he announced that Jesus is God. Having made this assertion, he proceeded to point out the servant relationship Jesus sustained with the Father who is also God.

The phrase, “above thy fellows” is a source of consternation to some because the author does not identify the “fellows.” The context deals with angels and they would be the ones most likely to be intended by the word “fellows.” The importance of the statement is that Jesus is above; beyond those identified as “fellows.”

The idea of “anointing” was a very important concept in that day. The Old Testament text gives us insights into this action. Samuel anointed both Saul and David to be kings over Israel. It means to set the person apart, for divine service, which is our intent when we use the word “sanctify.” Jesus was anointed, set apart to accomplish the forgiveness of sin for those who repent and believe.

“And, “YOU, LORD, IN THE BEGINNING LAID THE FOUNDATION OF THE EARTH, AND THE HEAVENS ARE THE WORKS OF YOUR HANDS;” Hebrews 1:10

We must keep in mind that 1:10-12 are a very loose translation of Psalm 102:25-27. Our author wrote with extreme care. When he used the word “Lord” he was referring to Jesus. When he wrote, “In the beginning,” it was a way to point out that Jesus predates the beginning; He is eternal. Observe that in verse 10, the psalmist referred to the Messiah’s creative ministry in two ways:

A. “Thou didst lay the foundations of the earth.” This is a clear reference to Creation.

B. “The heavens are the work of Thy hands.” This expands the view of creation.

In both instances, David claimed that the Messiah is the eternal creator of all that exists.

“THEY WILL PERISH, BUT YOU REMAIN; AND THEY ALL WILL BECOME OLD LIKE A GARMENT,” Hebrews 1:11

In verse 11, the author quotes from Psalm 102:26 and presents the message in the form of a contrast:

A. They (heavens and earth) will perish.

BUT

B. Thou (Jesus) remainest

The emphasis is very strong; Jesus is much greater than all creation, throughout the balance of verses 11 and 12. David and our author, used comparisons to stress just how much greater Jesus is than all creation. He spoke of “a garment.” This is a heavier material, floor length T shirt that was worn by all Jews. These garments were able to be used for many years with the help of repair and patching, but eventually they wore out. The author was saying, that in the way this garment will eventually wear out, so will all Creation, but Christ remains unchanged.

“AND LIKE A MANTLE YOU WILL ROLL THEM UP; LIKE A GARMENT THEY WILL ALSO BE CHANGED. BUT YOU ARE THE SAME, AND YOUR YEARS WILL NOT COME TO AN END.”” Hebrews 1:12

In verse 12, the author continued this comparison as found in Psalm 102. The word translated “mantle” is really a robe; a coat. This coat/mantle is a heavier outer garment which is worn by day and used as a blanket by night. Rather than folding it, they would roll it up in order to stow it away.

The Superior Jesus

In our culture, we would probably translate this verse, “when all creation frays at the collar and shines at the elbows, Jesus has not even changed, much less worn out.” When the author writes, “and thy years shall not fail” it is, again, an emphatic way to say that Jesus is eternal.

Look carefully at the two closing statements in verse 12. They are:

- A. “YOU ARE THE SAME” – This is a way to say that Jesus does not change and ultimately indicates that He is eternal.
- B. “YOUR YEARS WILL NOT COME TO AN END” – This statement more emphatically asserts that Jesus is eternal.

In good Jewish teaching/writing style, the author has made exactly the same assertion in different words- Jesus is eternal.

“But to which of the angels has He ever said, ‘SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR YOUR FEET’?” Hebrews 1:13

The use of the word “but” indicates that we are in the midst of a strong contrast. The contrasted elements are:

- A. Verse 12 – Jesus is eternal; far greater than all creation.
BUT
- B. Verse 13 – God never told angels that He would make their enemies a footstool for their feet – a way of saying they are greater than all their enemies.
- C. Verse 14 – The angels are ministering spirits for those who believe in God.

This question actually includes a quotation from Psalm 110:1. When we encounter a question in our study of an epistle, it is important to ask what the anticipated answer to that question might be. Verse 13 is a question. It is obvious that God never said this about a single angel. The quotation, in this question, insists that God did say this to His Son – Jesus. That is the whole point of the contrast. The answer we give to this question colors everything else one can say about the verse.

When the people of that time and culture read this question, they recognized that this is a throne room scene. The most trusted man in any kingdom; the man who was so close to the king that his request would never be refused, he sat at the king’s right hand. That is the picture David saw about the Messiah, but was very certain it would never happen for an angel. At the close of this quotation, David wrote, “Until I make thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet.” David asserts that the Father did say these words about the Son, but never about an angel. The scene so depicted was a way to describe absolute power over an enemy. The Jews were very graphic, picturesque people. They loved to use this kind of image. When a victory was achieved in battle, there were two different ways to demonstrate this to the conquered enemy:

1. Two spears would be driven into the ground a few feet apart. A third spear was tied between the two about 18 inches above the ground. The conquering General would sit in front of these spears. The conquered General followed by all of his soldiers were forced to crawl under the spear to demonstrate that as of this moment they were his slaves.
2. Among the people in Galatia who came from Gaul, there was delight in battle. When they conquered a leader or a group of soldiers, the conquering general would place his foot upon the neck of an officer and then cut off his head. It was a very vivid way to express his victory and his power over these people for life or death.

“Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?” Hebrews 1:14

In verse 14, the author continued by explaining, in greater depth, the situation for angels. Once more, it is framed in the form of a question. The answer the author anticipated was a strong “absolutely!” In this question, he has framed the contrast in vivid terms:

- A. Verse 13- Jesus is portrayed as the second most powerful person in the kingdom.
BUT

STUDY OF CHAPTER 1

B. Verse 14 – Angels are portrayed as servants, not just of the Lord, but also for all the saints. This is perhaps the most devastating blow the author could mount against the idea that angels are worthy of worship.

QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 2

HEBREWS 2:1 – 18

1. There are four paragraphs in Hebrews chapter two. On the following table, write a brief summary of eight words or less for each of these paragraphs.

2:1-4	
2:5-9	
2:10-13	
2:14-18	

2. In Hebrews 2:1-4, there are two complete sentences in which the author expressed some serious concerns.
- A. Hebrews 2:1 is a complete sentence.
 1. What concern does the author express?
 2. What solution does he recommend to solve this problem?
 3. What did he mean by the words “drift away”?
 4. The use of the word translated “for” really means “therefore.” This always indicates that we are presenting a conclusion to statements previous presented. What facts are being concluded in this sentence?
 - B. Hebrews 2:2-4 form a complete sentence.
 1. What explanation does he offer in this sentence?
 2. In this verse the author used the words “transgression” and “disobedience.”
 - a. Define “transgression”.
 - b. Define “disobedience”.
 - c. What is the difference between the two?
 3. How would you explain his intention when he spoke of “a just recompense of reward”?
 - C. In 2:3, the author asked a question.
 1. What was his question?
 2. What does he mean?
 3. He used the word “neglect.” How would you explain this word to a new believer?
 4. He mentioned that the Lord spoke and that others confirmed His report. Why was the affirming report of others important here?
 - D. In 2:4, the author mentioned that God also bore witness to this message.
 1. How did God bear this witness?
 2. In what way was this helpful?
3. In Hebrews 2:5-9, the author dealt with what appears to be a problem.
- A. What is the apparent problem?
 - B. In 2:5, the author identified the subject of the quotation about whom the following quotation would speak. About whom was he speaking?
 - C. In 2:6-8, there are five complete sentences. The author quoted from Psalm 8:4 f.f.
 1. In Hebrews 2:6A, a complete sentence, you find these words, “**But one has testified somewhere saying...**” The truth of the matter is that the author knew exactly where this came from. Why would he mention it this way?
 2. In 2:6B, the author has quoted from Psalm 8:4. In this quotation, the author has asked two questions.
 - a. What did he ask?
 - b. To whom does he refer by the use of the word “man”?

The Superior Jesus

- c. To whom does he refer by the use of the words “Son of man”?
- d. What answer was the author seeking when he asked these questions?
- D. Hebrews 2:7 – 8A quote from Psalm 8:5, 6 and form a complete sentence. It would read as follows:
“YOU HAVE MADE HIM FOR A LITTLE WHILE LOWER THAN THE ANGELS; YOU HAVE CROWNED HIM WITH GLORY AND HONOR, AND HAVE APPOINTED HIM OVER THE WORKS OF YOUR HANDS;” Hebrews 2:7 YOU HAVE PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET.” For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him.” Hebrews 2:8A
 1. What was the author trying to accomplish by the use of this sentence?
 2. Of whom was he writing?
- E. Hebrews 2:8B, is a complete sentence and would read as follows: ***“For in subjecting all things to Him, He left nothing that is not subjected to Him.”*** Read the two sentences – 2:7-8A and 2:8B together. What was the author trying to accomplish in 2:8B?
- F. Hebrews 2:8C is a complete sentence and would read as follows: ***“But now we do not yet see all things subjected to Him.”*** What does the author achieve with the use of this sentence?
- G. Hebrews 2:9 is a complete sentence.
 1. The use of the word “but” at the beginning of this sentence indicates that we are in the midst of a strong contrast. What are the contrasted elements?
 2. What would be different if the author had omitted the words “for a little while”?
 3. Why would it be important for Jesus to be “be made lower than the angels”?
 4. What does the author mean when he wrote, “Jesus because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor” when dying on a cross was the ultimate shame in that culture?
 5. How would you explain the words “taste death”?
 6. How could Jesus “taste death for everyone”?
4. Hebrews 2:10-13 is a paragraph which contains five complete sentences.
 - A. Hebrews 2:10 is a complete sentence.
 1. The use of the word “for” indicates that an explanation is forthcoming. What is the author explaining?
 2. The author wrote, “For it was fitting for HIM.” To whom does he refer by the word “HIM”?
 3. The author wrote with serious emphasis, “For whom are all things,” and “Through whom are all things.”
 - a. What does it tell you when he wrote, “For whom are all things”?
 - b. What does it tell you when he wrote, “Through whom are all things”?
 - B. Hebrews 2:11-12A is a complete sentence and would read as follows: ***““For both He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all from one Father; for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren,” Hebrews 2:11 saying: Hebrews 2:12A***
 1. The use of the word “for” indicates that an explanation is in progress. What does this verse explain?
 2. Read verse 11 very carefully:
 - a. To whom does he refer by the words, “He who sanctifies”?
 - b. To whom does he refer by the words, “Those who are sanctified”?
 3. What does he mean when he wrote, “Are all from one father”?
 4. What did he add to this explanation by the inclusion of the words, “for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren”?
 - C. Hebrews 2:12A-13A form a complete sentence and would read as follows: ***“I WILL PROCLAIM YOUR NAME TO MY BRETHREN, IN THE MIDST OF THE CONGREGATION I WILL SING YOUR PRAISE.”” Hebrews 2:12B “And again:” Hebrews 2:13A***
 1. In Hebrews 2:12, the author quoted from Psalm 22:22, a Psalm of David. Of whom does it appear that David is speaking in this Psalm?

QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 2

2. What message is the author of Hebrews trying to present with this quotation?
- D. Hebrews 2:13 B is a complete sentence and would read as follows: *"I WILL PUT MY TRUST IN HIM."* And again, *Hebrews 2:13 B*
 1. Our author quoted from the prophecy of Isaiah twice in this verse.
 2. To whom is he referring by the word "Him"?
 3. What is the author trying to present by the quotation from Isaiah 8:8?
 4. In this sentence, (2:12 and 2:13)
- E. Hebrews 2:13C is a complete sentence and would read as follows: *"BEHOLD, I AND THE CHILDREN WHOM GOD HAS GIVEN ME."*
 1. To whom does Isaiah refer when he used the word "I"?
 2. What is our author trying to achieve by the use of this quotation?
5. Hebrews 2:14-18, are a paragraph which contains four complete sentences. These sentences have to do with the reason that Jesus had to become a complete human being.
 - A. Hebrews 2:14, 15 form a complete sentence.
 1. This sentence begins with two conjunctions – "since" and "then." The Greek text for these words translates "Because, therefore." Why does it appear that he begins this sentence and paragraph in this way?
 2. If you look carefully at verse 14, you will discover a cause and effect relationship:
 - a. What is the cause?
 - b. What is the effect?
 3. Hebrews 2:15 begins with the word "and." What does it tell you is happening?
 4. In what way were the people mentioned there in some form of slavery?
 - B. Hebrews 2:16 is a complete sentence.
 1. The use of the word "for" indicates that an explanation is forthcoming. What did the author explain?
 2. What would be the difference if the author had omitted the word "assuredly"?
 3. This sentence contains a contrast. What does the author accomplish by this contrast?
 - C. Hebrews 2:17 is a complete sentence.
 1. The word translated "therefore" indicates that a conclusion is in process.
 - a. With what part of the text does this conclusion deal?
 - b. What conclusion does he draw?
 2. What difference would it make if the author had omitted the words "in all things"?
 3. How would you explain the phrase, "that he might become" when He is deity?
 4. What did he mean when he spoke of Jesus as, "becoming a merciful High Priest"?
 5. What did he mean when he spoke of Jesus as "becoming a faithful High Priest"?
 6. How would you explain the author's assertion "to make propitiation (reconciliation) for our sins"?
 - D. Hebrews 2:18 is a complete sentence.
 1. The use of the word "for" indicates that an explanation is being provided. What is being explained?
 2. What would be different if the word "Himself" were omitted?
 3. If Jesus is God, omniscient and omnipotent, then why does He need the temptation of suffering in order to come to the aid of those being tempted?"

STUDY OF CHAPTER 2

JESUS IS GREATER THAN ANGELS

HEBREWS 2:1 – 18

There are four paragraphs in Hebrews chapter two. On this table you will find a brief summary of each of these paragraphs.

2:1-4	Pay Attention to God's Message
2:5-9	Jesus is Greater Than Angels
2:10-13	Jesus was Temporarily Humbled
2:14-18	Jesus was Tempted and Suffered Death

HEBREWS 2:1-4 – PAY ATTENTION TO GOD'S MESSAGE

For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. Hebrews 2:1

The word translated “for” is “dia” (διὰ) which is usually translated “through”, but there are occasions where it was translated “for” or “therefore.” In this instance, the idea of “therefore” seems to fit best. It indicates that a conclusion based upon chapter one will be presented. It is like saying, “because Jesus is far superior to the angels”, we ought to give the most earnest heed to what we have been taught. We are keenly aware that we always face the danger that we could drift away from what we have been taught if we are not very careful. This verse assumes that it is possible to drift from what we have been taught.

For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense, Hebrews 2:2

We should keep in mind that 2:2-5 form a single complete sentence. The word translated “for” indicates that an explanation is forthcoming. In this sentence, the author is drawing a logical conclusion. This conclusion takes the form of a conditional (IF...THEN...) statement – A. The condition. B. the consequence. Verse two forms the conditions:

- A. If the work spoken through angels proved unalterable.
- B. (IF) every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense.

The words translated “unalterable” are “egeneto” (ἐγένετο) which means “to become; “bebaios” (βέβαιος) which means to be trustworthy. It should be noted that the form of this phrase is aorist tense which adds serious emphasis to the words.

The use of the word translated “and” indicates that the author is tying together two or more ideas of equal importance. The second phrase in this verse is also a conditional “IF” statement. In this statement, the author mentions two words – “transgression” and “disobedience” which we tend to view as synonyms which are really quite different, but equally wrong.

- A. The word translated “transgression” is “parbasis” (παράβασις) which means a violation of the Mosaic law and involves a consciousness of sin.
- B. The word translated “disobedience” is “parakon” (παράκόν) which describes an unwillingness to hear; a rebellion.

The word translated “received” is “elaben” (ἔλαβεν) which means more than just to receive. It involves receiving a benefit for which the initiative rests with the giver. The form of this word, again, is aorist tense which adds serious emphasis.

The words translated “just recompense:” are very strong:

- A. The word translated “just” is “endikos” (ἐνδικος) which means that which is deserved; that which is fair.

B. The word translated “recompense” is “misthapodosia” (μισθαποδοσία) which is the word used to describe the payment of wages. It is not so much punishment as it is receiving what is due. The author has very carefully described what the recipients were guilty of doing. They all knew this very well. The author was forcefully bringing this information to their attention, again.

How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard, Hebrews 2:3

Verse three is the consequence portion of this conditional statement. The author is now going to make an appeal to logic through a question. Again, it is necessary to identify the anticipated answer when we find a question in the text. In this instance the answer would be, there is no possible way one could escape the promised recompense. A literal way to describe “escape” would be to say, “seek safety in flight.” This points to a way to avoid punishment. The word translated “neglect” is “ameleo” (ἀμελέω) means to make light of something. It is to be careless about. The use of the words “so great” is another way to emphasize something that is huge. Salvation involves more than a cancellation of guilt. It points to both present and future deliverance from the consequences of sin in our lives. The author reminded the readers that it was Jesus who made the announcement that confirmed the message of forgiveness proclaimed by the prophets. This was the message that Jesus preached during the three plus years of his ministry along with the disciples.

God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will. Hebrews 2:4

The use of the word “also” indicates the presence of additional information. The message of Jesus was sufficient for people to know to repent of their sins and trust in His death and resurrection. The message of the prophets – like Isaiah, was sufficient to let the people know that there was one who was coming and He would bring forgiveness for their sins and restoration to God. For God, however, that was not enough. He gave additional information to the people in the form of four different things:

There were “signs.” The word translated “signs” is “saameion” (σημειῶν). This is a sign or mark by which a person or thing is distinguished from others and is known. Jesus spoke of “the sign of Jonah.” The time Jonah spent in the belly of a fish was a sign of the time Jesus spent in the tomb.

"And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths, and lying in a manger." Luke 2:12

There were also “wonders.” The word translated “wonder” is “teras” (τέρας). This is something that is suited to excite wonder or amazement. These things confirm the truth of Christ’s message. The author quoted from the prophet Joel to describe something like this.

³⁰"And I will display wonders in the sky and on the earth, Blood, fire, and columns of smoke. ³¹"The sun will be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes. Joel 2:30-31

The author also spoke of “various miracles.” The word translated “miracles” is “dunami” (δύναμις) which are a different kind of miracles. It included the healing of the sick, especially those blind from birth, raising the dead, as with Lazarus. These are events that remove all pretense of deception.

The author also mentioned “Gifts of the Holy Spirit.” The word translated “gifts” is “merismos” (μερισμός) which means literally to divide into portions. It is to separate one thing from another. The Holy Spirit gave startling gifts to many people and they were all quite different from each other. The most obvious of these is the gift of speaking in tongues as described in I Corinthians 12. Each of these, in a very special way, draws sharp attention to the presence and power of God. The author closes the verse by adding the fact that the Holy Spirit gives these gifts “as He will.” This indicates that a divine choice is being made. It also removes the possibility of a believer deciding to have a specific gift for his life and ministry.

STUDY OF CHAPTER 2

HEBREWS 2:5-9 – JESUS WAS GREATER THAN THE ANGELS

***For He did not subject to angels the world to come, concerning which we are speaking.
Hebrews 2:5***

The word “for” indicates that an explanation is about to be provided. The author uses this brief paragraph to draw an application to what he has been describing.

This is done in the form of a contrast between Jesus and the angels. God did not place the world to come under the power of angels. The assumption of this statement is that He did place the world to come under the control of Jesus. This would be evidence that Jesus is, in fact, greater than the angels that some of these people were worshipping.

But one has testified somewhere, saying, "What is man, that Thou rememberest him? or the Son of man that thou visitest Him? Hebrews 2:6

This verse begins with the word “but.” This indicates that a serious contrast is in motion and will show the difference between two people or things. In this brief statement, the author is quoting from Psalm 8:4-6. It may seem unusual that the author quotes so many times from the Old Testament. We must keep in mind that if a person replies to an argument with scripture, his adversary will be unable to continue the argument because he would be arguing with scripture and not with the person.

In Psalm 8:4, the psalmist said, “what is man that thou rememberest him?” The word translated “rememberest” is “mimnaeskomai” (μυμνήσκομαι). This word is translated both as “to be mindful and as remember. There is a great difference between the meaning of the two words.

- a. “Remember” deals with bringing something/someone to mind that was previously not there.
- b. “Mindful,” on the other hand, is just the opposite of forgetting. It is to do something that demonstrates that the person was not forgotten.
- c. This is our intent when we say that someone “remembered” (was mindful) of a person in their will. The use of the word “or” points to a parallel idea that is a bit of a contrast. He spoke of “man” and then in contrast spoke of “the Son of Man.” The reference to the “Son of man” is a pointed reference to Jesus. Our text reads, “or the Son of Man that thou visitest Him.” It might be clearer to translate it, “or the Son of Man that thou art concerned about Him.” The word translated “concerned” is “episkeptae” (ἐπισκέπτη). It means to look after in order to help. It is to care for; to provide for. In Psalm 8 this is posed as a question which it will then answer. The question itself points to an intimate relationship both between God and mankind and between the Father and the Son.

"Thou hast made him for a little while lower than the angels; Thou hast crowned him with glory and honor, And hast appointed him over the works of Thy hands; Hebrews 2:7

In the portion of Psalm 8 quoted in Hebrews 2:7, 8, there are four descriptive statements about the Son. Thou hast made Him for a little while lower than the angels.” This is an important affirmation. If Jesus was never lower than the angels, then he could not be properly called totally human. It involves a specific level of limitation in order to be considered totally human. There is a double emphasis in this description of Jesus. He was totally human – lower than angels. This condition was temporary. It must change.

“THOU HAST CROWNED HIM WITH GLORY AND HONOR.”

This is an action of the Father which is bestowed upon the Son in the way that the prize was bestowed upon the winner of the Olympic type races of that day. The word translated “crowned” is “stephanoo” (στεφανόω). It is an adornment. It was a means used to identify the victor. The words “glory” and “honor” were often used together, but have different meanings. The word translated “glory” is “doxa” (δόξα). It portrays an estimation of the value of a person or action. It affirms the majesty, perfection and excellence which are Christ.

The word translated “honor” is “timae” (τιμή). This is a fixation of value. This value is expressed in reference and in this case reverence. Glory is an ascription of praise on the basis of Jesus’ character; who He is. Honor, on the other hand, has to do with the way we respond to the character and greatness which is Christ.

“AND HAST APPOINTED HIM OVER THE WORKS OF THY HANDS.”

The word translated “appointed” is “kathistano” (καθιστάνω). It means to place one in charge. It is to assign responsibility. It carries with it the power and authority commensurate with the responsibility. Angels are created beings. Angels are, therefore, under the responsibility and authority of Jesus. Jesus has total, final authority over angels. There is nothing created over which Jesus has no authority or power.

Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet." For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him. Hebrews 2:8

“THOU HAST PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET.”

This is a royal picture. It is the way they described the power and authority of a king over every facet of life in his kingdom. The word translated “put in subjection” is “hupotasso” (ὕποτάσσω). It means to subordinate. It is to assign responsibility. It is to grant authority in such a way that it requires one to give account of the use of that authority to the one who was placed in charge. This is essentially the same statement as the previous one. The Father, like a king, assigned tasks and responsibilities to lesser powers. In so doing, the Father made all created things reportable to His Son, Jesus.

But we do see Him who has been made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone. Hebrews 2:9

The author used very common Jewish teaching techniques. First he said what we do not see. He then, in this verse, indicated what we do see. Observe that the author is speaking very carefully. The author stressed the fact that Jesus was made lower than the angels. “For a little while” emphasizes the fact that this is a temporary arrangement.

The English text reads, “because of the suffering of death...” The word translated “because” is dia” (διὰ). This word is usually translated “through,” “because of” or “on account of.” It is a way of saying that the dying is what brought the glory. Death is not necessarily glory producing. There are other things involved in this situation:

- A. His obedience
- B. His character
- C. His holiness.

Observe the use of the word “that” in this sentence. It indicates that a statement of purpose is forthcoming. The purpose is that Jesus would taste death for everyone. This is possible because of the grace of God.

HEBREWS 2:10-13 – JESUS WAS TEMPORARILY HUMBLD

There are five complete sentences in this brief paragraph. You will note that the author will use the participial form repeatedly in this brief paragraph

“For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings.” Hebrews 2:10

The use of the word “for” indicates that an explanation is forthcoming. The author made several descriptive statements about Jesus in this verse.

STUDY OF CHAPTER 2

“FOR WHOM ARE ALL THINGS”

This suggests purpose. All things came into being in order for them to be in His domain. In the background of this statement is an emphasis on the fact that Jesus is superior to angels. This would only add to that emphasis.

“THROUGH WHOM ARE ALL THINGS”

The word “through” suggests source. Jesus was the agent through whom all things came to exist. It affirms that without Him nothing would be. The previous phrase, “for whom are all things,” would have been sufficient to demonstrate the greatness of Jesus. The addition of this phrase only adds stronger emphasis upon this truth.

IN BRINGING MANY SONS TO GLORY”

The idea of bringing sons to glory is crucial to the author’s message. Heretofore, these sons have not possessed glory. He is dealing with what is essential to achieve the divine purpose. The goal he mentioned is “bringing many sons to glory.” We must identify what he meant by this statement. “Glory” means an estimate or opinion of a person or idea which expresses great honor. It is like saying, this is what it takes to establish glory, a high opinion of those whom God will claim as His sons.

“TO PERFECT THE AUTHOR OF THEIR SALVATION THROUGH SUFFERING”

The word translated “perfect” is not the best translation of the word here. This word is “agagonta” (ἄγαγοντα) which literally means to guide or direct someone toward a specific goal. The word translated “author” is “arkaegos” (ἄρχηγός) which means leader. It is the one who goes first on the path. When the author referred to “the author of their salvation,” there is no doubt that he is referring to Jesus. This becomes confusing to some because Jesus, being Deity and thus omniscient, cannot not gain knowledge.

The guiding that Jesus did not have was in terms of suffering. Jesus knew all about suffering, but in the eternity before His birth, He had never experienced pain or the imminence of death. It was essential that the penalty for sin be paid and mankind could not pay it for himself. The result is that many sons are brought to a new relationship with God through this Son.

For both He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all from one Father; for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, Hebrews 2:11

The word “for” indicates that an explanation is forthcoming.

“HE WHO SANCTIFIES”

The word “for” suggests that an explanation of the previous statement is forthcoming.

The word translated “sanctifies” is “hagiadzon” (ἁγιάζων) which means to cause someone to be holy. The form of this word is present participle which means that both forms describe ongoing action. It would be translated “Is sanctifying.” This is what He is always doing. This, of course, is a reference to Jesus.

“AND THOSE WHO ARE SANCTIFIED”

“Those” is a reference to the ones whom Jesus has forgiven of their sins. The use of the word “and” indicates that that which preceded and that which follows are on equal footing in the sense of this sentence. This phrase, like the one previous, is also a present participle. Both the present tense and the participial form stress ongoing action. One might better translate this as “those who are being sanctified.” The use of this form suggests that this sanctifying is an ongoing process rather than a single action.

“ARE ALL FROM ONE FATHER”

This phrase is an indication of family. Unlike our understanding, to be a family member carried with it essential privileges and responsibilities. In the family, the “sons” were equally inheritors, though one son, usually the eldest, was chosen to take the responsibility of ultimately taking the father’s place and giving direction to the entire family. Again, each son was required to obey every wish of the father and emulate his nature and lifestyle. This is the reason Jesus was determined to do exactly as the Father commanded.

In this verse, the author was strongly insisting that the believer is equally a child of God with the Lord, but that He is the one the Father chose to give leadership to the family.

“HE IS NOT ASHAMED TO CALL THEM BRETHREN”

Saying, "I will proclaim Thy name to My brethren, In the midst of the congregation I will sing Thy praise." Hebrews 2:12

Hebrews 2:12, 13 contain three quotations from the Old Testament. In 2:12, the author quoted from Psalm 22:22, which is a Psalm of David. In this Psalm, David recounts his cry to the Lord when life was threatening. The author's use of this quote reflects the use of the word “brethren.” This is considered to be a Messianic Psalm. The emphasis in Hebrews is that Jesus accepted the believers as His family.

And again, "I will put My trust in Him." And again, "Behold, I and the children whom God has given Me." Hebrews 2:13

In 2:13A, the author quotes from Isaiah 8:17. In this statement, Isaiah described a time when Israel had distanced themselves from God, but in their trouble God would not hear them. In spite of this fact, Isaiah was going to wait upon the Lord. In these two verses, there are three quotations. That, of course is what the O. T. law required to establish truth.

HEBREWS 2:14-18 – JESUS WAS TEMPTED AND SUFFERED DEATH

Since then the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil; Hebrews 2:14

It is interesting that this sentence begins with two conjunctions. The English words “since” and “then” are translations of these words:

- a. (ἐπεὶ) – which is translated “because”
- b. (οὖν) – which means therefore

This was one of their ways of applying great emphasis to a statement. This format serves a cause and effect relationship in this sentence.

- a. Cause – the children share flesh and blood
- b. Effect – Jesus also took flesh and blood upon Himself.

The use of the word “that” indicates that a statement purpose is forthcoming. We usually speak of Christ's death as purchasing our redemption. That is true. The author suggests more than that. Jesus did purchase our redemption. He also rendered the devil powerless. Observe that he refers to the devil as the one who had the power of death. Death is viewed as a final act. Death loses its power when the one who causes it loses the ability to maintain that condition. At that point there is no threat in dying.

And might deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives. Hebrews 2:15

The use of the word “and” indicates that he will continue the idea he had pursued in the previous verse. He was describing the purpose of Christ's sacrificial death. He described an additional purpose for the sacrificial death. He wanted to deliver people from the slavery of the fear of dying. This was a lifelong issue for the people from all over the world. It expressed itself in the form of bondage. Because Jesus overcame death, it then loses its threatening to believers.

For assuredly He does not give help to angels, but He gives help to the descendant of Abraham. Hebrews 2:16

STUDY OF CHAPTER 2

”FOR ASSUREDLY”

The use of the word “for” indicates that an explanation is forthcoming. The word that is translated “assuredly” is “daepou” (δήπου) This is a compound word:

1. De – emphasizes explicitness
2. Pou – Indefinite pronoun

This word means doubtless, Certainly. It indicates very high certainty. It is obvious that Jesus took on the form/nature of people and not angels.

The use of the word ”but” indicates that a contrast is in place

“HE DOES NOT GIVE HELP TO ANGELS”

In this chapter, the author is dealing with the problem of some believers worshipping angels. He does this by pointing out that first Jesus is greater than the angels. He follows this by reminding them that Jesus did not take the form of an angel, but of men. This is a very important point in his logical presentation in chapters 1 through 4.

“BUT”

The author is going to establish a contrast between what the Father did not do and then what He did. Without this established fact, his message does not have the necessary impact for these believers.

“HE GIVES HELP TO THE DESCENDANT OF ABRAHAM”

This may not be the best translation of these words. The word translated “gave help” is epilambano”, a compound word.

- a. Epi - means to superimpose upon
- b. Lambano – to catch, to seize, to take or get hold of.

In this respect, the Jews were greater than the angels.

Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. Hebrews 2:17

“THEREFORE”

The word therefore always indicates that a conclusion is about to be given. Verse 17 is the logical conclusion to the logical statement made in 2:9-16. There are several words that are translated “therefore.” The word here is “othen” (ὁθέν). This is a word that produces a very mild conclusion. The common word “hina” (ἵνα) is a much more complicated and stronger call for a conclusion.

“HE HAD TO BE MADE LIKE HIS BRETHREN IN ALL THINGS”

The author previously established the fact that Jesus and the believers were brothers in the same family. The word translated “had to be made” literally means to owe, or to be obligated, to do something or otherwise fail a duty. “In all things” – there is no way in which He was unlike other members of the family.

“LIKE HIS BRETHREN”

The word translated “like” it means to be similar in character. There are two very similar words:

- a. (ὁμοιούσιν) To be similar, or like.
- b. (ὁμούσιν) - means the same.

The word used here is (ὁμοιούσιν). This debate instigated one of the most damaging controversies in the history of the church. One group claimed Jesus had a nature LIKE other human beings. Another group held that Jesus had the same nature as all human beings. There were many who died because of their position on this issue.

“THAT”

The Greek word is “hina” (ἵνα). The text uses this word which is usually translated “in order that.” It is clear that A statement of purpose is about to be presented.

“HE MIGHT BE”

The word so translated is “genaetai” (γενηται). The form of this word is aorist middle subjunctive.

- a. aorist – the emphasis is on the action not the time.
- b. middle – The subject is involved in the action
- c. subjunctive – points to uncertainty, but possible

The word is best translated “that he might become.”

“MERCIFUL AND FAITHFUL HIGH PRIEST”

The word translated “merciful” is “eleaemon” (ἐλεήμων) and means “compassionate.” It is divine action, not human action. It describes an object of grace. The word translated “faithful” is “pistos” (πιστός) and it means trustworthy. It can be translated “true.” Literally it means to be what you appear to be. The emphasis is on the high priest. Most of the priests simply assist in the sacrifices. The high priest was much different. He actually interceded with God on behalf of the people.

“IN THINGS PERTAINING TO GOD”

The word “pertaining” does not appear in the Greek text. The translator has assumed that this is the intent of the author. This phrase indicates the direction of His merciful and faithful high priesthood. The author describes Jesus as a merciful and faithful high priest to God.

“TO MAKE RECONCILIATION”

The word translated “reconciliation” is “hilaskesthai” (ἱλάσκεσθαι) and assumes a broken relationship is in existence. This has created alienation. The mediator seeks a way to remove the alienation and restore relationships. It involves several features. There is some atoning that is required. Conciliation is necessary to repair the damaged relationships. He will petition God to be gracious when it is totally undeserved. This process requires an intimate knowledge of the situation of the one responsible for the original broken relationships. This is the only thing that will avert certain calamity.

“FOR THE SINS OF THE PEOPLE”

The damage was done. The people were guilty. This process was not to enable the people to be found not guilty. The guilt has already been established. It is rather to seek mercy on the part of the one who was aggrieved.

For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted. Hebrews 2:18

The word “for” indicates that an explanation is forthcoming.

“FOR SINCE HE HIMSELF HAS SUFFERED BEING TEMPTED”

This is a very emphatic statement. This is an appeal to the understanding of experience. The word translated “suffered” is “peponthen” (πέπονθεν). It means to experience a painful sensation or impression. The form of this word is Perfect indicative Active. Perfect tense identifies completed action. The Indicative mood points to a statement of fact. The active mood suggests that the subject performs the action. “Has suffered” is an appropriate translation.

The word translated “being tempted” is “peirastheis” (πειρασθείς). This is a test which attempts to discredit. The form of the word is aorist passive participle. The aorist tense places an emphasis on action, not just time. The passive voice indicates that the subject receives action. The participle describes ongoing action.

STUDY OF CHAPTER 2

“HE IS ABLE”

The word so translated is “dunatai” (δύνανται), which means to be able. The form of the word is Present Passive Indicative. It is to be enabled rather than to be able. This is a very important difference.

“TO SUCCOUR”

The word so translated is “boaethesai” (βοηθήσαι). It means to bring relief. It is to bring aid.

“THOSE WHO ARE TEMPTED”

The word so translated is “peiradzo” (πειράζω) and means those who are subjected to discipline; those who are being tempted. The form of this word is Present passive participle: Present tense identifies action that begins and never ends. It describes a lifestyle rather than a simple action. The passive voice identifies the fact that the subject receives the action. The participial form describes ongoing action.

QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 3

HEBREWS 3:1 – 19

1. There are three paragraphs in the third chapter of Hebrews. On the following table, write a brief summary of eight words or less for each paragraph.

3:1-6	
3:7-11	
3:12-19	

2. In Hebrews 3:1-6, there are three complete sentences.
- A. In 3:1, 2, the author focused his attention on Jesus.
 - 1. How did the author identify the recipients?
 - 2. What did the author accomplish by the use of this identification?
 - 3. The author also made three descriptive statements about Jesus.
 - a. What are these descriptions?
 - b. What does the author accomplish by the use of these descriptions?
 - 4. In 3:2 & 3, the author drew a comparison between Jesus and Moses. In what way can we compare the two?
 - B. Hebrews 3:3 and 4 form a complete sentence. In this sentence, the author offers an explanation of his former statement.
 - 1. In 3:2, the author drew a comparison of Jesus and Moses. In 3:3, the author points out that Jesus is greater than Moses. What is the author attempting to accomplish?
 - 2. Carefully read 3:3 again. In what way does the house and builder illustration parallel the glory of Jesus and Moses?
 - C. In 3:4, the use of the word “for” indicates that an explanation is forthcoming. How does 3:4 explain the author’s statement in 3:2, 3?
 - D. Hebrews 3:5, 6, form a complete sentence.
 - 1. Hebrews 3:5, 6 are contrasting statements. What contrast does the author present?
 - 2. Hebrews 3:6 is a conditional statement:
 - a. What is the condition?
 - b. What is the consequence that the author presents for this condition?
 - c. Why does the author use this conditional statement?
3. Hebrews 3:7-11 form a single sentence.
- A. In 3:7, the author wrote, “Therefore just as the Holy Spirit says.” The quotation which follows was taken from Psalm 95:7-10.
 - 1. Is this a word for word quotation?
 - 2. What is the atmosphere of Psalm 95?
 - 3. What is the atmosphere of Hebrews 3:7-11?
 - 4. How does the atmosphere of the two passages compare?
 - B. In Hebrews 3:7, the author made a conditional statement.
 - 1. What is the condition?
 - 2. What is the anticipated consequence of this condition?
 - C. In 3:10, the author drew a conclusion by quoting from Psalm 95:10.
 - 1. What conclusion does the author draw?
 - 2. What does this have to do with these believers?
 - 3. How would you describe the author’s use of the word “wrath”?
 - 4. What do the authors of Psalm 95 and this passage mean by the word “rest”?
 - 5. The author used the word “swore.” What is the significance of his choice of words here?

The Superior Jesus

- D. Hebrews 3:11 is the conclusion to the quotation from Psalm 95.
1. How does this relate to the rest of the quotation?
4. Hebrews 3:12-19 form the final paragraph in this chapter. There are only two complete sentences in the paragraph.
- A. Hebrews 3:12-15 form an elongated sentence.
1. In 3:12, the author referred to the recipients as “brethren”. What is the significance of this?
 2. Study this warning. What is the relationship between “evil, unbelieving hearts” and “falling away from the living God”?
 3. Can “brethren” fall away?
- B. Hebrews 3:13 is presented as a contrast to 3:12.
1. In what way is “encouraging one another” the opposite of “falling away”?
 2. What does the author mean by the use of the word “hardened”?
- C. The explanation in 3:14 is a conditional statement in reverse order.
1. What is the condition?
 2. What is the consequence?
 3. What is implied if they do not hold fast?
- D. In 3:15, the author quoted Psalm 95:7.
1. In this verse, the author brings the same message again.
 2. Why would he again refer to the “hardening”?
 3. What did he refer to when he quoted the words “provoke him”?
 4. What picture of God do you see here?
- E. In 3:16, the author teaches in good Jewish style – by questions.
1. What is the point of the two obvious historic questions in this verse?
 2. Why does he mention Moses at this point?
- F. In Hebrews 3:17, the author asked two more questions.
1. Observe that the second question answers the first.
 2. Compare the author’s question in 3:16 with the questions in 3:17. What did you find?
- G. In 3:18, the author continued to teach by the use of questions.
1. What is the “rest” mentioned in 3:18?
 2. What is the message that the author presented by the use of this question?
 3. Review the questions the author asked in 3:16 17 and 18. In what way, if any, are these questions related?
- H. Hebrews 3:19 is a summary statement for the paragraph 3:12-19. Explain the author’s reference to unbelief when it is only referred to once in 3:12.
5. Having finished the study of chapter three, review your paragraph titles which you prepared at the beginning of this part of the study. If it seems appropriate to adjust these in any way, write new summaries on the following table.

3:1-6
3:7-11
3:12-19

STUDY OF CHAPTER 3
JESUS IS SUPERIOR TO MOSES
HEBREWS 3:1-19

There are three paragraphs in Hebrews chapter three. On the following table, you will find a brief summary of each of these paragraphs.

3:1-6	Jesus is greater than Moses
3:7-11	Warning against hardened hearts
3:12-19	Encouragement to hold fast our faith

HEBREWS 3:1-6 – JESUS IS GREATER THAN MOSES

“Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession;” Hebrews 3:1

We should keep in mind that each verse is not a complete sentence. On some occasions, one sentence may occupy several verses. That is the case in this chapter.

“THEREFORE”

The word translated “therefore” is (ὥστε). This word was also translated as “therefore” in 2:17. The idea behind this word seeks to express the source of the conclusion which follows. Observe that the author, in this verse, identifies the readers in two different ways.

“HOLY BRETHREN”

The word translated “holy” is “hagioi” (ἅγιοι). It describes that which is so pure that it causes one to stand in awe. The author viewed these readers as unusually pure in a society characterized as morally polluted.

The word brethren is “adelphos” (ἀδελφός) which means to be born of the same two parents. It was more commonly used to describe family. It indicates mutual responsibility and privilege experienced by family members. It identifies fellow believers in the New Testament. It also describes the wonderful way in which believers view each other as family.

“PARTAKERS OF A HEAVENLY CALLING”

The word translated “partakers” is “metoxoi” (μέτοχοι) which means a partner. It is one who shares a given benefit or experience/responsibility. The word translated “heavenly calling” is “epouranioi” (ἐπουρανίου). This has to do with God’s invitation to each of us to follow Him. There are many voices seeking our attention and following. God calls each of us to forsake every other allegiance and follow Him alone.

“He was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was in all His house.” Hebrews 3:2

In verse two, the author draws a comparison between Jesus and Moses, one of the two greatest men in the history of Israel. Jesus was faithful to the Father, the one who had appointed Him. The word translated “appointed” is “poieo” (ποίηω). It literally means to make or to do something. In this instance it describes what the Father did. Both to send Jesus as well as prepare Him for His mission. The word “as” indicates that this comparison is in progress. Moses was also faithful. Having established the comparison of faithfulness, the author then moved to draw a serious contrast between the two.

“For He has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, by just so much as the builder of the house has more honor than the house.” Hebrews 3:3

“FOR HE WAS COUNTED WORTHY OF MORE GLORY THAN MOSES”

The verb translated “was counted worthy” is “axios” (ἄξιός) which means to deserve. It means to be considered entitled to something valuable. It is to be considered worthy. The form of the word is perfect passive. The perfect tense identifies completed action. In the passive voice, the subject receives the action. The idea of “worthy” is in contrast to the honor that both Jesus and Moses deserve. The author draws a primary conclusion that Jesus must be evaluated and considered to be of greater honor/dignity and esteem than the house of Moses.

“BY JUST SO MUCH AS THE BUILDER OF A HOUSE HAS MORE HONOR THAN THE HOUSE”

The author turned to a logical illustration. It is framed in the form of a comparison. A house can be considered to be worthy of praise. The builder and designer of the house is to be considered to be more honorable than the house itself. That is certainly true. Jesus, however, is the agent through whom God created all things, including Moses. The logical conclusion is simply that the creator is considered to be more honorable than the creation that he brought into being.

“For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God.” Hebrews 3:4

“FOR EVERY HOUSE IS BUILT BY SOMEONE”

The author continued his comparison and contrast concerning the house. He began with the assertion that every house is built by someone. These people tried to always begin such a discussion with a statement to which all parties could agree.

“BUT THE BUILDER OF ALL THINGS IS GOD”

The use of the word “but” indicates that the author is going to draw a contrast. He clinches the contrast by asserting that God is the creator of all things. The logic of this conversation is that God would therefore be greater than all those who built the house. Jesus being God, is therefore demonstrated to be greater than Moses.

“Now Moses was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken later;” Hebrews 3:5

“NOW MOSES WAS FAITHFUL IN ALL HIS HOUSE AS A SERVANT”

As the author pursued the logical argument, he has still not tied up the loose ends of the argument. The use of the word “now” indicates that the author is going to take a different direction in his presentation of the argument. He will return to the contrast between Jesus and Moses. He had previously established the fact that both Jesus and Moses were faithful. He will now turn to that statement again. He will clarify what he meant when he said that Moses was faithful. In that time, people were keenly aware of the difference between the servant and the son. Having established this, the author pointed out that Moses was faithful in his house, but that his position was that of a servant. In order to say this, the author had to ignore the fact that Moses died in the midst of a punishment for his disobedience. This is the way Jews, and most Christians have always thought.

“FOR A TESTIMONY OF THOSE THINGS WHICH WERE TO BE SPOKEN LATER.”

The word translated “for” is not “(γάρ) which usually occurs, but (εἰς) which in this instance means “with reference to.” The word translated “testimony” is (μαρτύριον), the source of our word “martyr” which means a witness; a testimony. The Greek statement here is briefer than our translation. It reads “of these things to be spoken.” The insertion of the word “later” is due to the fact that the word translated “spoken” is future tense.

“but Christ was faithful as a Son over His house—whose house we are, if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end.” Hebrews 3:6

“BUT CHRIST WAS FAITHFUL AS A SON”

Having established the situation for Moses, the author now turns our attention to Jesus. It begins with the word “but” which indicates we are in the midst of a strong contrast. He will now present the opposite part of the contrast between Jesus and Moses

“OVER HIS HOUSE”

Though Moses was faithful as a servant, the author now presents the fact that Jesus was also faithful in His house, but in the capacity of a son, not a servant

“WHOSE HOUSE WE ARE”

This immediately made the argument very personal. We are that house to which he referred as the one Jesus was faithful in. This was done in the form of a conditional statement:

A. CONSEQUENCE – THEN we are, indeed, His house

B. CONDITION – IF we hold our confidence and the boast of our hope firm to the end

Observe that the use of the word “if” indicates that this is a conditional statement. If you look carefully, however, you will note that the condition and consequence are presented in reverse order. This is almost always a tool to add serious emphasis.

“IF WE HOLD FAST OUR CONFIDENCE”

The use of the word “if” is intended to indicate that being God’s house is conditional. These people would know exactly what the author was talking about because of their severe persecution. The word translated “hold fast” is (κατάσχωμεν) which means to continue to believe. The form of this word is understandably aorist subjunctive:

A. Aorist – adds strong emphasis

B. Subjunctive – the mood of possibility – it is a choice.

The word “our” does not appear in the text, but the word “the” is there.

The word translated “confidence” is (παρρησίαν) which means courage; boldness.

“AND THE BOAST OF OUR HOPE”

The word “and” ties two or more equal entities together. The word translated “boast” is (kauchma) which means the right to boast; the basis of pride. This word “boast” is an interesting word choice since the New Testament specifically condemns boasting. This boasting, however, is in their hope and not in themselves. The word translated “hope” is (ἐλπίδος) which means favorable and confident expectation. It is to be shocked if the “hoped for” does not occur. The question is appropriate, Why is hope so important? One reason is that our whole world is in a hopeless situation. Without hope, there is no reason to continue to expect anything of value in the future.

“FIRM TO THE END.”

The words translated “firm to the end” appear in some documents, but do not appear in the most dependable ones. If you look closely at this document, these words are supported in the rest of the sentence.

HEBREWS 3:7-11 - WARNING AGAINST HARDENED HEARTS

“Therefore, just as the Holy Spirit says, “TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE,” Hebrews 3:7

“THEREFORE JUST AS THE HOLY SPIRIT SAYS”

The word translated “therefore” is (διὸ) which is different from the other words so translated because it usually indicates that the inference is self-evident. It is sometimes translated “for this reason.” We should keep in mind that this entire paragraph is a single sentence in the Greek text. Actually it is a rather free translation of Psalm 95:7-11. It is a bit surprising that the author said, “Just as the Holy Spirit says” when he knew that this was a Psalm probably written by Moses. We would not be shocked by this because we would understand that Moses may have written it down, but it was inspired by the Holy Spirit.

“TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE”

The English translation of Psalm 95:7 reads, “today if you MIGHT hear His voice.” The translation of the Greek text reads emphatically, Today if you MIGHT hear His voice.” The insertion of the word “might” is because the form of the word translated “hear” is aorist subjunctive.

“DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS AS WHEN THEY PROVOKED ME, AS IN THE DAY OF TRIAL IN THE WILDERNESS,” Hebrews 3:8

“DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS”

The word translated “not” is (μή) which is a median level negative. The word translated “harden” is (σκληρύνετε) which means to cause to be stubborn/obstinate in regard to truth. The form is present subjunctive. He was asking that they not allow this to become a way of life. The use of the word “hearts” is a reference to their inner self, not the blood pump in our chests.

“AS WHEN THEY PROVOKED ME”

The Greek text literally reads, “As in the provocation.” The word “as” suggests that a comparison is in progress. The compared elements are as follows:

A. Verse 8 – the hardening of Israel’s hearts

AS

B. Israel did in the provocation

“AS IN THE DAYS OF TRIAL IN THE WILDERNESS”

The word “as” appears a second time in this sentence, but the Greek word here is “kata” which identifies a point of time which is simultaneous to another point in time. It could be translated “when.” The word translated “trial” is (πειρασμοῦ) which means testing or temptation. The Jewish recipients would understand this to refer to Israel’s desert experience in the Exodus when no miracle God performed seemed to please them.

“WHERE YOUR FATHERS TRIED Me BY TESTING Me, AND SAW MY WORKS FOR FORTY YEARS.” Hebrews 3:9

“WHERE YOUR FATHERS TRIED ME”

The use of the idea of “Your fathers” accomplished two things:

A. The use of the words “your fathers” made this a very personal example. Family actions were a shared responsibility in those days.

B. It presented an example of exactly what he wanted to say to these unhappy Jewish believers.

The word translated “tried” is (ἐπείρασεν) which we saw in verse eight and means to tempt; to try to trap. The form of this word is an emphatic aorist tense. It is difficult to imagine people thinking, “Let us see if we can trap God.” Nevertheless, that is what happened.

“BY TESTING ME”

A literal translation of the Greek words would be, “In testing.” The word “me” is understood, but does not appear in the Greek text. The word translated “testing” is (δοκιμασία) Which means to try to learn the genuineness of something by careful examination. We need to carefully discern the difference between “tried” and “testing”.

A. TRIAL – means to determine the nature of something by submitting it to thorough testing. It asks the questions, “WHAT IS THIS?”

B. TESTING – it is to try to learn the genuineness of something by examining it through actual use. It asks the question, IS THIS REAL?

The difference between the two is in motive.

“AND SAW MY WORKS FOR FORTY YEARS”

This is a very emphatic statement. It is literally translated, “And they saw the works of Me 40 years.” It is like saying, “They kept testing and God kept showing His miracles 40 years.”

“THEREFORE I WAS ANGRY WITH THIS GENERATION, AND SAID, ‘THEY ALWAYS GO ASTRAY IN THEIR HEART, AND THEY DID NOT KNOW MY WAYS’;” Hebrews 3:10

“THEREFORE I WAS ANGRY WITH THIS GENERATION”

The word translated “therefore” is (διὸ) which indicates a statement of results is about to be given. The word translated “I was angry” is (προτύχθισα) which means to be provoked to anger; to feel strong irritation because of what someone has done. The form of this word is aorist tense which adds serious emphasis.

The words translated “with this generation” literally translate “for this the generation.” Observe that this anger was pointed toward an entire generation of their people. This is very important because the author was dealing with a whole group of people whose spiritual fatigue was a known form of disobedience which they all understood, but were on the verge of capitulating. His illustration dealing with their ancestors was absolutely on target.

“AND SAID, THEY ALWAYS GO ASTRAY IN THEIR HEART”

The words translated “And I said,” literally translates, “And I was saying.” First, this is a very emphatic statement – aorist tense. Second, it should be translated, “I was saying.” This is a response to a lifestyle and not a single event.

The word translated “go astray” means to be deceived, which a wrong view causes one to wander from the path. The form of this word is present tense which suggests that this is a lifestyle of wandering off from God’s path.

Note that their going astray is “in the heart.” The problem is in the heart, that place within us where we choose to do right or wrong.

“AND THEY DID NOT KNOW MY WAYS”

The word translated “and” is (δὲ) which is usually translated “but.” However, it was occasionally translated “and.” The difference is identified by the context. The word translated “know” is (ἐγνώσαν) is the progressive form of knowing which they used to describe a child’s learning process.

The words translated “My ways” are literally “the ways of me.” The word translated “ways” is (ὁδοὺς) which means a way of life; a customary manner of behavior.

“AS I SWORE IN MY WRATH, ‘THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST.’ ” Hebrews 3:11

“AS I SWORE IN MY WRATH”

This is a quotation from Psalm 95:11 and is also mentioned in Numbers 14:29, 30. In verse 8, we saw the word “as” translated from (ὡς) which indicates that we are in the midst of a comparison. The elements of this comparison are:

A. I swore in my wrath

AS

B. They shall not enter my rest.

The word translated “swore” is (ὤμοσα) which means to take an oath. In their culture, an oath could not be compromised, but became the responsibility of succeeding generations. The form of this word is aorist tense which is most emphatic.

The word translated “wrath” is (ὀργῆς) which originally meant a natural impulse, but came to be identified with anger, our strongest impulse. Some would question whether or not God could be angry. There are repeated instances in the Old Testament where God was angry with His people. There is clear New Testament evidence that Jesus became angry. There are no references that indicate that either Father or Son became angry and stayed angry.

“THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST”

Verse 11 is a direct, word-for-word copy of Psalm 95:11. The problem is that the word “not” does not appear in the Greek text. This quotation, however, is so well known among the Jews even today that the recipients would have carefully memorized it. What is there, is the word (ἔιτελεύσονται) which means to move into; to begin an experience. The form is future tense and would be translated “they shall enter.” The word translated “rest” is (καταπαύσιν) which means rest. This word, however, is used in more than one way in the Scripture. In Exodus, it was used to describe their entry into the land of promise – Canaan. In the New Testament, however, it was used to describe our eternal situation. It is always used in a positive way to describe the ultimate gift of God. In this particular location, the word “rest” is clearly a reference to that heavenly home where persecution is a problem of the past.

HEBREWS 3:12-19 - ENCOURAGEMENT TO HOLD FAST OUR FAITH

“Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God.” Hebrews 3:12

“TAKE CARE BRETHREN”

The word translated “take care” is (βλέπετε) which means to see; to watch out; to think carefully about. The form of this word is present imperative. One would translate this command, “be thinking carefully about.”

The word translated “brethren” is (ἀδελφοί) which was translated in two ways:

- A. Family member
- B. Fellow believer.
- C. In this instance, it was used to indicate “fellow believer.”

The author addressed the recipients by this term only four times in the epistle (3:1; 3:12; 10:19; 13:22). In each instance, it was at the time he was addressing an issue of ultimate importance.

“THAT THERE NOT BE IN ANY ONE OF YOU”

The Greek text literally translates, “never be in any of you.” The word translated “not” is (μήποτε) which means “absolutely not.” The use of this strong word adds serious emphasis to the statement.

“AN EVIL, UNBELIEVING HEART”

The word translated “evil” is (πονηρὰ) which means wicked; guilty. The word translated “unbelieving” is (ἀπιστίᾳς) which means “not trusting;” not believing. The question must be asked, Is not the unbelieving heart evil? The answer is yes. We must discern what the difference is between the two qualities. The word translated “evil” carries with it the idea of being wicked, but also implies that which is evil in character and results in pain, sorrow and malignant moral conduct. On the other hand, the word translated “unbelieving”, which is the word for believing with the letter (α) in front which changes the meaning to not believing and base our actions, which seem to be unreasonably impossible, upon the omnipotence of God that we affirm. This is what Moses’ parents did in Genesis two when they hid their baby for three months. It is what Moses did when he told all Israel to “stand still and see the salvation of the Lord” as found in Exodus chapter 14.

The difference between the two ideas is clear:

- A. Evil is a broad, all-encompassing term which includes every expression of disobedience to God.
- B. Unbelief is a specific expression of evil related to one’s conviction about who God really is.

The inclusion of both of these words points to the author’s desire for emphasis.

Observe that the author ascribes the evil and unbelief to the “heart.” If you search the Scriptures, you will note that the word “heart” repeatedly does not refer to the organ that pumps blood, but instead refers to that part of the human life where choices and decisions are made and it is not a reference to the brain. That is what our author identifies in this instance.

“THAT FALLS AWAY FROM THE LIVING GOD”

The word translated “that” is (ἐν) which is almost always translated “in.” One exception to this rule is that when the author seeks to describe a consequence, as he does in this instance. The “falling away” is a result of evil and unbelief.

The word translated “falls away” is (ἀποστῆναι) which means a defection; a revolt; an apostasy from faith.

The word translated “from” is (ἀπὸ) and is well translated. The word “the” is an English necessity, but does not appear in the Greek text.

The recipients would have completely understood if the author had omitted the word “living.” This indicates that the inclusion of this word was not for clarity. These people lived in a province where the people worshipped hundreds of idols which were made of wood, clay and precious metal. It was a vivid contrast. Again, the fact that God is living points to vital participation in all of life as these struggling believers experienced it.

“But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called “Today,” so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.” Hebrews 3:13

“BUT ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER”

The word translated “but” is (ἀλλὰ) which is the most emphatic indicator of a contrast. The use of this word indicates that this is an extremely important point for the writer.

The word translated “encourage” is (παρακαλεῖτε). This is the root for the word “paraclete” which is the word used to describe the ministry of the Holy Spirit in our lives. It is a compound word which means to call to one’s side which is the way they identified an attorney. It is like saying, do for each other what an attorney does for you in court. The word translated “each other” is (ἐαυτούς) which means “yourselves” or “each other.”

“DAY AFTER DAY”

The words translated “day after day” are (καθ - ἑκάστος – ἡμέραν) which mean “after every day.” It is a way to say unceasingly.

“AS LONG AS IT IS CALLED TODAY”

The Greek word shows great emphasis. The word translated “called” is “kaleitai” (καλεῖται). The form of this word is present indicative active:

- A. Present tense – action that begins and does not cease.
- B. Indicative mood – emphasizes a statement of fact.
- C. Passive – the subject receives the action of the verb.

One might translate this, “it is being called today.”

“SO THAT NONE OF YOU”

The word translated “so that” or “lest” is “hina” (ἵνα). This word is usually translated “in order that.” The important concern is that it indicates purpose. It is a way to emphasize that it could apply to any or all of the believers in this place.

“WILL BE HARDENED”

The word translated “hardened” is “sklaeruno” (σκληρύνω) which is a medical term. We use it when we speak of “sclerosis of the liver.” It is to stubbornly refuse to change one’s attitude. It is to refuse to listen. The form of this word is aorist subjunctive. The aorist tense describes the simple past tense and is used only for emphasis. The subjunctive mood indicates possibility. The emphasis is on the hardening and not on the process. The process is about to be described.

“BY THE DECEITFULNESS OF SIN”

The word translated “deceitfulness” is “apatae” (ἀπάτη) which means deception. It is trickery or attraction. This is apparent in the story of the Fall in Genesis. It is more than a bad choice. It involves being tricked into wrong choice and action by the false promise of wrong, but appealing results. The author stressed the nature of sin as it seeks to deceive us into poor choices which will never be fulfilled as promised.

“For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end,” Hebrews 3:14

This sentence begins with the word “for.” This signals that a reason is forthcoming. This comes in the form of a conditional statement. It is stated in an unusual fashion. Usually the condition is first and the promise follows. This is just the opposite. The condition comes last. The word “If” signifies the condition. “If we hold the beginning of our confidence firm to the end.” The promise naturally follows – then we have become partakers of Christ.” The word translated “we have become” is “gegonamen” (γεγονάμεν). The root of this word means to happen or to become. The form of the word is perfect tense. This is a way to strongly emphasize that the action has already been completed. The opposite side of this coin is that if we do not hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm to the end, then we will not become partakers of Christ. The word translated “partakers” is “metochos” (μέτοχος) which means to be a partner. It is to share, in every possible way, the life and ministry of Christ. It is to be a participant in His work, His reputation, dignity and suffering.

“while it is said, “TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS, AS WHEN THEY PROVOKED ME.”” Hebrews 3:15

This verse uses a quotation from Psalm 95:7 as the “THEN” portion of the conditional statement initiated in verse 14. The phrase “while it is said” is an attempt to stress two things:

- A. The subject the author has in mind.
- B. It also stresses the fact that the option will at some point close.
- C. There is a hint that the time of closing may be a surprise.

The use of the word “today” is an attempt to place some time pressure on the decision that is being called for. The fact that the author used this quote from the Psalms without any form of explanation is an indication that the recipients would know exactly what he was talking about. Being Jews, they would be quite familiar with the Psalm. The words, “When they provoked me” is an even greater indication of the Jewishness of the recipients. He did not have to tell them what this provoking was all about. They knew.

“For who provoked Him when they had heard? Indeed, did not all those who came out of Egypt led by Moses?” Hebrews 3:16

“FOR WHO PROVOKED HIM WHEN THEY HAD HEARD”

The use of the word “for” indicates that a reason is about to be presented. The word translated “provoked” is “parapikraino” (παράπικράινω) which means to make bitter. It is to be made angry by rebellion and shocking disobedience. The form of the word is aorist tense. The aorist tense is used to add emphasis. The word translated “heard” is “akouo” (ἀκούω) which means to hear, but it is more than that. This word comes from the courts. The emphasis is not on the ability to perceive sound. It is an attempt to carefully scrutinize what one hears. The form of this word is aorist participle. The aorist tense is used for emphasis and the participle identifies ongoing action. He has described carefully considered information which occurred repeatedly in the past. The answer to this leading question is, “Everyone who came out of Egypt with Moses.” This is what the author was trying to emphasize to his readers.

“DID NOT ALL THEY THAT CAME OUT OF EGYPT BY MOSES?”

The anticipated answer to this leading question is “YES.” In giving the answer to the first question, the author has added very strong emphasis to his point.

STUDY OF CHAPTER 3

“And with whom was He angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness?” Hebrews 3:17

The use of the word “and” indicates that this is a continuation of the questioning in the previous sentence. The anticipated answer to this question is exactly the same as the answer to the previous two questions – “All the Jews who came out Egypt with Moses.” This accomplishes increasing emphasis on the author’s point. The fourth question is, in fact, an answer to question three. By the use of this format, the author has added stronger emphasis to an already highly emphasized point. The way this fourth question is stated, the author has added a cause and effect message to the emphasis he is pressing.

- A. He has given them another cause and effect statement.
- B. The cause is that they sinned.
- C. The effect is that these sinner’s bodies fell in the wilderness and never reached the promised land that God had promised.

“And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient?” Hebrews 3:18

This is question five, which is simply a restatement of question one. The author couched the question in different terms, but the message is the same. He presented this question in terms of cause and effect just as he did with the previous questions. Notice, however, that he inverted the sequence- he stated the effect first and then the cause. The effect is “He swore that they should not enter His rest.” The cause is “those who were disobedient”.

“So we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief.” Hebrews 3:19

Verse 19 is a summary of the questioning session the author has conducted in verses 16-18. He summarized it all by restating the answer that he gave to each of the five questions. This is an extraordinarily emphatic statement about the results of the sins of the people of the Exodus.

QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 4

HEBREWS 4:1 – 16

1. There are three complete paragraphs in the fourth chapter of Hebrews. On the following table write a brief summary of eight words or less for each paragraph.

4:1-11	
4:12, 13	
4:14-16	

2. In Hebrews 4:1-11, the word “rest” appears 10 times. With one exception, (verse 9) the Greek word so translated is exactly the same. The author’s use of the word, however, is not always the same. We will need to carefully examine the use of this term and identify the way the author used it each time. There are five complete sentences in the paragraph.
- A. Verses one and two form a complete sentence. In verse one, the author used the word “fear” what did he mean by the use of that word?
 - B. In verse one, the author used the word “rest.” How would you describe his use of the word in this verse? The author spoke of “His rest.” How does this affect the meaning of the word “rest”?
 - C. How could one “come short” of “His rest”?
 - D. In verse two, the author offered an explanation.
 - 1. What does he explain?
 - 2. How does he explain it?
3. Hebrews 4:3-5 form a complete sentence.
- A. In verse 3, the author used the word “rest” on two occasions. What did he mean by each usage?
 - B. In this verse, the author wrote about “His works.” To what did he refer?
 - C. In 4:4, the author wrote “And God rested.” How would you explain this statement?
 - D. In 4:5, the author quoted again from Psalm 95:11. In this quotation he used the words “My rest.”
 - 1. To what does he refer?
 - 2. Why does he use this repetition?
4. Hebrews 4:6-8 form a single complete sentence.
- A. The use of the word “therefore” indicates that this sentence provides a conclusion for the previous statements. What is his emphasis in this conclusion?
 - B. In 4:7, the author emphasized the lapse of time. What is the point of this emphasis?
 - C. In 4:8, the author used Joshua to illustrate his point.
 - 1. What did he illustrate?
 - 2. How did he use the word “rest” here?
5. Hebrews 4:9, 10, form a complete sentence.
- A. In 4:9, the author wrote of a “Sabbath rest.” How does this differ from “rest”?
 - B. In 4:10, the author used the word “rest” twice.
 - 1. How did he use each one?
 - 2. The author drew a comparison between what God did and those who entered “His rest.” What does this comparison tell us?
6. Hebrews 4:11 is a complete sentence and also serves as a conclusion to the paragraph 4:1-11.
- A. The conclusion is in the form of a command.
 - 1. What is the command?
 - 2. How does he use the word “rest”?
 - B. He wrote about “disobedience.” What does he mean by this?
 - C. What is the relationship between “fall” and “disobedience”?

The Superior Jesus

- D. In this verse, the author drew a parallel between the Israelites and these believers. What was he really saying?
7. Hebrews 4:12, 13 are a paragraph presented in a single sentence.
- A. The word “for” at the beginning of verse 12 indicates that an explanation is forthcoming.
 - 1. What is he explaining?
 - 2. What explanation did he give?
 - 3. What does the image of a two-edged sword have to do with the disobedience mentioned in 4:11?
 - B. The use of the word “and” at the beginning of verse 13 indicates that it is a continuation of the conclusion begun in 4:12.
 - 1. Hebrews 4:13 is presented in the form of two things in contrast.
 - 2. What two ideas are contrasted?
 - 3. How do these ideas relate to each other?
8. Hebrews 4:14-16 form the concluding paragraph of the chapter.
- A. There are two sentences in this paragraph – 4:14, 15 and 4:16, consisting of three complete sentences.
 - B. In 4:14, the author said, “We have a great High Priest.” At the time of this writing, the temple may well have been destroyed and the priestly system dismantled. Why would he write in this way?
 - C. In 4:14, the author made a statement followed by a command.
 - 1. How does the statement relate to the command?
 - 2. What does the author mean when he wrote, “Let us hold fast our confession”?
 - D. In 4:15, the use of the word “for” indicates that an explanation is in progress. It is presented in the form of a contrast.
 - 1. What are the contrasting statements?
 - 2. What does it mean?
 - E. Hebrews 4:16 is a complete sentence.
 - 1. These people knew all about the temple. What was he suggesting when he wrote, “Let us draw near”?
 - 2. What is added to the command when he included the words “with confidence”?
 - 3. What did he mean by the word “mercy”?
 - 4. What did he mean by the word “grace”?
 - 5. How do you account for the difference when he wrote, “RECEIVE mercy” and “FIND grace”?
 - 6. What is the significance of the promise the author made in this sentence?
9. Now review your study of chapters 1 – 4.
- A. What thread of thought, if any, do you see running through these chapters?
 - B. What specific claims does the author make about Jesus?
 - C. In every epistle, the commands reveal the issues over which the author is writing. What do the commands/exhortations in these chapters reveal?

STUDY OF CHAPTER 4

THE BELIEVERS REST

HEBREWS 4:1 - 16

There are three paragraphs in Hebrews chapter four. On the following table you will find a brief summary of each of these paragraphs.

4:1-11	The Danger of Failing to Believe
4:12-13	The Word of God Judges
4:14-16	Our Tempted High Priest

HEBREWS 4:1-11 – THE DANGER OF FAILING TO BELIEVE

“Therefore, let us fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it.” Hebrews 4:1

“THEREFORE, LET US FEAR”

The use of the word “therefore” indicates that a conclusion is about to be presented. The word translated “fear” is “fobos” (φόβος) which originally meant to tremble, but the Christians used it in two different ways:

- A. It meant to be afraid
- B. It came to be used to describe a sense of awe before the greatness of God.
- C. One can only identify the author’s intent by studying the context. In this instance, the author was dealing with the danger of failing to enter rest.

The form of this word is aorist subjunctive:

- A. Aorist tense places strong emphasis on the action, not the time.
- B. The Subjunctive is the mood of possibility and was repeatedly used to identify a gracious command.

“LEST WHILE A PROMISE REMAINS”

This sentence is awkward to translate into English. Remember, these believers were persecuted in Jerusalem and fled here for their lives. Now, they are being persecuted on all sides again. They have not been killed, but that is all that they have missed in terms of persecution. They are worn down by all the pain. The author is dealing with this situation directly. He fears that they might give up on their faith.

“OF ENTERING HIS REST”

The Greek wording here is very strong and specific. The words translated “entering” literally translate, “to go in into...” They had two different understandings about rest:

- A. There is rest which simply focuses on ceasing activity.
- B. There is rest whose purpose is to be restored so that activity can resume.

The latter understanding is what the author had in mind.

“ANY ONE OF YOU”

The literal translation of the words so translated is, “some from you.” The author is writing with extreme care. He writes as though this might be extremely improbable. The truth of the matter is that the very fact that he mentions the vague possibility is pretty clear evidence that this is much more than a distant possibility. He deals with it very casually, but it is receiving real concern on his part.

“MAY SEEM TO HAVE COME SHORT OF IT.”

The word translated “might seem to” is “dokaē” (δοκᾷ) which means to regard something as presumably true, but without certainty; to suppose. The word translated “come short” is “hustero” (ὕστερον) which means to fail to attain.

“For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also;” Hebrews 4:2A

We must keep in mind that there is a strong contrast which exists between the two sentences in this verse. We will need to address this contrast after observing the two sentences.

“FOR INDEED”

The use of the word translated “for” indicates that an explanation is forthcoming. The word translated “indeed” is “kai” (καὶ) which is usually translated “and” or “also.” The author’s inclusion of this word adds significant emphasis to the statement.

“WE HAVE HAD GOOD NEWS PREACHED TO US”

The word translated “we have had” is literally translated “we are” and it is in the present tense which describes ongoing action and could be translated “we are having.” The word translated “good news preached” might be translated “having heard the gospel.”

“JUST AS THEY ALSO.”

The use of the word translated “just as” signals that a comparison is in progress and it does this with strong emphasis. The inclusion of this phrase is a way to say that the exposure to the Gospel was the same for the author and his fellow workers as it was for the recipients of this epistle.

but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard.” Hebrews 4:2B

“BUT THE WORD THEY HEARD”

This sentence contains the contrast previously mentioned. The use of the word “but” announces this contrast. As mentioned earlier, there are three words usually translated “but.” These words differ in their intensity. The word used here is the strongest of those words. The author previously announced that the hearing of the Gospel was exactly the same for both groups. He is now building on that assertion. The words translated “they heard” should be translated “of the hearing of them,” because it is in the genitive.

“DID NOT PROFIT THEM”

This is a very strong phrase. The word translated “not” is a strong word. The word translated “benefit” means to provide assistance; to help. The form of this word is aorist tense which is intended to add serious emphasis to the action. This is the contrast. One group was seriously helped by the preaching of the gospel. The other group was not.

“BECAUSE IT WAS NOT UNITED BY FAITH”

The word “because” is implied, but it does not appear in the Greek text. The word translated “united” means to cause the parts to fit together; to compose. The word translated “not” is quite strong and is intended to add strong emphasis. The words translated “by faith” would literally be translated “in the faith” because the dative case was used.

“IN THOSE WHO HEARD.”

The words translated “in those who heard” would be emphatically translated because of the use of the aorist tense. If you reread this sentence, the author intentionally used unusual forms to create a very strong emphasis and deliberate word choice.

The author was stressing that between himself and his associates on the one hand, and those recipients there was an enormous difference created by the fact that he and his associates received the Gospel by faith, but these faltering recipients received the same Gospel, but did not have faith.

“For we who have believed enter that rest, just as He has said,” Hebrews 4:3A

“FOR WE WHO HAVE BELIEVED”

Again, the use of the word “for” assures us that an explanation is coming. The words translated “who have believed” are in the aorist tense which indicates that the author wants to place strong emphasis on this phrase. The word translated “faith” and “believe” are really the same Greek word. As we encounter the

STUDY OF CHAPTER 4

word, we will take extra care to explain how the word is used in each specific situation. In this instance, the word “believed” means more than accepting something as being true. It involves accepting something as real and true to the point of acting upon it despite the risks.

“ENTER THAT REST”

The word translated “rest” appears nine times in chapter four. Eight of those nine times the same word is used. The word translated “Sabbath rest” does not mean rest, but a Sabbath observance. Though these eight occurrences use the same word, the intent in each situation requires that we state specifically how the author has used the word in each instance. In this first part of verse three, the word translated “rest” is obviously a reference to heaven. It describes a never-ending intimate relationship with God.

“JUST AS HE HAS SAID”

The use of the word translated “just as” indicates that the author is about to present a comparison. In such a situation, it is essential to identify the elements being compared. The elements being compared are as follows:

- A. The ones who believe enter into God’s “rest.”
- B. The use of the word translated “He has said,” indicates that he is going to quote from the Old Testament. The quotation is, “As I swore in my wrath, they shall not enter my rest.” This is a quotation from Psalm 95:11.

In the Old Testament situation, “rest” is a reference to God’s dealing with Israel in the desert and not allowing them to enter His rest, their occupation of the land of promise – now Israel.

“As I swore in My wrath,” Hebrews 4:3B

The word translated “as” indicates that the author is continuing with his comparison. The word “I” is a reference to God. The word translated “swore” means to make an affirmation that cannot be changed under any possible circumstances. This is an irrevocable action. The author was saying that God took an oath which was of such a nature that He would always stand by its announcement.

““They shall not enter My rest,” although His works were finished from the foundation of the world.” Hebrews 4:3C

Throughout this paragraph, the author has used the middle voice when forming a verb. The middle voice portrays the subject acting with reference to himself. God is at work, but the subject is a mutual participant in that action.

“THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST”

The Greek text of this sentence literally reads a bit differently than the English translation. The Greek text reads, “If they will go in into the rest of me.” There is no problem with the Greek text. The thing we have to deal with is two-fold:

- A. The word “IF” is missing in the English text, but does appear in the Greek text.
- B. The word “NOT” is not found in the Greek text.

If you look at Psalm 95:121, you will see that the word “if” does not appear in that text. Again, if you look at Psalm 95, the word “not” does appear in that text. You would also note that the word “truly” is in the Psalm 95 text, but not in the Greek text of Hebrews. The result of all this is that the Hebrews author quoted from Psalm 95:11, but the quotation is not a literal one. These Jewish recipients would completely understand.

The word translated “rest,” in this verse, is exactly the same word that was found in verse one. On that occasion, we suggested that he used this word to mean heaven.

“ALTHOUGH HIS WORKS WERE FINISHED FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD”

Some scholars question why the balance of this sentence was added to the quoted text. First, it is a Biblical concept. Christ was chosen to be the sacrifice for sin before there was time. The Scriptures, however, also

require that the sinner seek the forgiveness Jesus offered. Peter is saying that though this sacrifice was acknowledged by God before time came into being, it only became effective as God's chosen people sought forgiveness and accepted God's gift which they could never deserve.

“For He has said somewhere concerning the seventh day: “And God rested on the seventh day from all His works”;” Hebrews 4:4

Every Jewish man would know that this is a quotation from what we call Genesis 2:2. There certainly is no doubt that the author and recipients knew this verse from memory. It has been suggested by some that this is evidence that the author was also writing to Gentile believers. We can't be sure about this suggestion.

The word translated “rested” would more accurately be translated “to desist,” “to cease.” God was not tired. It was a divine celebration that He had finished His Creative Act. This changes the understanding of this text completely.

“and again in this passage, “They shall not enter My rest.”” Hebrews 4:5

The use of the word “and” ties the forthcoming idea to that which was previously presented. The words “they shall not enter my rest,” are quoted from Psalm 95:11. This is the second confirming quotation from the Old Testament. As the author had so often observed Jesus do, he clinched his argument with two or three appropriate quotations from the Old Testament. If anyone continued the argument, they would be arguing with Scripture, not with the author.

Though the word translated “rest” is exactly the same as previously used, the author's use of the term is different. The context points to the fact that the author is talking about God's promise to bring the people of Abraham into the land of promise – Israel.

The message is clear, the “rest” of which the author was speaking was reserved for those who believe. The word “believe” is too often used to describe a host of different things. The word “believe” is more than a certainty that Jesus is God. It deals with this certainty which is affirmed and expressed by our obedience to His instructions.

“Therefore, since it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly had good news preached to them failed to enter because of disobedience,” Hebrews 4:6

“THEREFORE SINCE IT REMAINS FOR SOME TO ENTER IT”

The words translated “since” therefore are well translated. They indicate that a conclusion is about to be presented. The form of the word translated “it remains” is present tense. This tense describes action that begins and never ends. It should probably be translated “it is remaining.” In this verse, the author takes a stand against universalism. He points out that some will enter into this “rest.” The use of the aorist tense in the balance of the verse places strong emphasis on the fact that there are also some who will not enter this “rest” because of their disobedience.

“AND THOSE WHO FORMERLY HAD GOOD NEWS PREACHED TO THEM”

The use of the word “and” indicates that the author is continuing with the previous idea. The mention of the fact that this second group had the good news preached to them is very important. It removes the possibility that these people might not have known of the gift God wanted to present to them. They were without excuse. The fact that this is in the aorist tense strongly affirms that this is something the author wanted to place strong emphasis upon.

“FAILED TO ENTER BECAUSE OF DISOBEDIENCE.”

Again, the form of the word translated “failed to enter” is aorist tense which places the strongest possible emphasis on this statement. This is what the author was trying to emphasize for his readers.

“He again fixes a certain day, “Today,” saying through David after so long a time just as has been said before, “Today if you hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts.”” Hebrews 4:7

“HE AGAIN FIXES A CERTAIN DAY, “TODAY,””

The use of the word “again” here is very important. Truth is established by two or three witnesses, also in Scripture. The author is in the process of presenting a second statement of the truth of his message.

“SAYING THROUGH DAVID”

This is a picture of what Scripture was intended to accomplish – be a vehicle whereby God speaks to the pinnacle of His creation, mankind. Having said this, it was also a way to establish every portion of Scripture as the word of God which must be faced with this in mind.

“AFTER SO LONG A TIME”

In the Greek text, this would be translated, “After such time.” It is a way of saying, though so much time has elapsed since God spoke through Moses. Indeed, many centuries had passed since Moses first presented the message. Now it was being presented again.

“JUST AS HAS BEEN SAID BEFORE.”

In Psalm 95, David claimed that Israel was unable to enter their rest/promised homeland because they did not listen to God. They had hardened their hearts. David was simply reiterating the message that Moses had presented centuries before.

“TODAY, IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE”

Centuries have passed since God spoke in these terms through Moses. Now, David wrote to indicate that the situation was unchanged. The hardened heart; the unwillingness to obey God’s directives will inevitably lead to dire consequences.

Our author takes up the theme once more, even hundreds of years after David’s strong reminder. The author is saying that the divine initiative has not changed. He wants us to return to Him, but His edict both through Moses and David has not changed. The blessing rests upon our hearing the directives which God has given in the person of His servants and now through His word.

“DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS.”

The word translated “harden” means to be stubborn, obstinate. This, of course, is exactly what both Moses and David encountered. The author of this epistle is saying that some of the recipients of this letter were doing exactly the same thing. The form of the word translated “hardened” is aorist tense. This form places strong emphasis on the action in the text. This is the central idea that he is trying to accomplish in this message.

“For if Joshua had given them rest, He would not have spoken of another day after that.” Hebrews 4:8

The author was referring to a statement made in Joshua 22:4. In that verse, Joshua spoke of rest. Our author was attempting to clarify what Joshua was referring to.

The word translated “for” indicates that an explanation is about to be given. This explanation is in the form of a conditional (IF...THEN...) statement. The elements of this conditional statement are as follows:

A. CONDITION – IF Joshua had given them rest.

B. CONSEQUENCE – (THEN) he would not have spoken of another day after that.

This is an appeal to logic. The author was saying that IF Joshua had already given rest to Israel, THEN it would not make sense to talk about rest again. The word translated “given them rest” is in the aorist tense. The author used this to place great emphasis upon this crucial statement.

“So there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God.” Hebrews 4:9

“SO THERE REMAINS A SABBATH REST”

The Greek text places the word translated “so” or “then” before the balance of this phrase. The word translated “so” almost always points to a result of a previous statement. The word translated “remains” literally means to allow. This word is in the present tense and would be translated “It is being allowed” or “It is being permitted.”

The word translated “Sabbath rest” is just “sabbatismos” (sabbatismos) which means a Sabbath. This is more than cessation of work. It is an interlude in one’s work so as to be able to worship and praise God. Without the praise and worship it is not a Sabbath.

“FOR THE PEOPLE OF GOD”

The Greek text of this phrase literally reads, “To the people of THE God.” This was a way to describe our relationship with God. It firmly states that we belong to Him; that we are His family.

Observe that the text does not say, “People of God” as our English text records. It literally says, “the people of THE God.” This is a very strong statement which holds that there is simply only one God and Jehovah is that one. We must keep in mind that these people live in an area where the bulk of the people literally worship hundreds of different gods.

“For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His.” Hebrews 4:10

“FOR THE ONE WHO HAS ENTERED HIS REST”

Once more, the word translated “for” indicates that an explanation is coming. The form of the phrase translated “the one who has entered” is aorist participle. An emphatic translation of this phrase would be “the one entering his rest.” The word translated “rest” is “katapausin” (καταπαύσιν) which is used to identify not Canaan, but a reference to eternal life.

“HAS HIMSELF ALSO RESTED FROM HIS WORKS”

If the author had omitted the words translated “himself also” his intent would still be clearly understood. This is an attempt to add strong emphasis to a very important statement. This statement is further emphasized by the fact that the word translated “he rested” is in the aorist tense which is only used to add emphasis.

“AS GOD DID FROM HIS.”

The use of the word translated “as” could be translated “as indeed” which provides two pieces of information:

A. The use of the word “as” indicates that we are in the midst of a strong comparison. In this case it is a comparison between:

1. A person’s cessation from work.
2. God’s completion of His work of creation. There was no other creative act after that point.

B. The appropriate addition of the word “indeed” adds even stronger emphasis to this comparison.

By the way, the word “rested” does not appear in the Greek text in this phrase, but it is implied. The use of this word “rested” in this situation does not mean to prop your feet. God had not tired Himself out in the Genesis account. It literally means to complete one’s task and celebrate the completion of the task.

“Therefore let us be diligent to enter that rest, so that no one will fall, through following the same example of disobedience.” Hebrews 4:11

“THEREFORE LET US BE DILIGENT”

The word translated “therefore” indicates that the author is about to present a conclusion based upon the information just previously presented. The form of the word translated “let us be diligent” was carefully chosen. It is aorist subjunctive:

A. The aorist tense is only used to place strong emphasis on the action.

STUDY OF CHAPTER 4

- B. The subjunctive mood is the mood of possibility. It is something one could choose to do, but it is not inevitable. Some translators deal with this situation with the words “might” or “let us.”

The word translated “diligent” means to do something with intense effort and motivation. The author used this word as a way to emphasize just how important it was for the recipients to take this matter very seriously.

Observe that the author is strongly instructing the recipients to pattern their lives after the example of Jesus and the Father. This is a pattern you will find with some frequency in the New Testament. For instance, look at what Paul wrote in Ephesians:

“Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children;” Ephesians 5:1

“TO ENTER THAT REST”

The Greek text is much more intense than the English translation. The Greek text literally translates, “To go in into that the rest.” From this, it is very obvious that the author is making every effort to be both very clear and very emphatic. Once more, the author used the aorist tense to add additional emphasis to the statement.

“SO THAT NO ONE WILL FALL”

The Greek text is a bit awkward at this point. It reads, “That not in the same.” The words added in our English translation do not appear in the Greek text, but they are an attempt to help us understand the author’s thought. The form of the word translated “might fall” is aorist subjunctive:

- A. AORIST TENSE – the tense used exclusively to emphasize action.
- B. SUBJUNCTIVE MOOD- the mood of possibility. This is the reason for the use of the word “might.”

“THROUGH FOLLOWING THE SAME EXAMPLE OF DISOBEDIENCE.”

The word “following” does not appear in the Greek text, but it is implied. It reads, “in the same example of the disobedience.” The author presented this warning because there was the serious possibility that these believers were apt to make the same mistake Israel made and would face the same tragic consequences.

HEBREWS 4:12-13 - THE WORD OF GOD JUDGES

“For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.” Hebrews 4:12

“FOR THE WORD OF GOD IS LIVING”

The use of the word “for” indicates that an explanation is about to be given. The author spoke of the “word of God.” When we think of the “word of God” we are thinking of the whole Bible. For them, it was what we refer to as “the Old Testament.” The message of the Old Testament, however, is corroborated and expanded in the “New.”

The word translated “living” is carefully chosen. It would be translated “the living word;” or “the word of God (is) living.” The textual choice would be “the living word.” This is in contrast to word that is dead; not living. It is an important piece of information that God’s word is, indeed, living, appropriate for the struggles one faces. The word “living” does not mean pumping blood, but that it is apropos for the challenges we face.

“AND ACTIVE AND SHARPER THAN ANY TWO-EDGED SWORD”

The word “and” ties two or more entities together that are compatible, but not identical. In this case, the two things are living and active:

- A. LIVING - means to have life; as opposed to being without life.
- B. ACTIVE – means to be effective in causing something to change.

God intended His word to be an agent of change for our lives.

Again, the word “and” ties these two entities to the third one – sharper than any two-edged sword.

“AND PIERCING AS FAR AS THE DIVISION OF SOUL AND SPIRIT”

A word is not a physical object, but it is perfectly capable of producing real and observable results. In good Jewish fashion, the author used a visible image – a sword – to carefully describe an invisible reality - God’s message – both in written and verbal form.

“OF BOTH JOINTS AND MARROW, AND ABLE TO JUDGE THE THOUGHTS”

It is like saying, “Just as a sharp sword can cut between joint and marrow, SO God’s word can pierce between soul and spirit. Frankly, we have great difficulty just identifying what soul and spirit means.

“AND INTENTIONS OF THE HEART.”

The author continued with the comparison by saying, “intentions of the heart.” Our human problem with judging is that we are completely incapable of knowing the intention of the heart of any other human being. This is one reason that we have been commanded by God not to judge.

“And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.” Hebrews 4:13

The use of the word “and” indicates that this verse is a continuation of the topic in the previous verse. Saying that no creature is hidden from His sight is a way of saying that God is omniscient. God knows all things. The word “but” indicates that a contrast is in progress. This is an unusual contrast in that it is a parallel statement to the previous one. To say that all things are open to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do is exactly the same as saying, “all things are laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.” Both of these statements are exactly the same as saying that there is no creature hidden from His sight. The repetition the author used and the way he used it added great emphasis to his statement – God is omniscient and nothing escapes His notice and discovery.

HEBREWS 4:15 – 16 - OUR TEMPTED HIGH PRIEST

“Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.” Hebrews 4:14

Our text reads, “Therefore since.” The Greek text, however, uses the single word “oun” (οὖν) which should be translated “therefore.” The use of the word “therefore” indicates that a conclusion is forthcoming. In this instance, 4:14-16 form the conclusion not only for chapter four, but for 1:1 – 4:13 which emphasizes the message that Jesus is the superior person. In this brief conclusive paragraph, he lists three facts about Jesus followed by an exhortation. The three facts he mentioned are as follows.

- A. We have a great High Priest – Jesus. There were many high priests. Only Jesus could be called the “great High Priest.”
- B. Our High Priest passed through the heavens. Every high priest was human and died just as we do. Jesus died, but He rose again and passed through the heavens. The emphasis here is that his intercessory ministry did not die when He died, but continued as he sat down at the right hand of the Father in the position of honor. This could be said of no other High Priest.
- C. Our High Priest is the Son of God. Every high priest was the son of a priest from the family of Levi. Jesus was the Son of God. No other High Priest could claim this honored position. It is a way of saying that this High Priest was unlike any other High Priest in the history of Israel.

“LET US HOLD FAST OUR CONFESSION.”

The word translated “hold fast” is “krateo” (κρατέω) which means to hold or to take power over. It is to become master of something. It is to hold and refuse to let go. The form of this word is present active subjunctive. The present tense identifies action that begins and never ends. This is the way we identify a lifestyle rather than a single action. The author was saying that they should make a lifestyle out of refusing

STUDY OF CHAPTER 4

to let go of their confession. The word translated “confession” is “homologia” (ὁμολογία). This is not a set of doctrines. It is the relationship that we profess to be ours. It is that relationship to which we consent; that for which we have no controversy at all. Because of who Jesus is, we should hold fast to the relationship we claim and entertain not one thought of giving up.

“For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.” Hebrews 4:15

The word translated “for” indicates the reason is coming to indicate why we should hold fast our confession. In good Jewish teaching style, the author first tells what the reason is not. He will then tell us what that reason is. We do not have a High Priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses. He is really saying that our High Priest can sympathize with our weaknesses. The word translated “sympathize” is “sumpatheo” (συμπαθέω) which is a compound word:

A. Sum – means with

B. Patheo means to experience

It is to have fellow feelings. It is to have great compassion; to experience pain jointly. It is to experience their pain as strongly as they do.

The next statement, which is a contrast, is identified by the word “but.” We have a High Priest who has been tempted in all things as we are. Because of a statement in the James epistle, there is great controversy over this statement. We must affirm that what James wrote was absolutely true. However, Jesus entered a different realm when he accepted the lowly human form. Part of the human condition is the vulnerability to temptation. The Gospel records clearly teach that Jesus was exposed to temptation. Every human being is tempted. The author of Hebrews is saying that no matter what the temptation is, Jesus experienced that temptation and was victorious over it. It is not just that He understands it. He experienced that specific temptation. He knows my temptation from personal experience. He was victorious over it. Therefore, I can trust His understanding of my dilemma. What James was saying was that Jesus was never successfully tempted.

He then tells us what the reason is. We don’t have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses. He is really saying that our High Priest can sympathize with every detail of our dilemma because He also experienced it.

“Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” Hebrews 4:16

The use of the word “therefore” indicates that this is the final conclusion for this section of the book. It is an exhortation; a command. The word translated “draw near” is “proserchomai” (προσέρχομαι) which means to draw near; to go to. This image is intentionally taken from their understanding of the throne room. If one wanted to come before the king, his request would need to be known in advance. He must wait to be invited. If the king was positively disposed, he would invite you to come closer so that you could talk intimately. When this happened, a positive outcome was usually assured. The word translated “confidence” is “parraesia” (παρρησία) which was often translated as boldness; courage. It is to come without reservation. This is still part of the image of the throne room. You have the assurance that you will be heard and will receive what you need. Observe that the author speaks of “the throne of grace.” There is a change in the image. He used the image of appearing before the king. He then referred to the throne, but it is the throne of grace, not the king’s throne. The word “that” indicates that a statement of purpose is about to be given.

The word translated “mercy” is “eleos” (ἐλεος) which means “kindness.” It is good will directed toward the sufferer’s concern for those not receiving the help they need. The word translated “grace” is “charis” (χάρις) which means to bring joy, pleasure. It is sometimes described as unmerited favor. You will notice that there is a difference between mercy and grace, though we often use them interchangeably.

The Superior Jesus

A. MERCY – this is assistance to provide help to meet a need.

B. GRACE – also provides aid, but focuses on unworthiness, rather than the need.

We need to keep in mind that these are Christians who have lost everything except each other. They have not suffered to the point of death. Their suffering, however, was quite real and painful. The author was saying that in the midst of their suffering they could come to the throne of grace. They can be confident that their plea will be heard and met. God will meet that need because it is great. God will meet that need because He is moved to meet the needs of the unworthy and undeserving.

QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 5

HEBREWS 5:1 – 14

1. There are three paragraphs in Hebrews chapter five. On the following table, write a brief summary of eight words or less for each paragraph.

5:1-4	
5:5-10	
5:11-14	

2. In Hebrews 5:1-4, there are two sentences.
- A. In 5:1-3, the author changed the focus of his message.
 - 1. In 5:1, the author made three descriptive statements about the High Priestly office. What are these descriptive statements?
 - 2. What is the author's intent when he wrote, "taken from among men"?
 - 3. Think about this statement, "appointed on behalf of men." What was he stressing?
 - 4. What is the differences between "gifts" and "sacrifices"?
 - 5. Reflect on the content of this verse. In what way could the "gifts" and sacrifices" be helpful in relation to the people's sins?
 - B. In 5:2, the author suggested that the High Priest's weaknesses enabled him to deal gently with the ignorant and misguided.
 - 1. What did he mean by "ignorant"?
 - 2. What did he mean by "misguided"?
 - 3. How can his weaknesses be helpful in this respect?
 - C. In 5:3, the author made a major statement about High Priests.
 - 1. What is that statement?
 - 2. What significance does it have?
 - D. Hebrews 5:4 is an additional sentence.
 - 1. The author pointed out that the High Priesthood was a divine calling. How would the recipients view this when they knew that the High Priest was chosen by the Roman government in that day?
 - 2. Why would this divine calling be important?
3. In Hebrews 5:5-10 there are two sentences.
- A. In 5:5, 6, the author drew a comparison between the Levitical High Priest and the priesthood of Jesus.
 - 1. In this sentence, the author made two quotations from the Psalms.
 - a. What is the relationship of the quotation from Psalm 2:87 to the quotation from 110:4?
 - b. The High Priest must come from the tribe of Levi. Why then, is Jesus a High Priest after the order of Melchizadek and not Aaron?
 - c. The quotation from Psalm 110 says that "HE WILL BE A PRIEST FOREVER." What is the significance of that statement?
 - B. In 5:7-10, the words "He" and "Him" refer to Jesus.
 - 1. In the previous sentence, the author mentioned that the High Priest offered up "gifts" and "sacrifices." In this sentence, he said Jesus offered up "prayers and supplications," but said nothing about "gifts and sacrifices." Why would he do this?
 - 2. What is the significance of his statement about "loud crying and tears"?
 - 3. At the end of verse seven, the author added, "He was heard because of His piety." What is the importance of this addition?
 - 4. Read 5:8 very carefully. If Jesus is all-knowing, then how could He learn obedience?

The Superior Jesus

5. Again, how does suffering enable one to learn obedience?
 6. In 5:9, the author spoke of Jesus as “having been made perfect.”
 - a. What does this mean?
 - b. What does “obey” have to do with their eternal salvation as a product of His “having been made perfect”?
 7. In 5:10, the author again points out that God designated Jesus as a High Priest according to the order of Melchizadek. Why would this be important?
4. In Hebrews 5:11-14, there are three complete sentences.
- A. Hebrews 5:11 is a complete sentence.
 1. In this verse, the author made an abrupt shift in the direction of his message.
 - a. What was it previously?
 - b. What is it now?
 - c. How would you describe the author’s understanding of the spiritual condition of the recipients?
 2. The author admits that he has many things to say, but it would be “hard to explain.” Why would that be?
 - B. Hebrews 5:12 is a complete sentence. The author described the spiritual condition of the recipients.
 1. Specifically, what did he say?
 2. In this verse, the author parallels the need to be teachers with spiritual maturity. What was he saying?
 3. In this verse, the author used two sets of images:
 - a. What are these images?
 - b. How do they relate to each other?
 - c. What would be different if he used only one?
 - C. Hebrews 5:13, 14 form a complete sentence.
 1. The use of the word “for” at the beginning of this sentence indicates that it will provide an explanation.
 - a. What does the author mean when he said, “everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness”?
 - b. What is his inference?
 - D. In 5:14 the author drew a contrast.
 1. What two things are being contrasted?
 2. What is the point of this contrast?
5. Now review chapter five. How would you summarize this chapter?
6. In question one, you wrote a brief summary of each paragraph in the chapter. Review these summaries. Record the changes, if any, you would like to make?

5:1-4	
5:5-10	
5:11-14	

STUDY OF CHAPTER 5

JESUS – ETERNAL HIGH PRIEST

HEBREWS 5:1 – 14

In the fifth chapter of Hebrews, there are three paragraphs. On the following table you will find a brief summary of each of these paragraphs.

5:1-4	High Priestly Credentials
5:5-10	Jesus' Superior High Priestly Credentials
5:11-14	Recipients Dull of Hearing

Chapter five is the beginning of the second section of the epistle. The chapter begins with the word “for”. This indicates that at least the first paragraph – 5:1-5 – is an explanation of the closing portion of chapter four, if not the entire first section – chapters one through four. It is possible that it is saying that chapter five and the rest of section two (5:1 – 10:39) is an explanation of the importance of section one – 1:1 – 4:16.

HEBREWS 5:1-4 – HIGH PRIESTLY CREDENTIALS

For every high priest taken from among men is appointed on behalf of men in things pertaining to God, in order to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins; Hebrews 5:1

“FOR EVERY HIGH PRIEST TAKEN FROM AMONG MEN”

The word “for” indicates that we are anticipating an explanation, a reason for previous statements. Observe that the author immediately deals with the high priestly level of the priesthood. The significance of this is that the task and function of a high priest is different from that of the priests who serve at the altar. The author highlights the fact that this high priest, like all other high priests, is totally human. The author starts this comparison at the place where every high priest is equal – his humanity.

“IS APPOINTED ON BEHALF OF MEN”

The word translated “appointed” is “kathistaemi” (καθίστημι). It means to be placed in charge of something. It is to be charged with administering an office. Jesus’ task is to serve on behalf of people. That is the nature of His position.

“PERTAINING TO GOD IN ORDER TO OFFER BOTH GIFTS AND SACRIFICES FOR SIN”

Jesus’ task is specifically designated as serving in the relationship between God and people. This is the normal responsibility for a High Priest. He stands before God interceding on behalf of the people. He stands before the people on behalf of God. This is quite similar to the picture you see in the ministry of Samuel. Observe that the High Priest’s task was to offer both gifts and sacrifices. These are two very different ministries. GIFTS The word so translated is “doron” (δῶρον). There were many forms of gifts with which the High Priests would deal. It could be in the form of money deposited in the temple treasury. It could be a gift in kind such as an animal, etc. These gifts were offered as an expression of honor or gratitude. The High Priest was an enabler for the grateful worshipper.

The word translated “sacrifices” is “thusia” (θυσία), This word is always translated (29 times) by the word “sacrifice.” The sacrifice is given for one of two reasons:

- It can be a gift of gratitude.
- It can also be a response of sorrow for sin.
- The latter is the intent in this instance.

The priestly function, in this instance, was one of intercession. The author identified the intent of Jesus’ ministry as dealing with the sacrifice for sin

He can deal gently with the ignorant and misguided, since he himself also is beset with weakness Hebrews 5:2

The word translated “can” is “dunamai” (δύναμι). It is more than the ability to serve. The word translated “can” is the word for “power.” It is to have the power through personal ability or one’s state of mind to accomplish something. The word translated “deal gently” is “metriopatheo” (μετριοπαθέω). It is more than simply being involved with something or someone.

It is to have compassion with someone. It is to be keenly aware of sin, but not overly angered by what one observes.

“WITH THE IGNORANT AND MISGUIDED”

The word translated “ignorant” is “agnoeo” (ἄγνοέω). This word literally means “not knowing.” There are possible meanings in the use of this word. The not knowing can be because one is uninformed. It can be not knowing because of limited mental ability. It can be by mistake. When the word is used this way with a spectrum of possibilities, it is often because the author intentionally wants to leave the intent wide open.

The term translated “misguided” is “planao” (πλανάω). The word means to be deceived. It also means to be seduced, to go astray, or lead away from the right way. The intent as you can see is an unfortunate choice, but not necessarily an intentional evil choice.

“SINCE HE HIMSELF ALSO IS BESET WITH WEAKNESS.”

The author stressed the fact that the human weakness of the high priest makes it possible for him to understand the weakness and failure of others. You may remember that in 4:14-16 the author concluded the first section of the epistle with the strong assertion that Jesus was able to sympathize with our weakness because he experienced and overcame the same temptations that plague our daily existence.

The word translated “beset” is “perekeimai” (περίκειμαι). This word has a stronger image than our idea of beset. It literally means to be bound with. It can be used to describe the hanging of a criminal. It is a serious expression of restraint.

The word translated “weakness” is “astheneia” (ἀσθένεια). This is a medical term that describes severe physical weakness. It is to be infirm.’ He used the picture of physical infirmity to describe spiritual inability.

And because of it he is obligated to offer sacrifices for sins, as for the people, so also for himself. Hebrews 5:3

The High Priest’s own struggle with sin and spiritual weakness becomes his mandate to minister to others. The word translated “obligated” is “opheilo” (ὀφείλω). This word describes a sense of “ought.” It is to be in debt that will not go away until it is paid. He must offer the sacrifice, but he must do more. He must have experience that enables him to sympathize with those who struggle and fail.

And no one takes the honor to himself, but receives it when he is called by God, even as Aaron was. Hebrews 5:4

The decision to become a priest is not a personal choice. Jesus did not simply decide that he would like to become a priest. The priesthood is a calling. Observe that the author spoke of the calling to the priesthood as an “honor.”

The word translated “honor” is “timae” (τιμή). It describes the honor one receives by reason of rank or state of office. It involves some level of deference. It was sometimes used to describe a valuing by which a high price was fixed. The author has made a very significant statement: He is saying that this necessary mission is one that brings some level of recognition and deference with the office. He is reaffirming that this is not a personal choice, but a calling.

“BUT RECEIVES IT WHEN HE IS CALLED BY GOD, EVEN AS AARON WAS”

The fact that the priest receives this calling affirms that it is not his responsibility. God takes full responsibility for this person's call to priestly service. This point was so important to the author that he sought out a very obvious illustration – Aaron. Aaron did not receive his call to priestly service as a result of unusually holy living. He was born into the family of those who later became priests. The act of assigning priestly service to Aaron was completely a divine activity. This must always be the case.

HEBREWS 5:5-10 – JESUS' SUPERIOR HIGH PRIESTLY CREDENTIALS

“So also Christ did not glorify Himself so as to become a high priest, but He who said to Him, “THOU ART MY SON, TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN THEE””; Hebrews 5:5

The use of the words “so also” indicate that the author has drawn a strong comparison. He has compared the situation of Jesus with that of Aaron. The word translated “glorified” is *edoxasen* (ἐδόξασεν). The word means to honor or extol. It is to magnify or make glorious. One might say it, clothe with splendor. It is to cause the dignity of a person to become visible or obvious.

The author is saying that Jesus did not honor himself or add glory to His reputation.

“SO AS TO BECOME A HIGH PRIEST”

There are many ways a person could honor themselves. The author specifically indicates the manner in which Jesus did not decide for Himself to become a High Priest.

“BUT HE WHO SAID TO HIM”

Pronouns need to be identified by name. The word “He” in this phrase refers to God the Father. The word “Him” in this phrase refers to Jesus. The author is going to identify the one who made the choice for Jesus to be the High Priest. It is the one who said to Him,

“THOU ART MY SON”

The words translated “you are” are “*ei se*” (ἐἶ σε). There is an unusual twist to the use of the word (ἐἶ). The form of the word is present active. The present tense identifies something that happens and never ceases to happen. It describes a lifestyle rather than a single act. The active voice indicates that the speaker – the Father – is the one initiating the activity. The unusual thing is in the present tense. As indicated, the present tense acts and never ceases to act. Jesus did not become the Father's Son at a point in time and then never cease to be the Father's Son. In all eternity before time, Jesus was the Father's Son. It is like the name Jehovah in Hebrew – Not I will be, but “I am.”

“TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN THEE”

This is a quotation from Psalm 2:7. The use of the additional “I” in the Greek text indicates that the author of Hebrews intends for this to be a very emphatic statement. It is saying, “I, I have begotten Thee.” The word “today” does not refer to a point in time, but to that point before there was time when the Father made this declaration. The use of the word “begotten” has caused some concern on the part of some. Their question is simply this, If Jesus is begotten, then how can He be eternal? The question deserves an answer though it is, frankly, beyond human comprehension. In His humanity, the Son was conceived. As the Son of the Father, the second person of the trinity, He was as eternal as the Father.

Just as He says also in another passage, “Thou art a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.” Hebrews 5:6

“JUST AS HE SAYS IN ANOTHER PASSAGE”

Western minds are puzzled at the need for multiple Old Testament references to support a statement of truth.

The eastern mind, however, takes seriously the Old Testament affirmation that truth is established at the voice of two or three witnesses.

“THOU ART A PRIEST FOREVER ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF MELCHIZADEK”

These words are taken from Psalm 110:4. Being of the lineage of the royal tribe of Judah, Jesus could not qualify for the Aaronic priesthood. A question arises that we are unable to properly settle. Jesus’ mother, of the tribe of Judah, had a first cousin, Elizabeth who was of the tribe of Levi. (There is the remote possibility that Jesus did have some family relationship to the tribe of Levi, though this epistle makes it clear that He still would not qualify for that priesthood.) There is a subtle message in the quotation from Psalm 110. The Aaronic priesthood was age specific. A priest served at the altar for the first time on his 30th. birthday.

Each priest was officially retired at the age of 50. There was one exception – as long as he was physically able, he must participate in the sacrifices as they were held at the time of the three great feasts each year.

“THE ORDER OF MELCHIZADEK”

Other than the nine appearances in Hebrews chapters 5, 6 and 7, this name appears only in Genesis 14:18 and Psalm 110:4. Aside from Jesus, we know of no one else who identified with the Priesthood of Melchizadek.

The conditions of participation in the priesthood of Melchizadek.

1. There was no known restriction concerning one’s tribe of origin.
2. There was no known restriction concerning the age at which one might begin his ministry.
3. There was no posted age of required retirement.
4. Thus Jesus could become the eternal High Priest according to this order because He is eternal.

In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety.
Hebrews 5:7

“IN THE DAYS OF HIS FLESH, HE OFFERED UP BOTH PRAYERS AND SUPPLICATIONS”

The New Testament gives clear testimony concerning Jesus’ heavenly ministry of intercession. This verse, however, points out that during his earthly life, Jesus also performed this High Priestly ministry. Is this what occupied His times of early morning prayer? We cannot be sure.

Jesus offered up both prayers and supplications. The word translated “prayers” is “deasis” (δέσεις). It means a request for needs. It is an entreaty on behalf of a very serious need. The word translated “supplications” is “hiketeria” (ἱκετηρία). This is a more formal plea for a devastating, dire need. This request has a vivid cultural background. In the greatest of dire circumstances, a person would approach the one they wish to supplicate carrying a palm branch interwoven with white wool. In such instances, the request was so horrendous that it must be met if at all possible. “Prayers” and “supplications” differ in the extremity of their expressed need.

“WITH LOUD CRYING AND TEARS TO THE ONE ABLE TO SAVE HIM FROM DEATH”

The Greek meaning of these words is essential to our understanding. The word translated “loud” is “ischyros” (ἰσχυρός) which means to be violent, powerful. It suggests forcible statements. These are boisterous petitions. The word translated “crying” is “kraugae” (κραυγή). The emphasis is not on weeping. It is a clamorous outcry. It stresses the forcefulness of the petition rather than the weeping. The word translated “tears” is “dakroun” (δάκρουν). It means wet tears on the face. Tears for the Jew, however, mean much more than great sorrow. They collected their tears. It included the drops of tears in their tear cup. It also meant the bitter memory of accumulated pain of many years. It is what Joseph felt when he revealed himself to his brothers.

“TO THE ONE ABLE TO SAVE HIM FROM DEATH”

The author gives us a clue in this part of the statement. Writing material was at a premium. Biblical authors would never use two words to say something if one word would do it. The exception to that rule was when

STUDY OF CHAPTER 5

the additional words would serve a serious purpose. This is a case in point. The author could have saved space and said, “to the Father,” because that is what it means. The fact that he chose to write the longer statement suggests he wanted to emphasize what he has said here. In this statement he has shared the issue involved in the “loud crying and tears.” It is for our benefit that Jesus had to struggle with impending death as we do.

It is a convincing display of just how human He was. It also makes clear the extent of his sympathizing with our struggle. This is a vivid validation of the conclusion of section I – 4:14 – 16.

Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. Hebrews 5:8

He is here building upon his assertion that Jesus is God’s Son. This indicates that the author has now established this information as truth. The way he has worded this statement indicates that the assertion in progress would seem strange to his readers. It is like saying, “Aside from the fact that Jesus was God’s Son, still...this is something that every Son must experience.

“HE LEARNED OBEDIENCE”

The word translated “learned” is “manthano” (μανθάνω) means to understand, to be informed. It is to increase in knowledge. It is to learn by practice. This presents a serious problem for some. Jesus is deity.

God is omniscient. Therefore, how can He learn anything when He already knows all things. There is a solution. The leaning here has less to do with discovering new information. It has more to do with experiencing the things His omniscience already understood. Jesus learned obedience. Obedience was not a new idea for Jesus. His coming to earth in human form is an expression of obedience determined before there was time.

“FROM THE THINGS WHICH HE SUFFERED.”

The word translated “suffered” is “pascho” (πάσχω). It literally means to suffer sadly. It is to be in a bad plight. It is to undergo suffering. The suffering through which Jesus went provided experience of what He already knew and understood, but had never experienced.

“And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation,” Hebrews 5:9

“AND HAVING BEEN MADE PERFECT”

The word translated “made perfect” is “teleioo” (τελειόω). Our general understanding of “perfect” is to be flawless, faultless. That is not the idea of this word. It means to finish or to fill full. It is to complete; to bring to an end. It is to carry through completely. The form of the word – This is an aorist passive participle.

1. The aorist tense – this tense places an emphasis on the action and not on the time.
2. The passive – It is to be perfected; to be acted upon, rather than to act.
3. Participle – This describes ongoing action.

This is the source of the wording “having been made perfect.” Some would argue that 1:1-4 speaks of Jesus as the agent of creation. That being the case, how could He be made anything by anybody he created? The author used a very specific form of the word. It was not to say that Jesus was imperfect, but became perfect. He used this form to convey the idea that Jesus’ perfection was completed by previously unparticipated experience which He knew but never suffered previously.

“HE BECAME TO ALL THOSE WHO OBEY HIM THE SOURCE OF ETERNAL SALVATION”

The word translated “He became” is “egeneto” (ἐγένετο). The meaning of the word: It means to come into being. It is to become. The form of the word is:

- A. Aorist – In this form the emphasis is on the action and not on the timing.

B. The indicative – statement of fact

C. The middle - the subject is involved in the action.

Now, we know that from eternity Jesus was chosen to be the redeemer. Not until time; indeed, until what we refer to as the first century A.D. did He take on human flesh and limitations so as to become our redeemer, though He was considered to have done so from eternity. Observe, the text says, “To all those who obey Him.” The idea of universal salvation cannot survive this definitive statement. It is limited to those who obey Christ. Indeed, no one else is included.

Being designated by God as a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek. Hebrews 5:10

“BEING DESIGNATED BY GOD”

The word translated “designated” is “prosagoreuo” (προσαγορεύω). The meaning of the word: It is to be called; to salute. It is to address; to give a name/title in public. The choice was made in the eternal confines of the Trinity. The public announcement of that designation was made in the Scriptures thousands of years later.

The form of the word is an aorist passive participle.

- a. The aorist tense places an emphasis on the action and not on the time.
- b. Passive – Subject is recipient of the action. This is very important. This form identifies action not taken by Jesus. It rather identifies action taken on His behalf. This is a repeated theme in the book of Hebrews.
- c. Participle - This represents action that is ongoing. It perfectly fits the author’s idea that this is an eternal appointment. There will never be a time when He is not a High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

He was designated as a “High Priest.” The word translated “designated” is “prosagoreuo” (προσαγορεύω).

It means to be called, to salute. It is to give an address or title in public. The choice was made in the eternal confines of the trinity. The public announcement of that designation was made in scripture. The form of the word is an aorist passive participle. The aorist emphasizes the action and not the time. It is passive. This very important form identifies action taken on behalf of Jesus. This is a repeated theme in the book. It represents action taken on behalf of Christ.

Participle – As previously indicated, this represents action that is ongoing. It perfectly fits the author’s idea that this is an eternal appointment.

“ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK”

This statement is vital to the understanding of the priesthood of Jesus. Though He had relatives in the Levitical system, it is quite clear that he was a member of the tribe of Judah, the kingly tribe. With this background it was obvious that He could never qualify to become a priest, much less a High Priest in the Levitical system.

HEBREWS 5:11-14 – RECIPIENTS ARE DULL OF HEARING

Concerning him we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. Hebrews 5:11

This brief paragraph is a parenthesis in the book. The author will return to the theme of the book very quickly.

“CONCERNING HIM WE HAVE MUCH TO SAY”

There is a lot to teach about Jesus. There is no lack of information to convey

“AND IT IS HARD TO EXPLAIN”

This describes the difficulty level of the information the author wants to teach about Jesus. It is very difficult to grasp

“SINCE YOU HAVE BECOME DULL OF HEARING”

The use of the word “since” indicates that a reason is about to be provided. The word translated “become” is “gegonate” (γεγονάτε). It is to become something/someone you previously were not. It means to come into existence. The form of the word is perfect, active indicative.

1. Perfect – past event now completed.
2. Active – The subject performs the action
3. Indicative – statement of fact

The word translated “dull” is “nothroi” (νόθροι). It means to be slow or sluggish. It involves two possible causes. It can mean slothful, lazy. It can also mean the opposite of brilliant. In this instance, it can be both, but dull seems the more appropriate. The idea involved – This is a form of mental ineptitude, like a depression reflecting spiritually stunted growth.

The word translated “hearing” is “akoais” (ἀκοαῖς). It can mean ears. Jesus spoke of “ears to hear.” It can also refer to what is heard. In this instance it refers to the inability to grasp what has been heard.

For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. Hebrews 5:12

“FOR THOUGH BY THIS TIME YOU OUGHT TO BE TEACHERS”

The use of the word “for” indicates that an explanation is about to be given. When the author wrote the words, “by this time,” he indicated that these Jewish people had been believers for an extended period of time. We should keep in mind that it was the early church design to teach people and then they would teach others. The author is saying that in this case, that process has not been working. It is one thing to know a certain level of information. It is quite a different thing to be able to teach this to someone else. The author is saying that these people should be in the place where they can easily share this truth with those who are new to the faith.

“YOU HAVE NEED AGAIN FOR SOMEONE TO TEACH YOU THE ELEMENTARY PRINCIPLES OF THE ORACLES OF GOD.”

The use of the word “palin” (παλιν) which means “again” helps us to understand the slowdown. It is not that they are learning, but at a very slow pace. It is that they were exposed to this truth on a previous occasion and now must be exposed again. This need may come from the fact that they failed in spiritual growth. It may mean that they just did not comprehend what they were being taught. They have previously been exposed to this truth. Now they need for someone to teach them again the same lessons. The mention of elementary principles of the oracles of God is interesting. This describes the first principles, the most primary understandings of the Christian faith. This has to do with the rudiments of the faith in the same way that the letters of the alphabet are rudimentary to a study of a language. It would deal with issues like who is the Messiah? Why do we need a Messiah? What is sin? Why are we guilty when we were born that way?

The author is saying that these people failed Christianity 101. It is interesting that the author spoke of “the oracles of God.” It is a way of speaking of the word of God in the broadest sense. It is a way of saying that God has communicated with us in terms that are final and are not negotiable. This is important since there is an element of judgment included in that message from God.

“AND YOU HAVE COME TO NEED MILK AND NOT SOLID FOOD”

The form of the word translated “have” is very important in understanding the message of the author.

The form is present active participle. Present tense – Action that begins and never ceases. It is the description of a lifestyle. Active voice – the subject does the acting. Participle – This describes ongoing action.

Observe that you have repetition in this form. The author has strongly emphasized that their need for milk is doubly unending. This, of course, is tragic.

For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. Hebrews 5:13

“FOR EVERYONE WHO PARTAKES ONLY OF MILK”

The use of the word “for” makes it clear that the author will give further explanation on the initial explanation that he has already given. The author is using an illustration of a new born baby. A New-born baby cannot eat steak. The diet consists only of milk. The milk is sufficient at this stage. But there is no benefit in the milk for the child that continues to grow. The author drew a parallel. Just as a growing child needs more than milk to continue to grow. So the growing Christian needs more than elementary principles of the oracles of God in order to grow and continue to grow.

“IS NOT ACCUSTOMED TO THE WORD OF RIGHTEOUSNESS”

The word translated “accustomed” is “apeiros” (ἄπειρος). The word means unskillful. It means inexperienced. It is to be not acquainted with. It is clear that the author is not saying these people are not forgiven. He is saying that they do not have any experience with the word, logos, that increases the presence of righteousness in their lives.

But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil. Hebrews 5:14

The author continues with the parallel between grown-ups who eat solid food and grown up believers who are experienced in the word of righteousness.

“BUT SOLID FOOD IS FOR THE MATURE”

Two Greek words are translated “solid food”. “Solid” is a translation of “stereos” (στερεός). It means something firm, steadfast. It is something that is strong.

“Food” is a translation of the word “trophe” (τροφή). It means food or nourishment. It is more often translated “meat.” The word translated “mature” is “teleios” (τέλειος). It means to be complete or perfect. It is to be brought to completion. It is to be full grown, of full age. The author was saying that it takes Christian experience in order to grasp the word that leads to righteousness. We want to grow, but that growth comes as our Christian experience of living for God enables us to grasp the message of righteous living that the Scriptures present. To everyone else, it does not make sense.

“WHO BECAUSE OF PRACTICE”

The word translated “because of” is “dia” (διό). It can be translated “because of”. More often it is translated “through” It describes a means of accomplishment. The word translated “practice” is “hexis” (ἕξις). It is often translated “use”. Literally – the power acquired by practice. The author compared spiritual life with a learned activity. At the beginning you can’t do it at all. Practice seems awkward and stumbling. A little at a time fines develops. Eventually it becomes a natural motion. This is also true of spiritual growth. The author is saying that these people just have not practiced daily spiritual living.

“HAVE THEIR SENSES TRAINED”

The word translated “have” is “echo” (ἔχω). The word means to have. It is to own. It is to hold as one holds property. The form of the word is present active participle.

- a. The Present tense – This is to begin and never stop. It describes a lifestyle.
- b. Active voice – The subject does the acting.
- c. Participle – This describes ongoing activity.

In this form there are two that suggest ongoing action. This is not a single action or event. It describes a lifestyle. It is to make a lifestyle out of daily practicing obedience to the Scriptures and becoming more godly in character because of it.

STUDY OF CHAPTER 5

The word translated “senses” is “aistheterion” (αἰσθητήριον). This is the human faculty for understanding. It is the human faculty for perception. We casually speak of this as the mind. It involves the mind, but is that part of the mind that enables one to make sound judgment.

The word that is translated “train” is “gymnadzo” (γυμνάζω). This is the source of our word for gymnasium. The Romans had schools of athletics. In these schools great effort was invested in physical training of the body to near perfection. The author drew a parallel. The people in the gymnadzo trained their bodies into excellent condition. In the same way, the spiritually mature train their ability to judge spiritual things with great accuracy

“TO DISCERN GOOD AND EVIL”

This is the object of discernment alluded to in the previous phrase. The word translated “discern” is “diakrisis” (διάκρισις). It is the ability to judge between two seemingly similar things. It is the skill of distinguishing one thing from another. The word only appears three times in the New Testament. Spiritual maturity is all about discerning and then acting upon that discovery.

The word translated “good” is “kalos” (καλός). This word appears 83 times in the New Testament and is used in several ways. It means that which is morally good. It is that which is beautiful by reason of purity of heart. That which is commendable. The word translated “evil” is “kakos” (κακός). This is the direct opposite of that which is good. It is to be destructive. It is that which is not what it ought to be. The entire concept of spiritual maturity is enveloped in the ability to discern good from evil and then to act upon that knowledge. This is a skill that must be developed through experience of choosing the right; of choosing to be like God. Only with such practice can one gain the ability to identify the good and then act to choose it for one’s life.

QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 6

HEBREWS 6:1 – 20

1. There are paragraphs in the sixth chapter of Hebrews. On the following table, write a brief summary of eight words or less for each paragraph.

6:1-8	
6:9-12	
6:13-20	

2. In Hebrews 6:1-8 there are four complete sentences.
- A. Hebrews 6:1, 2 form a complete sentence.
1. What does the author mean by “elementary teaching about Christ”?
 2. How would you describe what he meant by the word “maturity”?
 3. What did he mean by, “not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and faith toward God”?
 4. Would a new believer in our time know what the author meant by the statement in verse two?
 5. Why would we need instruction concerning these things when as New Testament believers we are not required to keep these instructions?
 6. What does the laying on of hands have to do with New Testament obedience?
 7. Where do we see this laying on of hands practiced in the Old Testament? In the New Testament?
- B. Hebrews 6:3 is a complete sentence.
1. Read this verse very carefully.
 2. What was the author saying specifically?
 3. The author wrote, “If God permits.” What does this say about future planning which the New Testament also suggests?
- C. Hebrews 6:4-6 form a complete sentence.
1. In this sentence, the author lists six conditions which are prevalent among the recipients. What are they?
 2. What does it mean to be “enlightened”?
 3. What was he describing by the words “tasted the heavenly gift”?
 4. What does it mean to be “made partakers of the Holy Spirit”? What difference does this make?
 5. What does it mean “to taste the good word of God”?
 6. What does it mean to “(taste) the power of the age to come”?
 7. How would you describe such a person’s relationship with God?
 8. In verse six, what does he mean by “have fallen away”?
 9. What does it mean “to renew them again unto repentance”?
 10. Can you think of a New Testament person who fits this situation?
- D. Galatians 6:7, 8 form a complete sentence.
1. This sentence is a visual, Jewish explanation of the previous statement.
 2. What blessing could this ground receive from God?
 3. The use of the word “but,” in verse eight, indicates that this is a contrast. What are the contrasted elements?
 4. What was the author trying to say by the use of this contrast?
3. Hebrews 6:9-12 is a paragraph incorporating only two sentences.
- A. Hebrews 6:9, 10 form a complete sentence.
1. Verse nine indicates that this is in the midst of a contrast.
 - a. What are the contrasted elements?

The Superior Jesus

- b. What purpose does this contrast serve?
 2. In view of what the author wrote in 6:1-8, why would he now use the endearing word “beloved”?
 - B. Hebrews 6:11, 12 form a complete sentence.
 1. This sentence is a continuation of the idea in the previous sentence. What does it add to 6:9, 10?
 2. The author’s words in this sentence are carefully chosen.
 - a. What does he mean by “diligence”?
 - b. What did he mean by “the full assurance of hope”?
 3. Verse 12 presents a statement of purpose for what he said in 6:11. What was he trying to say?
 4. What did he mean by “sluggish”?
 5. What was to be gained by the inclusion of the words, “who through faith”?
 6. The author indicated that “inheriting the promises” was the result of faith and patience? What does this mean?
 7. Why did he choose “faith and patience”? Why not “love and faithfulness”?
 8. What did he mean by the words “inherit the promises”?
 4. Hebrews 6:13-20 is a paragraph in which there are four complete sentences.
 - A. Hebrews 6:13-15 form a complete sentence
 1. The use of the word “for” indicates that this is an explanation.
 - a. What is being explained?
 - b. How did he explain it?
 - c. The author spends great effort explaining God’s swearing by Himself. Why was this so important?
 2. Hebrews 6:14 is a quotation from Genesis chapter 22. Read the Genesis account.
 - a. What is the context of this promise?
 - b. How would you explain this divine promise?
 3. Hebrews 6:15 is a report of the fulfillment of the divine promise.
 - a. How does the author report the fulfillment of the divine promise?
 - b. What does this report mean?
 - c. What is the significance of the words, “having patiently waited”?
 - B. Hebrews 6:16 is a complete sentence
 1. The use of the word “for” indicates that this sentence is an explanation.
 - a. What is being explained?
 - b. How does he explain it?
 2. How would you explain this explanation to a new believer?
 - C. Hebrews 6:17-18 form a complete sentence.
 1. What is suggested when you read the words, “In the same way”?
 2. Because these Jewish recipients already knew that God is changeless, why would it be necessary for God to do this?
 3. When you see the words, in verse 18, “in order that.” What does this tell you to anticipate?
 4. In this verse, it says, “by two unchangeable things...” What are the “two unchangeable things” as reported in this chapter?
 5. In this verse, the author placed strong emphasis on “we who have fled for refuge.” What is the point of this inclusion?
 - D. Hebrews 6:19-20 form a complete sentence.
 1. What did he mean by “anchor of the soul”?
 2. What does he mean by “soul”?
 3. Define the words “sure” and “steadfast.”
 4. How do these two words differ?

QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 6

5. In verse 19, the author mentioned “within the veil.”
 - a. What does this mean?
 - b. Why would he include this here?
6. In 6:20, the author mentioned that Jesus has “become a priest forever.” What is the significance of this information?
7. The author mentioned that Jesus was “according to the order of Melchizadek.”
 - a. What does this mean?
 - b. What is the significance of this at this point?

STUDY OF CHAPTER 6
JESUS ETERNAL HIGH PRIEST
HEBREWS 6:1 – 20

There are three paragraphs in Hebrews chapter six. On the following table you will find a brief summary of each of these paragraphs.

6:1-8	Dangers of Stalled Christian Growth
6:9-12	Author's Conviction of Recipients Strong Faith
6:13-20	Our Steadfast Hope

HEBREWS 6:1-8 – DANGERS OF STALLED CHRISTIAN GROWTH

Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, Hebrews 6:1

“THEREFORE, LEAVING THE ELEMENTARY TEACHING ABOUT THE CHRIST”

Surprisingly, the word translated “therefore” is “dio” (διό). It is translated “therefore” 10 times. Therefore usually points out that a conclusion is forthcoming. Dio, however, is more apt to be used to say “on account of,” to describe the source of reason or purpose. Here, however, the context indicates that a minor conclusion is coming. The word translated “leaving” is “aphiemi” (ἀφίημι) it means to allow something to happen. It was used to describe a husband divorcing his wife. It means to go away from. The form of the word is aorist active participle:

1. Aorist – The emphasis is on the action and not on the timing.
2. Active – The subject is doing the acting.
3. Participle – This describes ongoing action.

The word translated “elementary” is “arche” (ἀρχή). It describes that by which anything begins. The origin; that which initiates. In this case, it describes the initial experiences and learnings when one is forgiven. The use of this word is interesting. It deals with the level of teaching as “elementary.” It is clear, however, that this is far more than many so called mature believers are able to deal with adequately.

The word translated “teaching” is “logos” (λόγος). This is translated 218 times as “word.” It can be a teaching. It can be an understanding. In this instance the author used the word to identify that which one learns initially about the faith.

“LET US PRESS ON TO MATURITY”

There might be a better translation. “Therefore, leaving the beginning teaching of the Christ, upon the maturity, let us press.” The word translated “let us press on” is “phero” (φέρω). It means to bear or bear up. It is to uphold; to endure the rigors of difficulty; to continue undaunted.

The form of the word is present passive subjunctive.

- a. Present tense – begin and do not stop
- b. Passive – subject is acted upon
- c. Subjunctive mood – There is the possibility of happening, but it is not certain.

This is not something you do and it is done. This is something we begin and continue the rest of our lives. You press on and keep on pressing on. The word translated “maturity” is “teleiotes” (τελειότης). The KJV uses the word “perfection.” It does not really mean that. It is more accurate to say completeness.

In this life, we will never be flawlessly perfect. We can, however, become all that God wants us to be at this point in our spiritual walk.

“NOT LAYING AGAIN A FOUNDATION”

This is a very emphatic statement.

There are at least two ways to express the negative in the Greek language. The letter “a” added to the front of a word expresses a negative idea. The use of the word “no” or “not” is a more emphatic way to express negative thought. In this text the author has used the word “mae” (μή) to indicate the negative in an emphatic way. The word translated “laying” is “kataballo” (καταβάλλω). This word was used to describe the laying of a foundation. It is to put in a lower place. It literally means to throw against. It is like using the word “establishing.” The form of the word is present middle participle.

1. Present – It is to begin and never stop.
2. Middle – subject involved in the action
3. Participle – This describes ongoing action.

This form places great stress on continuing action. He was emphasizing this is no time to keep laying the foundation of their faith. It is time for them to grow.

The word translated “foundation” is “themelion” (θεμέλιον) which means foundation. It is the elementary beginning teaching.

“OF REPENTANCE FROM DEAD WORKS”

The word translated “repentance” is “metanoia” (μετάνοια). It describes a change of mind. It is an attitude toward one’s previous actions, life. It represents a total change of purpose. The word translated “dead” is “nekros” (νέκρος). It means to be inanimate; to be without life. It is to be destitute of force. It means dead, lifeless. It is sometimes used to describe spiritual death. The word translated “works” is “ergon” (ἔργον). It describes deeds. It is an act. It is that which occupies our energies both good and bad. In this phrase, the author is identifying some of what he meant by “foundations.” This is not the total of what he has in mind, but it is part of it.

“AND OF FAITH TOWARD GOD”

The use of the word “and” indicates that what follows is a part of the statement just previously made. The word translated “faith” is “pistis” (πίστις). This word is often translated “belief” but it is more than that.

It is the conviction concerning a given truth. It is an active belief that Jesus is indeed the Son of God; it is expressed in active trust in that belief that results in specific action.

This is faith toward God. There are those who feel that everything is fine as long as people believe. Their definition of this belief is more than broad. The author here is being very specific – it is a faith in God, nothing less.

Of instruction about washings, and laying on of hands, and the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. Hebrews 6:2

“OF INSTRUCTIONS ABOUT WASHINGS”

The word translated “instruction” is “didaschaes” (διδασκαίῃς) which is usually translated “teaching.” It is one of several forms of instruction.

The word translated “washing” is “baptismos” (βαπτισμός). Contrary to popular thought, this word is translated “washing” three times and “baptism” only once. We will see this same differentiation when we come to our study of chapter nine. The author’s reference here is to the ceremonial washings prescribed in the Mosaic law. There are a number of washings mentioned in the Old Testament. In Leviticus there is mention of a washing because of uncleanness due to an issue out of his flesh. In Numbers 19:7, 8, they were to wash the clothes and the person after killing and burning the red heifer. In Numbers 31:24, They were to wash the spoil after a victory in battle and taking of spoils in order to bring them into the camp.

“AND LAYING ON OF HANDS”

The use of the word “and” indicates that the message that follows is an equal part of that which precedes it.

The word translated “laying” is “epithesis” (ἐπίθεσις) which means to place. It is the imposition of hands as a sacred rite. This was practiced by Jews and taken on as a rite among Christians. It was used to confer upon the recipient a specific divine blessing. In Acts 13:3, the brethren laid hands upon Paul and Barnabas setting them apart to proclaim the Gospel in the area we now refer to as Eastern Europe. In Acts 8:17, there is mention of the laying on of hands for a new convert. In I Timothy 4:14, Presbyters laid hands upon Timothy. This rite was sometimes associated with the commissioning for ministry. It was also associated with the receiving of the Holy Spirit in Acts 8:17-19.

“AND THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD”

The Jewish faith includes the belief that there will be a resurrection from the dead. One of the proof items for the Jews, concerning Messiah, was that he must raise someone from the dead. This is the reason Lazarus was so important in Jerusalem. These Christians to whom Hebrews was written had been taught that there would be a resurrection from the dead.

“AND ETERNAL JUDGMENT”

Again, these Jewish believers had been taught, as Jews that there would be a judgment for them to face. They believed, as we do in the church, that there will be an accounting for the deeds done in the body. They dealt with this, though, on the basis of good works.

And this we shall do, if God permits. Hebrews 6:3

The word “and” indicates that this verse is a continuation of the message of verse two. In this verse the author is talking about a task that he will shortly undertake. Still he leaves room for the will of God to direct otherwise. We point this out to indicate that the mature believer must be sensitive to God’s leading moment by moment.

This raises an issue. The New Testament teaches, on several occasions,, that we must plan ahead. We must therefore ask the question, “How does one plan ahead and still be sensitive to what God permits”? The answer is that we must do both. We must definitely plan ahead, but at the same time we must be sensitive and open to the possibility that God will choose a different direction for our lives. It appears that most of us have experienced this kind of cross-road in our lives.

For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, Hebrews 6:4

Verses four through six form a complete sentence. We need to overview of the argument. In verses four through six, the author listed six conditions that are true of these recipients. After listing these six conditions, he promptly makes a statement about their spiritual condition.

“THOSE WHO HAVE ONCE BEEN ENLIGHTENED”

This clearly describes those who have been forgiven of their sin. Without salvation, there is no enlightenment. The word translated “enlightened” is (φωτισθέντας) which means to make known; to shine upon. It describes what happens when a new believer is instructed about the meaning and practice of the Christian faith. The form of this word is aorist participle which places great emphasis on ongoing action.

“HAVE TASTED OF THE HEAVENLY GIFT”

Granted this is written in graphic language. The word translated “tasted” is “geuomai” (γεύομαι). It means to eat. It was sometimes used to describe enjoying. It is to take nourishment. The form of the word is aorist middle participle:

- A. Aorist – Focused on action rather than the time.
- B. Middle – the subject is involved in the action.

C. Participle – This describes ongoing action’

This describes an ongoing experience that is given to us, not one that we take. The word translated “the” is taes” (τῆς) which is a demonstrative. It adds unusual emphasis. That is the purpose of this inclusion.

The word translated “gift “ is doreas” (δῶρεας) which literally means gift or grant. It is a royal picture. A citizen begs the king for a piece of land. The “gift” is the deed that the king gave in response to the request.

In Nehemiah 2:3 he asked the king for permission to leave and return to Jerusalem. The king gave the permission and gave papers entitling Nehemiah to trees, etc. The word “gift” is emphatically modified by “the heavenly.” The word translated “heavenly” is “epouraniou” (ἐπουρανίου) which means heaven. It is the opposite of earthly. It is used to indicate the abode of God. The heavenly gift is salvation. To speak of having tasted of the heavenly gift – salvation – is a way of saying that they possess this gift of salvation as well as an eternal abode. This information is crucial. It is a way of saying that this person was saved.

“AND HAVE BEEN MADE PARTAKERS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT”

The use of the word “and” placed between each of these qualities ties them together on equal footing. The wording of this phrase in the Greek text is a bit different. One might translate it, “And sharing becoming Spirit Holy”. We will look more carefully at each of these words. The word translated “made” is “genaethentas” (γεννηθέντας) which means to become. The form of this word is, again, aorist participle. With great emphasis, it describes a way of life, not a single action. The word translated “partakers” or “sharing” is “metoxos” (μέτοχος) which is a compound word.

A. (meta) means “with.

B. (Ecw) means to have

It means to share. It is to be a partner. It means to participate. It is to be a companion. It describes one’s origin, birth. It is to be brought into existence. The words translated “Spirit Holy” are “pneumatōs Hagioū” (πνεύματος ἁγίου). It literally means Holy Spirit. It identifies the third person of the Trinity. It modifies the word “companion,” or “sharing” or “partakers.” The Holy Spirit does not share fellowship with the unregenerate. The Holy Spirit convicts the unregenerate of sin. This is a way to describe a way of life in which every moment; every experience is totally shared with the Holy Spirit. He is a total participant in all we are and do. We completely share in all that the Spirit is doing. The author said that these people were partakers of the Holy Spirit. We must, therefore, conclude that they are forgiven and share a guiding relationship with the Holy Spirit.

“And have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, Hebrews 6:5

“HAVE TASTED OF THE GOOD WORD OF GOD”

Again, the author resorted to picturesque language. The word translated “tasted” is “geusamenous” (γευσσάμενους) which means to experience; to taste. Once more, the form is aorist participle which emphatically describes a way of life. The “good word of God” is a descriptive way of identifying these things:

A. The Scriptures.

B. The teachings of Jesus.

C. The example of Jesus.

D. The character of God.

There is no doubt that this is a reference to Scripture, but it is also more. It describes both statements and events. These people have the privilege of experiencing the power and faithfulness of God through that which He does in the struggles of their lives.

“(THOSE WHO HAVE TASTED) OF THE POWERS OF THE AGE TO COME”

“The age to come” is a reference to eternal life. Again, “tasted “ is a picturesque way of describing salvation, a participation in the family of God. We must conclude that this too is a description of a person

STUDY OF CHAPTER 6

who has been forgiven his sin. He spoke of “powers of the age to come” This is the experience of God’s limitless power here and now, but which we will experience beyond description in a future age.

And then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God, and put Him to open shame. Hebrews 6:6

“AND THEN HAVE FALLEN AWAY”

The use of the word “and” indicates that this is a series of events. The word translated “fallen” is *parapesontas* (παράπεσόντας) which means to slip aside. It is translated “fallen away.” It is to deviate from the right path. It is to wander. It is to be involved in error. It is falling from the worship of God.

All of these descriptives involve two things:

- A. Being first on the right path
- B. Failing that relationship and abandoning it.

The form of this word is aorist active participle:

- A. Aorist – this is an emphasis on action and not on the timing.
- B. Active – The subject is doing the action.
- C. Participle – This is ongoing action.

This is not a single incident, but a way of life. The final event in the series is a picturesque way of identifying a person who has faith and then abandons it. In some circles this is referred to as losing one’s salvation.

“IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO RENEW THEM AGAIN TO REPENTANCE.”

Again, it is impossible to renew a person to repentance if that person has never repented. The word translated “renew” is *anakainidzo* (ἀνακαίνιζω) which means to renew; to renovate. In each instance there is an element of restoring something that was there before. Observe that both the words “renew” and “again” suggest the same thing – the author is talking about a person who once had a saving relationship and then lost/abandoned it.

For ground that drinks the rain which often falls upon it and brings forth vegetation useful to those for whose sake it is also tilled, receives a blessing from God; Hebrews 6:7

The author turns to a natural illustration. The author suggests a conditional statement that everyone would understand. This is a land where there is not that much rain. IF the ground receives the rain. IF the ground brings forth vegetation that people can use. THEN God will bless that situation. This is what every farmer would expect.

But if it yields thorns and thistles, it is worthless and close to being cursed, and it ends up being burned. Hebrews 6:8

Remember, verses seven and eight form a single sentence. This verse begins with the word “but.” It indicates that this is the middle of a serious contrast.

The contrast is between the “given” of verse seven and the surprise possibility of verse eight. Verse eight is a second conditional statement in this two verse sentence. IF this well-watered ground produces thorns and thistles. These two items are some of the most useless things the ground can produce.

THEN the author evaluated the production. It is worthless. It sounds as though it is a matter of having no redeeming value. It is more than that. The word translated “worthless” is *adokimos* (ἄδοκιμος). It means worthless, but there is more. It is also translated “reprobate” or “castaway.” It describes something that is unfit. It was also used dealing with metal that was judged unfit to be made into coins.

“CLOSE TO BEING CURSED”

The word translated “cursed” is *katara* (κατάρα). It is translated “cursed” on five occasions. It also carries the idea of imprecation – pleading with God to devastate and destroy. This is one of the worst possible attacks.

“IT ENDS UP BEING BURNED”

This is a picture of total uselessness. It was their idea of total tragedy.

HEBREWS 6:9-12 – AUTHOR’S CONVICTION OF RECIPIENTS STRONG FAITH

But, beloved, we are convinced of better things concerning you, and things that accompany salvation, though we are speaking in this way. Hebrews 6:9

“BUT BELOVED”

The word “but” indicates another strong contrast is in process, but it is different from the previous one. The previous contrast was between 6:7 and 6:8. This contrast, however, is much broader in scope. In 6:1-8, the author has spelled out the spiritual failures of some of those to whom he wrote. It was not a pretty picture.

In 6:9-12, the author hastened to indicate that these people were known for their righteous works and their love. However, the author does not want to demoralize his readers. In this paragraph, the author wants to encourage the recipients and still expose their weakness. Observe his description of these believers. The word translated “beloved” is “agapetos” (ἀγαπητός). The root word is “agape”. It identifies love without limits and conditions. This indicates how precious these people were to the author who chastises them.

“WE ARE CONVINCED”

The word translated “persuaded” or “convinced” is “episeio” (ἐπισεύω) which means to be persuaded or convinced. It is to be absolutely certain. The form of this word is perfect indicative passive:

- A. Perfect – past action with present consequences.
- B. Indicative mood – This is a simple declaration of action.
- C. Passive voice – the subject receives the action.

This is a simple statement that past experience has created a favorable impression of the recipients in the mind of the author.

“OF BETTER THINGS”

The word translated “better” is “kreiton” (κρείττων). It means superior. It is sometimes translated profitable. It was also translated useful.

“AND THINGS THAT BELONG TO SALVATION”

The word “and” indicates that the previous ideas in this verse are being continued. The word translated “having to do” is “exo” (ἔχω). The word literally means belonging to. He has used the word to describe what should be anticipated when a person has been forgiven of their sins. The form of this word is present participle.

- A. Present tense – It means to begin and never stop – it describes a lifestyle.
- B. Participle – This is ongoing action.

The author emphasized ongoing action by using two forms which both emphasize ongoing action.

The word translated “salvation” is “sotaerias” (σωτηρίας). There is a quality of life that befits those who are saved. It sets them apart from the rest of humanity

For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name, in having ministered and in still ministering to the saints. Hebrews 6:10

“FOR GOD IS NOT UNRIGHTEOUS”

The word “for” indicates that a reason for previous statements is about to be given. The way this statement is worded presents a strong emphasis on the author’s words. The statement is presented in the negative for purposes of emphasis. To say, “God is not unrighteous” is a way to emphasize the righteousness of God.

“SO AS TO FORGET”

The word translated “forget” is “epilambanomai” (ἐπιλαμβάνομαι) which is a compound word:

STUDY OF CHAPTER 6

1. Epi – means upon.
2. Lambano - means to hide, ignore or hold secretly.

It means to seize. It is to take hold of something. The form of the word is aorist infinitive:

- A. The aorist –simple past action.
- B. The infinitive – it expresses unitary action – to forget, to ignore

The word translated “work” is “ergon” (ἔργον) is the opposite of rest. It describes an accomplishment. It is the compliment of faith as one would find in the book of James. The word “and” indicates that what follows is a vital part of what has just been expressed.

“THE LOVE YOU HAVE SHOWN TOWARD HIS NAME”

The word translated “love” is “agapae” (ἀγαπή) which is love without limits or conditions. It is to be loved just because you are. It is self-sacrificing and seeks no response.

The word translated “you have shown” is “enedeizasthe” (ἐνεδείξασθε) which is outward proof. It is to demonstrate a quality of life. The form of the word is aorist indicative middle:

- A. The aorist tense – used to add emphasis to the statement.
- B. Indicative – a simple declaration of action
- C. Middle voice – The subject is involved in the action.

The author gives some additional information in the form he used for this word. There is a strong emphasis in the simplicity of the form:

He chose middle voice – the subject is involved in the action, but not uniquely so. There must be room for God to share this change in their lives. The author speaks of love shown toward the name of God. It is not love shown toward the saints, though it involves them. We need to recognize that names held a much more prominent place in that time than they do today. The author is talking about a great love which enabled these people to sacrifice because of their love for God.

“IN HAVING MINISTERED AND STILL MINISTERING”

The word translated “having ministered” is “diakonaesantes” (διακονήντες) which is the source of our word “deacon.” It means to give aid and support. It is to serve where needed. It is to serve God in special ministry. The form of the word is– Aorist active participle

- A. Aorist tense – adds emphasis to the statement.
- B. Active – The subject performs the action.
- C. Participle – This is unending action.

“TO THE SAINTS”

The word translated “saints” is “hagios” (ἅγιος) which means – holy ones. It is addressed to the saints. This does not mean that they were faultless. It does mean that they were very human, but still holy.

And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end, Hebrews 6:11

“AND WE DESIRE THAT EACH ONE OF YOU”

In the Greek text, the sentence does not begin with the word “and” but with the word “but” (δὲ) which indicates that we are in the midst of a contrast.

The contrasted elements are as follows:

In verse 10 the author talked about the way God evaluates our actions. In verse 11 he talked about the desire that he and those with him had for these Jewish believers.

The word translated “desire” is “epithoumouomen” (ἐπιθυμοῦμεν) which identifies a burning desire, in a good sense. It is to long for.

The form of the word is present indicative active:

Present tense – action begins and never ends.

Indicative mood – simple declaration of action.

Active voice – the subject performs the action

The author is talking about a burning desire that never goes away. The author has used one of the strongest possible ways of saying just how intensely they desire. Observe that this is the first person plural. The author is not alone in this driving desire. He has not indicated the names of those who share this burning desire. The Greek words used in the translation, “every one of you,” show that the author has used very strong emphasis in his indication that this is for every one of these persecuted believers.

“SHOW THE SAME DILIGENCE”

The word translated “show” is “endeikumi” (ἐνεδείκωμι) which means to show. It is to demonstrate. In the best sense, to prove by one’s actions. The form of the word is present infinitive middle:

- A. Present tense – action begins and never ends.
- B. Infinitive – This is a verbal noun.
- C. Middle voice – the subject is involved in the action.

The use of the middle voice is very significant. It highlights the fact that the subject is involved in this proving conduct. It just as strongly highlights the fact that the subject cannot perform this alone. Unless God is the main source of the action, with the subjects participation, nothing is going to happen.

The word translated “same” is “pros” (πρός) which literally means “toward.” It indicates a close proximity. It is a word they commonly used to express what we mean when we say “same.”

The word translated “diligence” is “spoudaen” (σπουδῆν). It expresses a genuine commitment. It describes an eagerness growing out of deep devotion. The author parallels devotion based eagerness with the ministering to the saints previously mentioned. We must be reminded that these are severely persecuted believers. Under such circumstances, the tendency is to forget about others and focus on one’s own survival. The author is trying to forestall that tendency.

“SO AS TO REALIZE THE FULL ASSURANCE OF HOPE”

The deliberate use and placement of words in this statement suggests some very strong emphasis. The word “realize” does not appear as such in the Greek text. It should be noted, however, that the inclusion of the word “realize” does not constitute a poor translation. It is in line with the author’s intent.

The word translated “full” is “pleroopheria” (πληροφορία) which is most certain confidence. It is an assurance that has no hesitation. This is an attempt to describe absolute conviction that has no reservations whatsoever.

The word translated “hope” is “elpis” (ἐλπίς) which means a joyful expectation of eternal salvation. This is our ultimate hope.

“UNTIL THE END”

The word translated “until” is archi” (ἄρχι) which is usually translated “until”. In each instance it points to the future. The word translated “end” is “telos” (τέλος) which means fulfillment. It is the opposite of beginning. It suggests termination. It describes the best experience of completion.

“That you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. Hebrews 6:12

“THAT YOU BE NOT SLUGGISH”

The word “but” does not appear in the Greek text. The word “hina” (ἵνα) does appear in the Greek text. The word “hina” is usually translated “in order that.” The word translated “be” is genaesthe” (γένησθε) means to become. It is sometimes described as “come to be.” It can also mean established. In each definition, there is the element of becoming what one had not previously been.

The form of the word is aorist subjunctive middle:

- A. Aorist tense – simple past action
- B. Subjunctive mood – This form expresses possibility
- C. Middle voice – The subject is involved in the action.

STUDY OF CHAPTER 6

The use of the middle voice might pass unnoticed. That would be unfortunate. By the use of the middle voice, the author is really saying that this cannot happen without the individual's compliance.

The word translated "sluggish" is "nothros" (νοθρός) means lazy, sluggish." It is most often used in the New Testament to describe one who is slow to understand spiritually. This might be blamed on a number of things, but at root it focuses on the fact that the spiritual life of the individual is such that the spiritual awareness is not what it needs to be.

"BUT IMITATORS OF THOSE WHO THROUGH FAITH"

The word translated "but" is "de" (δέ). The use of the word "but" here is the best translation. it indicates that it is in the midst of serious contrast. The contrasted elements are as follows:

- A. The "sluggish" person on the one hand.
- B. The imitation of those who inherit the promises because of faith and patience on the other hand.

The word translated "imitators" is "mimaetaes" (μιμητάς) which means imitator, follower; One who follows another's example. It also identifies an actor- as used in Ephesians 5:1 – "imitators of God." The form is the aorist tense, as used in this instance, identifies a decisive action which has permanent, unending results.

The word translated "through" is "dia" (διὰ). This word is usually translated "through". It was sometimes translated "on account of" or "because of." I would prefer "because of." In each instance, however, it points to a cause.

The word translated "faith" is "pistis" (πίστις) which is a trust sufficient to rely upon; the Christian virtue of commitment based upon unrealized results. Certainty that God and righteousness are still winning even though you are nailed to a cross.

"AND PATIENCE INHERIT THE PROMISES"

The use of the word "and" indicates that which preceded and that which follows are equal and part of each other. The word translated "patience" is makrothumia (μακροθυμία) which It means endurance. It identifies steadfastness. It is a military term that means to stand under authority. The whole thrust of this sentence is that there is a prerequisite if one is to survive such an attack successfully. If there is no faith coupled with patience, there can be no victory over the inevitable attacks by evil. The author found it necessary to make this statement because that combination was obviously lacking in the people to whom he was writing.

HEBREWS 6:13-20 – OUR STEADFAST HOPE

For when God made the promise to Abraham, since He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, Hebrews 6:13

In this paragraph, there are four complete sentences. Verses 13 through 15 form a complete sentence.

"FOR WHEN GOD MADE THE PROMISE TO ABRAHAM"

The use of the word "for" "gar" (γάρ) indicates that this paragraph begins with an explanation of the issues from the previous paragraph. The word translated "promise" is "epangelamenos" (ἐπαγγελάμενος). It is an announcement that a person is about to do something. It can be used to claim the ability to perform. It is to make a binding agreement.

The form of the word is aorist middle participle.

- A. Aorist tense – simple past action
- B. Middle voice – the subject is involved in the action.
- C. Participle – This is ongoing activity. It describes a lifestyle rather than a single act.

One might translate this, "when God was making promise." It describes an ongoing relationship between God and Abraham. This was a promise that was to always be considered in the process of being active. This promise was an eternal one. This gives us a very different picture of what was happening in that

situation. It is interesting to note that the author chose to use the example of God's promise to Abraham. There are a number of other prominent people in the history of Israel that could have been used. It has to be that Abraham is the first one to be called a Jew.

Also, God made the original covenant with Abraham and the ongoing nature of this relationship is vital to the author's case in this presentation.

“SINCE HE COULD SWEAR BY NO ONE GREATER”

The word translated “since” is “epei” (ἐπει). This word is usually translated “when” or “because.” The translators have used the word “since” which describes a result. The word “because” might be a better choice because it points to a reason for a given action. That appears to fit this situation best. The word that is translated “could” is “exo” (ἐξω). The word is usually translated “have.” The use of the word “could” is a bit more interpretive than it is a translation, but it is not a faulty use. This is a picture of a divine dilemma. When a covenant is made, one usually offers some stronger verification to support the promise.

The Greek word “kata” (κατά) is a preposition. The inclusion of this word clearly adds strong emphasis to the author's statement. The choice of words in the rest of the sentence adds further evidence of the strength of this emphasis.

The word translated “swear” is “omnuo” (ὀμνύω). As we have seen before, this means taking an oath, but it is more. It literally means to grasp a sacred object. This adds intensity to the oath being taken. Illustration – In our culture, when a person is about to give testimony in court, they place their hand on the Bible and promise to tell the whole truth.

The word translated “by no one” is “oudenos” (οὐδενός). It means “none,” but it is stronger than that. It really means emphatically, “no, not even one.” This is the strong emphasis of which we previously spoke.

The word translated “greater” is “megas” (μέγας) which means “great.” It was used particularly in situations attempting to describe the superlative. For instance descriptions of space, strength and intensity. In verse 14, we will deal with this more carefully. For now, suffice it to say that God was simply following the cultural norm of swearing by something or someone greater than the one making the oath.

“HE SWORE BY HIMSELF”

The word translated “swore” is “omnuo” (ὀμνύω). This is the same word used previously in this verse. It means to swear, to grasp a sacred object as an oath is taken. The form of the word is aorist active infinitive:

- A. Aorist tense – simple past action.
- B. Active voice – the subject performs the action.
- C. Infinitive – a verb functioning as a noun – i.e.- “asked him to go”

This form choice stresses emphasis by the simplicity of its choices. It emphasizes precisely what God did. The word translated “by” is “kath” (καθ). This preposition is often translated “against.” There is a reason for choosing this word. When an oath is taken, there is an attempt to provide verbal collateral. It is like saying, the one by whom I swear will stand behind my oath.

The word translated “himself” is eautou” (ἐαυτοῦ). It is usually translated “himself.” It, again, adds emphasis as God presents an oath which cannot be changed. The author has been attempting to deal with a bit of a dilemma. It was customary that when any oath was taken, it should be considered very seriously. Indeed the Jews thought that every oath was taken between two individuals or groups, but that God was the invisible third party to the oath. Any oath that you make; you make also with God. The dilemma is that God is the one making this oath. He has no one greater than Himself to bring as verbal collateral to this promise. Thus, He was forced to swear by Himself because there was no one greater to whom He could appeal.

Saying, "I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply you." Hebrews 6:14

STUDY OF CHAPTER 6

The word translated “saying” is “legon” (λέγων). The word means to speak. It is to lay out in orderly fashion. The form of the word is present active participle:

- A. Present tense – Begin and never stop – it is a picture of a lifestyle, not a single action.
- B. Active voice – The subject carries out the action.
- C. Participle – ongoing action.

The present tense and the participial form give great emphasis to the idea of ongoing action. It is very clear that because the author chose the present tense and the participial form he is dealing with more than a simple statement of the words of an oath.

He strongly emphasizes that God said the words and never intended to stop saying them forever. That is the kind of covenant He wants to make. The author inserted the Greek word “ei” (εἰ) though it is not translated in the English text. This word is usually translated “if” or “whether.”

The important thing about the use of this word is that this conjunction is used in conditional situations. We will need to keep this in mind.

“I WILL SURELY BLESS YOU”

The word translated “surely” is “maen” (μῆν). It is sometimes translated “naturally.” The use of this word adds an element of conviction, of certainty to what is being said. It is a way of saying, there is no possible way I will fail to do this.

The next two words, in the Greek text, are forms of the same word. The word translated “blessing” is “eulogeo” (εὐλογέω). It means to praise or give thanks. It is sometimes translated “extol.” When this word is used of God, it carries the idea of conferring favor, blessing or benefit. The form of the word – Present active participle.

- A. Present tense – begin and continue the action. This is a lifestyle.
- B. Participle – ongoing action
- C. Active voice – the subject performs the action.

The intentional use of both the present tense and the participial form adds great emphasis to the idea that God will never stop blessing Abraham. This is a never-ending promise.

The word translated “I will bless you” is “eulogaeso” (εὐλογήσω). This is the same word for “blessing” that was previously described. The form of the word is future indicative active.

- A. Future tense – action that will begin at a time in the future.
- B. Indicative mood – A simple declaration of action.
- C. Active voice – The subject performs the action.

There is a dramatic emphasis in these words. The author used the word “blessing” twice. Repetition is the most common means of emphasis in the Bible. The forms the author used with this repeated word suggest continuous action that will not end in the future.

The word “se” (σέ) means “you.” The word would be understood even if it were not written. The inclusion of the word adds strong emphasis to the statement.

“AND MULTIPLYING I WILL MULTIPLY YOU”

The use of the word “and” places the word translated “multiplying” on an equal basis with the word “blessing.” The word translated “multiplying” is “plaethunwn” (πληθύνων). It means to multiply. It is to accumulate, to increase. This would be particularly significant seeing Abraham was childless. Again the form of this word is Present active participle.

- A. Present tense – begin and never stop. This describes a lifestyle.
- B. Participle – ongoing action.

Active voice – the subject performs the action.

As with the use of the word translated “blessing,” the author used two strong forms which both describe ongoing action in order to emphasize what God was really promising to do. One might present the intent of God’s promise, “I will never stop blessing and multiplying you.”

Again, God used the same word twice with different forms as He did with the promise of blessing. The word translated “multiplying” is future indicative active:

- A. Future tense – action that will begin at a future time.
- B. Indicative mood – a simple declaration.
- C. Active voice – the subject performs the action.

The author of the epistle repeatedly uses this kind of form construction. It is just one more way to stress a point that has already been emphasized.

Again, the use of the word “se” (σέ) places dramatic emphasis on the fact that God intended this promise to be exclusively for Abraham.

And thus, having patiently waited, he obtained the promise. Hebrews 6:15

“AND THUS HAVING PATIENTLY WAITED”

Again, the sentence begins with the word “kai” (καὶ) which means “and.” It means that the content of this verse is a vital part of the content of verse 14.

The word translated “thus” is (ὧτως). The word is variously translated “thus”, “or,” “in this way” or “in such a condition.” It indicates that the author is presenting information that will clarify his intentions.

“HE OBTAINED THE PROMISE”

The word translated “having patiently waited” is “makrothumias” (μακροθυμίας) which means to be slow to react. It is to be forbearing with great restraint.

The form of the word is aorist active participle:

- A. Aorist tense – simple past action.
- B. Active voice – The subject performs the action.
- C. Participle - This is ongoing action.

Our knowledge of Abraham’s life reminds us that he was not just patient once, but over and over for years. The word translated “he obtained” is “epitogxano” (ἐπιτογχάνω). It means to find; It is to obtain; To experience or attain. The form of the word – aorist indicative active:

- A. Aorist tense – simple past action.
- B. Indicative mood – Simple declaration of action.
- C. Active voice – the subject performs the action.

This form, because of its simplicity, adds unusual emphasis to the statement.

The word translated promise is “epangelias” (ἐπαγγελίας). It means An assurance. This word is most often used of God’s pronouncements that provide assurance of what He intends to do.

For men swear by one greater than themselves, and with them an oath given as confirmation is an end of every dispute. Hebrews 6:16

Our text shows that verse 16 is a complete sentence and verses 17-18 form another complete sentence. The Greek text does not read in this manner. In the Greek text, 6:16-20 form a single sentence. We will need to keep this in mind as we study the passage.

“FOR MEN SWEAR BY ONE GREATER THAN THEMSELVES”

The use of the word “for” indicates that verse 16 is an explanation of the content of verse 15. Verse 16 is an explanation of the purpose and method of an oath. The author spoke of this as something that men do. This is a generic use of the word “men” (ἄνθρωπος). Basically, business dealings were conducted by men. The author’s intent might better be translated by “people.”

The word translated “swear” is “omnuousin” (ὀμνύουσιν). It means to take an oath. It literally means to place one’s hand on a sacred object as we observed earlier.

The form of the word is present indicative active:

- A. Present tense – begin to act and never stop. This is a lifestyle.

STUDY OF CHAPTER 6

B. Indicative mood – simple declaration of action;

C. Active voice – The subject performs the action.

It is a way of saying that this is the way an oath was always initiated.

The word translated “by” is “kata” (κατά). This word is most often translated as “against.” If properly understood, it indicates that the one who becomes the foundation for the oath is most dependable.

The word translated “greater” is “megas” (μέγας). It means larger by any measure – space, number, etc.

It can also mean mighty. It is to be greater or mighty. This is a comparative. The word “than” is understood, but does not appear in the Greek text.

The author’s use of the word “and” “kai” (καί) indicates that what follows is a continuation of the previous part of the sentence. The word translated “every” is “pasaes” (πάσης). This is a superlative reference. “All” or “every” both indicate that none are excluded.

“AND WITH THEM AN OATH GIVEN AS CONFIRMATION”

The word translated “oath” is “horkos” (ὄρκος) which means a summary statement of what is involved in the agreement. It includes a dependable, changeless promise to comply with every term of the agreement. The recipient of this oath has every reason to rest assured that the other party will faithfully comply with the terms of this agreement.

The word translated “confirmation” is “bibaiosis” (βιβαίωσις). This is a legal term. A better term might be “settlement for the dispute.” The confirmation is ended when the offender makes his oath, promise to compensate. This is worded like a reminder. Granted, the explanation is rather extensive for just being a reminder to people who knew it well. It may indicate that there were some gentiles among the persecuted believers who did not understand this well at all.

“IS AN END OF EVERY DISPUTE”

The word translated “end” is “peras” (πέρως). It literally means boundary or conclusion. The word “final” would also be appropriate. The word translated “dispute” is “antilogos” (ἀντιλογίας). This word identifies a controversy. It is sometimes used to describe rebellion against authority. Dispute is a broader term. The author was saying that if there is a dispute over the terms of an agreement, an oath will satisfy both parties involved and the dispute will be ended.

In the same way God, desiring even more to show to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, interposed with an oath, Hebrews 6:17

“IN THE SAME WAY, GOD”

Hebrews 6:17, 18 form a complete sentence.

The words translated “in the same way,” which would identify a comparison, are quite different in the Greek text. We will deal carefully with the wording of the Greek text.

1. “En ho” (ἐν ᾧ) means “in this.”
2. “Ho theos” (ὁ θεός) means “the God.” This is a more emphatic way to say what he meant.

“DESIRING EVEN MORE”

The word “boulomenos” [βουλόμενος) means a desire, or divine wish or divine intent. The content points to what God intends by His actions and choices. The form is Present middle participle.

1. Present tense – action begins and continues.
2. Middle voice – the subject participates in the action.
3. Participle – ongoing action.

The form here is very important. The author used two forms that both indicate continuing action to emphasize that this is always happening. These forms, when together, tend to identify a lifestyle. He used the middle voice to show that God is working His will through and in conjunction with us.

The word translated “even more” is “perissoteron” (περισσότερον) which means that which is exceedingly great; that which is more than something else – a superlative comparison.

“TO SHOW TO THE HEIRS OF THE PROMISE”

The word translated “to show” is “epedeizai” (ἐπιδείξαι) which means to show beyond a doubt; to demonstrate convincingly.

The form of the word is aorist infinitive:

- A. Aorist – simple past action.
- B. Infinitive – a verbal noun.

These two forms used together express unitary action.

The word translated “heirs” is “klaeronomois” (κληρονόμοις). It means the one receiving an allotted portion; A receiver. This is plural. It also identifies family.

The word translated “promise” is “epangelias” (ἐπαγγελίας). Originally this word meant an announcement. It became an announcement of what the person intended to do. In the case of Joseph, it was simply the presentation of the coat with long sleeves.

“THE UNCHANGEABLENESS OF HIS PURPOSE”

The word translated “unchangeableness” is “ametatheton” (ἀμετάθετον) which means never changing. It is unalterable. It is the basis for our word immutable.

The word translated “counsel” or “purpose” is “boulaes” (βουλῆς) which identifies the thought process leading to a serious decision. The inner deliberation one pursues in considering motive. It suggests great carefulness in evaluating a situation.

The question immediately arises, in view of their knowledge of God’s faithfulness to their people, why would it possibly be necessary to include an oath? In Malachi chapter three you find these words and they knew them well:

“For I, the Lord, do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed.” Malachi 3:6

“INTERPOSED WITH AN OATH”

The word translated “interposed” is “emesiteusen” (ἐμεσίτευσεν). This is an action that guarantees promised results. It is the surety of a contracted obligation. The form of the word is aorist indicative active

- A. Aorist – simple past action.
- B. Indicative mood – Simple declaration of action.
- C. Active voice – The subject performs the action.

The strong simplicity of these forms provides the strong emphasis the author sought.

The word translated “oath” is “orkos” (ὄρκος) which means a vow; a statement solemnly sworn. It is a way to strongly emphasize the importance and severity of the statement. It was necessary for the author to remind these people of the strong presentation of the changelessness of God because they were suffering greatly and had been for a long time. It was beginning to appear that God had forgotten them.

In order that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we may have strong encouragement, we who have fled for refuge in laying hold of the hope set before us. Hebrews 6:18

“IN ORDER THAT BY TWO UNCHANGEABLE THINGS”

The word translated “in order that” is “hina” (ἵνα) which means that. It is also translated “so that”: in order that. The author used this conjunction to indicate that a statement of purpose is forthcoming.

The word translated “unchangeable” is “ametatheton” (ἀμεταθέτον) which means unalterable. It is also translated never changing. It is the basis of our English word – immutable. The author spoke of two

STUDY OF CHAPTER 6

things which cannot be changed. There is some difference of opinion about the identity of these things. The context is helpful.

1. God gave a PROMISE
2. God supported that promise with an OATH

God cannot lie, so these two things are unchangeable.

“IN WHICH IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR GOD TO LIE”

The word translated “impossible” is *adunatos* (ἀδύνατος). This is a compound word:

1. A – means not
2. Dunatos – powerful or able or strong

There are two New Testament words that are translated “impossible”

1. Adunatos – means not strong
2. anondektos – means inadmissible,

The author chose “adunatos” (ἀδύνατος). He was not saying that God is weak. He was saying that His holy character would not permit Him to lie. The word translated “lie” is “*pseusasthai*” (ψεύσασθαι). It means to tell what is not true. It is to mislead; It is to deceive. This covers more than falsehood. It also includes misleading and deception, the same as falsehood. The author never wrote, “These are the two things in which it is impossible for God to lie...” If you reread chapter 6, however, you can identify them:

1. God made a promise and they knew that God never changes.
2. God sealed that promise with an unchangeable oath.

“WE MAY HAVE STRONG ENCOURAGEMENT”

The word translated “we have” is “*exomen*” (ἔχωμεν). There is a wide range of meanings for this word. It is focused by the context. In each instance, it stresses possession. It is used to describe having a disease. It is used to describe old age – have years. The form of the word is present active conjunctive.

- A. Present tense – begin and never cease. It describes a lifestyle.
- B. Active voice – the subject performs the action.
- C. Subjunctive mood – it expresses possibility

This is not a guarantee. It has not yet happened with these suffering believers. Still, the author presents this as a lifestyle to which these suffering saints are able to experience by the grace of God.

The word translated “strong” is “*iskuran*” (ἰσχυρόν). It means Strong and healthy – the opposite of weak and sickly; Mighty; more powerful.

The word translated “encouragement” is “*paraklaesin*” (παράκλησιν). This word comes from the courts.

It identified the attorney who stood beside the accused in court. It is the Biblical word associated with the Holy Spirit. The result of the Spirit’s presence at our side in our time of persecution is that there is a calm strength that belies the danger that appears before us.

“WE WHO HAVE FLED FOR REFUGE”

The word translated “who” is “*oi*” (οἱ). This word is demonstrative in nature. It adds strong identification and emphasis.

The word translated “have fled” is *kataphugontes* (καταφυγόντες). Literally, it means to flee for refuge.

It is to take refuge in a time of great danger. It is what Jesus intended when he instructed the people, “flee to the mountains.”

The form of the word is aorist active participle:

- A. Aorist tense – this is simple past action – “we have...”
- B. Active voice – the subject performs the action.
- C. Participle – this is action that never ceases.

The Superior Jesus

The beauty of this statement is that the author has described a safety net that never ceases to be ours no matter how grave the danger may be.

The Greek text speaks with greater impact. The word translated “laying hold” is “krataesai” (κρατῆσαι). It means to take into custody; to seize control. It is to grasp forcefully. The form of this word is aorist active infinitive:

- A. The aorist tense – simple past action
- B. active voice – the subject performs the action.
- C. Infinitive – an aorist infinitive expresses action that is singular in focus.

It is, therefore, very direct and intensely forceful. That is exactly what the author sought to portray. Notice that this is the second word in this verse that expresses great strength. It is the strong encouragement of the Holy Spirit. It is forceful taking hold of hope. The former is the result of the limitless power of the Holy Spirit to encourage us. The latter is the result of what happens in us when the Spirit has provided that strength.

The word translated “hope” is “elpidos” (ἐλπίδος). This is hopeful confidence. It is the Christian attitude of patiently waiting, in pain, in an atmosphere of faith and love. Observe that these are descriptions rather than definitions. It is not, however, less meaningful and powerful because of that.

“SET BEFORE US”

The word translated “set before us” is “prokeimenaes” (προκειμένης). It is to be on public display; to be exposed to view like a dead body. It is an attitude – “be there.” The form of the word is present middle participle:

- A. Present tense – begin and never stop – picture of a lifestyle rather than a single act.
- B. Middle voice – the subject participates, shares in the action.
- C. Participle – ongoing action.

Again, in a dramatic way, the author has used two forms which both present continuing action. The repetition places great emphasis on this attitude. This is not the result of our own singular strength, but rather the result of the cooperative effort between the Holy Spirit impacting the believers who are totally convinced of the outcome.

“This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil, ” Hebrews 6:19

* Verses 19 and 20 form a complete sentence.

“THIS HOPE WE HAVE AS AN ANCHOR FOR THE SOUL”

The word translated “which” is a reference to the hope mentioned in 6:18. The word translated “anchor” is “agkuran” (ἄγκυραν). The word “ankos” (ανκος) literally means a curve. In the ancient world, the anchor was their best illustration of something absolutely dependable.

The word translated “we have” is “exomen” (ἔχομεν). We have seen this word previously in chapter 6. It is to possess as our property. It is to have like a disease – “he has cancer.” It was used as a description of growing older – to have years. The emphasis is always on possession. The form of the word is present active indicative:

- A. Present tense – a lifestyle, it is to act and never cease the action.
- B. Active voice – the subject performs the action.
- C. Indicative mood – this is a simple declaration of action.

It is saying that this hope is always ours. This hope becomes the lifestyle that defines the way we live our lives.

The word translated “soul” is “psukaes” (ψυχήs). It is sometimes rendered “breath.” It is that which we consider the life principle. That part of the human life which defines one’s purpose for living. That which separates mankind from all the rest of creation.

This hope is that which renders human life meaningful in the midst of apparent meaninglessness and certain destruction.

“A HOPE BOTH SURE AND STEADFAST”

The word “hope,” in this instance, does not appear in the Greek text. We must keep in mind, however, that it is definitely understood to be part of the textual idea.

The word translated “sure” is *asphalae* (ἀσφαλῆ). It describes something absolutely reliable. It is a safe course of action. That which is free from danger. In the Greek text the word “and” renders it far more emphatic. Repetition is the ancient means of emphasis. The Greek text has two words instead of one that are translated “and.” The word “te” is a conjunction and is sometimes rendered “and.” The word “kai” is almost always rendered “and.” It is not that the Greek text should be translated “And, and.” It is that we should understand that the author places great emphasis on tying the two ideas together. The word translated “steadfast” is “bebaian” (βεβαίαν) which means secure; to be trustworthy; reliable

Both the words translated “sure” and “steadfast” refer to something reliable. The word translated “sure” tends to emphasize that which is correct and reliable. At the same time, the word translated “steadfast” emphasizes that which is reliable in standing against wrong.

“AND ONE WHICH ENTERS WITHIN THE VEIL”

The word translated “enters” is *eiserkomenaen* (εἰσερχομένην) which means to enter; to come into; to begin an experience. The form of the word is present middle participle:

- A. Present tense – begin and never stop – lifestyle
- B. Middle voice – the subject participates in the action
- C. Participle – Ongoing action.

The author used two forms that both indicate ongoing action. This was a way to strongly emphasize this ongoing action.

The word translated “within” is “eroteron” (ἐρώτερον) which means interior; farther in. The author was talking about moving from the holy place into the Holy of Holies. This, of course, is something that only the High Priest could do and only once in the year. It is obvious that the author does not have to explain the phrase “enters within the veil.” They already know that this is a reference to the high priest entering within the veil and serving in the immediate presence of God. The hope of which the author spoke was the coming of Jesus. This presumes that He is our High Priest, the one who enters into the Holy of Holies to make sacrifice for our sin.

The word translated “veil” is “katapetasmatos” (καταπετάσματος). It literally means curtain. It is the hanging which separates between the holy place and the Holy of Holies.

Where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek. Hebrews 6:20

“WHERE JESUS HAS ENTERED”

The word “where” refers to the Holy of Holies as mentioned in verse 19. You may remember that in the Gospel record, it mentions the fact that when Jesus died, the curtain between the holy place and the Holy of Holies was torn from top to bottom.

“AS A FORERUNNER FOR US”

Word translated “forerunner” is “prodromos” (πρόδρομος). It means one who goes ahead. This does not just describe order of persons acting. It is that which He has done on our behalf.

The word translated “for us” is “huper” (ὕπερ). It means on behalf of. For the sake of.

The word translated “for us” is “haemon” (ἡμῶν). It is the plural of I – “we.” It is added emphasis.

“HAVING BECOME A HIGH PRIEST FOREVER”

The word translated “having become” is “genmenos” (γενόμενος). It is to be; to become. The form of the word – aorist middle participle:

- A. Aorist tense – simple past action.
- B. Middle voice – the subject is involved in the action
- C. Participle – this is ongoing action.

This priesthood was not done on Jesus’ behalf, but he participated in the initiation of it. The word translated “High priest” is “archiereus” (ἀρχιερεὺς). This is the high priest. He was sometimes called chief priest, the leader of the priests at the temple. He was the one who interceded on behalf of all the people.

The words translated “forever” are “eis ton aionan” (εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα). The words literally mean “unto the age.” It is a way to describe eternity.

Timing of the priesthood was very important:

- A. Age 25 – they began their training.
- B. 30th. Birthday – baptized and serve at altar for first time.
- C. Age 50 – retire.

In first century this priesthood ceased to function.

JESUS’ HIGH PRIESTHOOD WAS DIFFERENT

- A. Age 30 – baptized and began His ministry
- B. He became the eternal high priest.

“ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF MELCHIZADEK”

The word translated “according to” is “kata” (κατὰ) and It literally means down from. In a sense, it means descended from in terms of leadership.

The word translated “order” is tadzin” (τάξις) which describes a sequence. Melchizadek was the first in order of his priesthood. The word translated “Melchizadek” is “melcisadek” (μελχισάδεκ) which deals with succession. The name “Melchizadek” is a compound word.

- 1. Melech – means king
- 2. Zadek – means righteousness.
- 3. He was the king of righteousness.

Jesus came from the tribe of Judah, not the tribe of Levi as all priests had done. He, therefore, did not qualify to be a priest in the tabernacle system. We know that Melchizadek was both a king and priest, but we do not know when he started or when he finished his priesthood. God the Father appointed Jesus a priest forever after the order of Melchizadek.

QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 7

HEBREWS 7:1 – 28

1. There are five paragraphs in Hebrews chapter 7. On the following table, write a brief summary of eight words or less for each paragraph.

7:1-3	
7:4-10	
7:11-19	
7:20-25	
7:26-28	

2. Hebrews 7:1-3 form a complete sentence.
- A. Verse one gives important information about Melchizedek.
1. Biblical names are always carefully chosen.
 - a. What does Melchizedek mean?
 - b. What does “Most High God” stand for?
 2. Where was Salem? What do we know about this place?
 3. How can we explain that Melchizedek was “king of Salem,” but also “priest of the Most High God”?
 4. What is the significance of the fact that Melchizedek MET Abraham?
 5. Why would the author include the fact that Melchizedek blessed Abraham?
- B. Hebrews 7:2 describes the encounter between Melchizedek and Abraham.
1. What is the significance of Abraham giving Melchizedek “a tenth of the spoils”?
 2. The author defined both the name of Melchizedek and the place over which he ruled. What would be gained for a Jewish audience by translating these Jewish titles?
- C. Hebrews 7:3 identifies Melchizedek with Jesus.
1. In this verse, the author mentioned four impossible situations:
 - a. What did he mean “without father”?
 - b. What did he mean “without mother”?
 - c. What did he mean “without genealogy”?
 - d. What did he mean “having neither beginning of days nor end of life”?
 2. There is a contrast in this verse. What are the contrasted elements?
 3. What is the point of this contrast?
 4. What did he mean, “Made like the Son of God”?
 5. What did he mean by, “He abides a priest perpetually (for ever)”?
3. Hebrews 7:4-10 – MELCHIZADEK BLESSED ABRAHAM
- A. Hebrews 7:4 is a complete sentence.
1. What would be different if the author had omitted the words, “The patriarch”?
 2. What point is the author trying to make in this sentence?
- B. Hebrews 7:5 is a complete sentence.
1. The author identified the temple participants in two ways:
 - a. What are these ways?
 - b. What is the point of this distinction?
 2. What is the author seeking to accomplish in this sentence? Why?
- C. Hebrews 7:6 is a complete sentence.
1. The use of the word “but” indicates that we are in the midst of a strong contrast.
 - a. What two issues are being contrasted here?

The Superior Jesus

- b. What is the author trying to say?
 2. What is the significance of the fact that the author spoke of “the one whose genealogy is not traced from them,” rather than the use of “Melchizadek”?
 3. In verse 6, the author spoke of “collecting a tenth” and “blessing the one who had the promises.”
 - a. What is the significance of each one?
 - b. What is the point of this message?
- D. Hebrews 7:7 is a complete sentence.
 1. What is the point of adding the phrase, “But without a doubt”?
 2. What difference could it make that the author wrote, “The lesser is blessed by the greater”?
 3. What is the author trying to achieve in writing this verse?
- E. Hebrews 7:8 is a complete sentence.
 1. To whom/what does he refer with the words “this case”?
 2. To whom/what does he refer with the words “that case”?
 3. In verse 8, there is a contrast. What are the components of this contrast?
 4. What does the author have in mind when he wrote, “Of whom it is witnessed that he lives on”?
 5. What is the purpose he seeks to achieve in this verse?
- F. Hebrews 7:9 is a complete sentence.
 1. Why did the author have to add the words, “So to speak”?
 2. How can we explain the message of this verse?
 3. What difference does it make?
- G. Hebrews 7:10 is a complete sentence.
 1. Identify the persons who are written of in this verse as “he,” “his” and “him.”
 2. This would be an awkward question in our culture. How important would it be in theirs?
4. Hebrews 7:11-19 there are seven complete sentences.
 - A. Hebrews 7:11 is a complete sentence.
 1. This sentence is a conditional (IF...THEN...) sentence.
 - a. What is the condition?
 - b. What is the consequence?
 2. How would you answer the author’s question in this verse?
 3. What is the author seeking to achieve in this verse?
 - B. Hebrews 7:12 is an explanation and is a complete sentence.
 1. In what way is this explanation true?
 2. What difference does it make?
 - C. Hebrews 7:13 is a complete sentence and a further explanation.
 1. What does this explanation add?
 2. What is the point of this explanation?
 - D. Hebrews 7:14 is yet another explanation and a complete sentence.
 1. This is careful logic which every Jew would be aware of and puzzled by.
 2. What is the author getting at here?
 3. What difference does it make?
 - E. Hebrews 7:15, 16 form a complete sentence.
 1. There is a contrast between verses 15 and 16. What are the elements of this contrast?
 2. What do the terms of this contrast mean?
 3. What does the author mean when he wrote, “The power of an indestructible life”?
 - F. Hebrews 7:17 is a complete sentence and offers a further explanation to the verses in this paragraph.
 1. This verse is a quotation from Psalm 110, which is a Messianic Psalm.
 - a. If you read Psalm 110:4, what is missing that would finish the author’s argument?
 - b. What does 7:17 attempt to achieve?

QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 7

2. In what way is this person “a priest forever”?
3. What would the author mean by the words, “After the order of Melchizadek”?
4. Again, what difference would this make?
- G. Hebrews 7:18, 19 form a complete sentence.
 1. In verse 18, the author referred to the law in terms of “weakness” and “uselessness”.
 - a. What is the difference between “weakness” and “uselessness”?
 - b. What would affect the law this way?
 - c. What does he mean by, “A setting aside of a former command”?
 - d. How can this be when according to the Scriptures God is changeless?
 2. Observe that in verse 19, the words “for the law made nothing perfect” are in parentheses. The Greek text does not include the parentheses, but the sense of these words is definitely parenthetical. What does the author mean by this phrase?
 3. In this sentence, (verses 18 and 19), the author wrote “on the one hand” and “on the other hand.” What is achieved by the inclusion of these words?
 4. What did he mean by, “there is a bringing in of a better hope”?
 - a. What was the former hope?
 - b. What is this “better hope”?
 5. What did he mean by “through which we draw near to God”? Were they not able, previously, to draw near to God?
 6. In this sentence, think of it in terms of a throne-room scene. What do you gain from that picture?
5. Hebrews 7:20-25 contain seven complete sentences.
 - A. Hebrews 7:20A reads as follows: “And in as much as it was not without an oath.”
 1. 7:20A is a complete sentence.
 2. In view of 7:20A and 7:20B, what is the point of mentioning that Jesus became a priest WITH an oath?
 3. Why would the author write “not without an oath,” when he certainly meant “with an oath”?
 - B. Hebrews 7:20B is a complete sentence.
 1. There is an obvious contrast between 7:20A and 7:20B. What are the elements of this contrast?
 2. What does this achieve?
 3. Why is this important?
 - C. Hebrews 7:21 is a complete sentence and reads as follows, “**but He with an oath through the one who said to Him, ‘the Lord hath sworn and will not change His mind, thou art a priest forever’**”.
 1. There is a contrast between 7:20B and 7:21.
 2. What are the contrasted elements?
 3. Who is the “One” referred to in this sentence?
 - D. Hebrews 7:22 is a complete sentence.
 1. In what way has Jesus become the “guarantee of a better covenant”?
 2. What would make this covenant “better”?
 - E. Hebrews 7:23 is a complete sentence.
 1. The use of the phrase “on the other hand” indicates that this is a contrast which is really a continuation of the previous contrast.
 2. There are two facts mentioned about Levitical priests in this sentence. What are they?
 3. What is the importance of these statements?
 - F. Hebrews 7:24 is a complete sentence.
 1. The word “but” indicates a continuing contrast and the words “on the other hand” add more emphasis to the statement.
 2. What difference does it make that Jesus “abides forever”?

The Superior Jesus

- G. Hebrews 7:25 is a complete sentence. Hebrews 7:25 is a complete sentence.
1. The use of the words “on the other hand” indicate that this is a contrast which is really a continuation of the previous contrast.
 2. There are two facts stated in this verse about Levitical priests. What are they?
 3. What is the importance of these statements?
 4. The author identifies the benefit that Jesus’ eternality provides. What is it?
 5. Look at this entire contrast – 7:21-25 – and report what the advantage is and why this is important.
 6. Hebrews 7:26-28 is a paragraph in which there are two complete sentences.
 - a. Hebrews 7:26-27 form a complete sentence.
 1. Why was it important to identify Jesus as a “High Priest” rather than a “priest”?
 2. The author identifies five qualities in the life of our “High Priest.” Why are these important?
 - b. Hebrews 7:28 is a complete sentence.
 1. What does the author mean by “the word of truth”?
 2. What contrasts does the author present in this verse?

STUDY OF CHAPTER 7

LEVITES: REGULAR SACRIFICES; JESUS ONE ETERNAL SACRIFICE

Hebrews 7:1 – 28

In the seventh chapter of Hebrews there are five paragraphs. On the following table you will find a brief summary of each of these paragraphs.

7:1-3	The Life of Melchizadek
7:4-10	Melchizadek Blessed Abraham
7:11-19	A Change in Priestly Law
7:20-25	Former Priests – Limited: Jesus – Eternal
7:26-28	Priests-Daily Sacrifice: Jesus Single Sacrifice

We need to look at the structure of the book in this second division of the book. Chapters 1-4 dealt with the superiority of Jesus as a person. Overall, chapters 5-10 picture Jesus as a superior High Priest. This is facilitated by identifying Jesus with the priestly order of Melchizadek. There is an interesting twist in the early part of the second division of the book. At the end of chapter 5, the author dealt with Melchizadek – a priest and also king of Jerusalem. Chapter 6 makes no mention of Melchizadek at all. Chapter 7 begins with more comments about Melchizadek. At least part of chapter 6 is obviously a parenthesis. It should be noted, however, that this is a very special and related parenthesis. We will watch for evidence of this as we continue our study of chapter seven.

HEBREWS 7:1-3 – THE LIFE OF MELCHIZADEK

In chapter seven, the author will give extensive attention to Melchizadek. We want to consider some background about this individual. The name Melchizadek is a combination of two words:

- A. Meleck – which means king.
- B. Zadek – which means righteousness.

He was the king of Salem which is Jerusalem. He met with Abraham when the patriarch returned from freeing Lot from Chedarlaomar and his three allies. Melchizadek gave Abraham bread and wine which was the king's meal. In Genesis 14:18-20, Melchizadek spoke of being the priest of the most high God. Melchizadek received a tithe of the spoils from Abraham. This suggests that Melchizadek is greater than Abraham.

For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham as he was returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, Hebrews 7:1

This chapter begins with the word “for” (γάρ) which indicates an explanation of previous information is forthcoming. The English text uses the word “this Melchizadek.” The Greek text uses two words, both of which (ὁ) and (οὗτος) are translated “this.” It is a way to place very strong emphasis on Melchizadek. The author identified Melchizadek in two ways:

- A. King of Salem – which is Jerusalem
- B. Priest of God Most High

Questions arise. We do not know how this man, king of a very pagan city, became a priest of God. The author was very specific in his identification of Melchizadek as a priest of Jehovah.

- C. The Hebrew form was Elohim elyon. (אֱלֹהִים עֶלְיוֹן) The Greek form was (θεοῦ οὐ ψιστοῦ). This is not explained anywhere in the Bible. Notice that the text says that Melchizadek met Abraham, not that Abraham met Melchizadek.

The word translated “sunantaesas” (συναντήσας). It is to meet; It is to encounter. The form of the word is aorist active participle:

- A. Aorist tense – simple past action.
- B. Active voice – The subject performs the action – this is evidence that Melchizadek did the meeting; he initiated the meeting.
- C. Participle - ongoing action.

The word translated “blessed” is (εὐλογῶσας). is to invoke a blessing. It is to praise.

The form of the word is again aorist active participle:

- A. It is the same form as mentioned above
- B. Aorist tense – simple past action.
- C. Active voice – the subject does the action.
- D. Participle – ongoing action.

To whom also Abraham apportioned a tenth part of all the spoils, was first of all, by the translation of his name, king of righteousness, and then also king of Salem, which is king of peace. Hebrews 7:2

Notice the process the author followed. In verse one – he mentioned that Melchizadek blessed Abraham. This was more meaningful to them than it is for us. The greater is always the one who blesses the lesser, never the other way around. Now in verse two Abraham gives Melchizadek a tithe. The lesser always gives the tithe to the greater. It is two strong ways to emphasize that Melchizadek is greater than Abraham. We will follow this logic as we move through the chapter.

The use of the words “to whom” introduce another of the author’s descriptions of the king. The word “divided” or as some translations put it “apportioned” is “emerisen” (ἐμέρισεν). It means to divide or separate: to distribute or assign.

The form of the word is aorist indicative active.

- A. Aorist tense – simple past action.
- B. Indicative mood – simple declaration of action
- C. Active voice – the subject performs the action.

The author did this repeatedly. He repeatedly used the aorist tense. He repeatedly added the active voice. The simplicity in both these forms added to the emphasis the author wanted to use. The subject charged with this action was Abraham. The word translated “tenth” is dekatos” (δεκάτος) which means tenth. This is the proportionate sacred gift prescribed by Mosaic law. As in the case of Job, it was followed even before the Mosaic law was given. It was the tithe.

The word translated “all” is “panton” (πάντων). The use of the word “of “ comes from the fact that the word is in the genitive case. Soldiers, usually hired foreigners, who were paid for their service. Part of the agreement was that they would share in the booty of the conquered persons or places. The officers took what they wanted first. The rank and file could take everything else the enemy possessed. Abraham was the leader and he took his part first. He gave a tithe, a tenth, of the booty to Melchizadek. In doing this, he acknowledged that Melchizadek was a representative of God. In verses two and three, the author listed eight pieces of information about this Melchizadek.

The author interpreted Melchizadek’s name – Melchizadek is a compound word

- a. Melek – means king
- b. Zadek – means righteousness.

King of Salem. Salem later became “Jerusalem” under Jewish control. At that time, however, it was a pagan, gentile kingdom. King of peace. – this is a translation of the Hebrew into Greek. Salem means “peace.”

Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, he abides a priest perpetually. Hebrews 7:3

“WITHOUT FATHER”

This puzzled students for a long time. It does not mean that Melchizadek did not have a father. It does mean that they did not know whom his father might be.

“WITHOUT MOTHER”

Again it did not mean that he had no mother, but that they did not know the mother's name or ancestry. Without genealogy – this is for purposes of emphasis. They did not know the names of any of his ancestors. He was not part of a dynasty.

“NEITHER BEGINNING OF DAYS”

They did not know when he was born. Nor end of life - it does not mean that he was eternal, but that they did not know when he died. The author had a very good reason for wanting to point this out. We will talk about that.

“BUT MADE LIKE UNTO THE SON OF GOD”

This is the reason that the author has spent so much effort identifying this king. The Jews knew very well that the Messiah was prophet, priest and king. Jesus is referred to as prophet, priest and king. Melchizadek is known as both priest and king.

“ABIDETH A PRIEST FOREVER”

This is a conclusive remark. On the basis of the things the author has said about Melchizadek, it is appropriate to think of him as a priest forever.

A priest served for a specific period of time – age 25 – 50. He was a priest, however, until the day he died. Not knowing when Melchizadek died, one cannot fix a date when his priesthood ended. One of the things the early church believed about Jesus was that He was eternal.

HEBREWS 7:4-10 – MELCHIZADEK BLESSED ABRAHAM

Now observe how great this man was to whom Abraham, the patriarch, gave a tenth of the choicest spoils. Hebrews 7:4

Having thoroughly described Melchizadek, the author continued his Genesis report. The author now turned to apply the information he has presented. He first identified his goal – “Consider how great this man was.” He begins by identifying Abraham as “the patriarch” This is the highest possible honor among the Jews. He then identified the fact that Abraham, the patriarch, gave this priest a tithe of the spoils.

Observe the logic up to this point. Melchizadek blessed Abraham – the lesser is blessed by the greater. Abraham gave Melchizadek a tenth – this stressed that Abraham, and thus his seed after him, were less than Melchizadek. His purpose is to highly stress the greatness of Melchizadek.

And those indeed of the sons of Levi who receive the priest's office have commandment in the Law to collect a tenth from the people, that is, from their brethren, although these are descended from Abraham. Hebrews 7:5

In this verse, the author continued the logic. He then turned to the legal priests – the descendants of Abraham. The law instructed them to receive tithes from the people.

“ALTHOUGH THESE ARE DESCENDED FROM ABRAHAM”

Every Jew would understand the author's intent at this point. The author is pressing home a point. He has set the stage to show the superiority of Melchizadek to the Levitical priesthood. Having done that, he will establish the fact that Jesus is a priest after this order.

But the one whose genealogy is not traced from them collected a tenth from Abraham, and blessed the one who had the promises. Hebrews 7:6

Abraham, the forefather of these Levitical priests, gave a tithe to Melchizadek. Therefore, in this, the levitical priests were giving a tithe to Melchizadek. The author added greater emphasis by the way he conveyed this information. He did not identify Melchizadek by name, but simply as “one whose genealogy is not traced from them. This unnamed priest blessed Abraham. He collected a tithe from Abraham.

without any dispute the lesser is blessed by the greater Hebrews 7:7

“Without any dispute” this adds a great deal of emphasis. He now affirms the principle again. “The lesser is blessed by the greater.” This was an emphatic way to say that Melchizadek was greater than Abraham.

And in this case mortal men receive tithes, but in that case one receives them, of whom it is witnessed that he lives on. Hebrews 7:8

He now begins to spell out the significance of this logic. The author assumes that Melchizadek “lives on” because they do not know when he died. This will provide another parallel between Jesus and Melchizadek.

The author turned to a strong contrast. He spoke of “mortal men.” This is a reference to the Levitical priests. These are regular men who are born and die. The contrast is that these men die, but because they do not know when Melchizadek died, he assumes that the king lived on.

And, so to speak, through Abraham even Levi, who received tithes, paid tithes, Hebrews 7:9

They are sons of Levi who was of the lineage of Abraham. They were priests of God. They received tithes of the people according to the Law. Abraham, their forefather, however, gave a tithe to Melchizadek. Therefore, in this, the Levitical priests were giving tithe to Melchizadek suggesting that he was greater than Abraham and thus greater than these Levitical priests.

For he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him. Hebrews 7:10

This does not make a lot of sense to us because we do not place this kind of importance on lineage. I never think of being involved or necessarily influenced by the early actions of my great grandfather. Still, for the Jew, this had great significance. It would be considered a logical point in their thinking.

HEBREWS 7:11-19 – A CHANGE IN PRIESTLY LAW

Now if perfection was through the Levitical priesthood (for on the basis of it the people received the Law), what further need was there for another priest to arise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be designated according to the order of Aaron? Hebrews 7:11

The word translated “now” does not appear in the Greek text.

The word “oun” (οὖν) does appear. It means therefore and signifies a coming conclusion. Verse 11 is an “IF...THEN” conditional statement. The structure is this: “IF this is true, THEN this must be the result.” This is hard, cold logic.

The statement of conditions “IF” - The word translated “perfection” is “teliosis” (τελειωσις). It means fulfillment, accomplishment or perfection. He was saying, IF the Old Testament Levitical system accomplished everything that was absolutely essential...”

The statement of the conclusion or result. This is the “THEN” clause. It is the simple statement of logic. THEN there would be no need for another priesthood after the order of Melchizadek. The logic is this, “the very existence of the priesthood after the order of Melchizadek is proof that the Levitical priesthood did not accomplish everything that was essential to be done in the lives of sinners. The clinching piece of evidence is that up until the time of Jesus, the priesthood was after the order of Levi. Now there was a change in the order. This would only be reasonable if the previous one was ineffective.

STUDY OF CHAPTER 7

For when the priesthood is changed, of necessity there takes place a change of law also. Hebrews 7:12

The word “for” is “gar” (γάρ) and indicates that an explanation is about to be given. This is another conditional statement.

The statement of condition – “IF” - IF there is a change in the priesthood. He has just established that it was true and necessary.

The statement of the results “THEN” - Then there needs to be a change in the laws that govern that priesthood. The logic - If you do the experiment in exactly the same way you did it before, you will inevitably gain exactly the same results every time. Therefore, there needs to be both a change in the priesthood and a change in the laws which govern it.

For the one concerning whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no one has officiated at the altar. Hebrews 7:13

The one of whom the author spoke in this verse is Jesus. Again, the use of the word “for” introduces an explanation. The author identified Jesus as a High Priest after the order of Melchizedek and explained the reason that this was necessary. He will now explain the issue as it relates to Jesus.

It sounds as though the problem has to do with Jesus’ tribal background. Jesus comes from the tribe of Judah. Levitical priests must come from the tribe of Levi. We know that there are Levites in Jesus’ family background – Elizabeth and Mary are first cousins and Elizabeth was of Levitical background. Nevertheless, Jesus was officially from the tribe of Judah. The issue is not that no one from Jesus’ tribe served at the altar. The issue was that Jesus was not a Levite.

For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, a tribe with reference to which Moses spoke nothing concerning priests. Hebrews 7:14

In verse 14, The author becomes more specific. Jesus came from the tribe of Judah.

Such people could not be Levitical priests under any circumstances. The author stressed the fact that Moses said nothing about a person from this tribe becoming a Levitical priest.

And this is clearer still, if another priest arises according to the likeness of Melchizedek, Hebrews 7:15

Verses 15 -17 are a single sentence.

“AND THIS IS CLEARER STILL”

This clause indicates that additional supportive information is about to be presented. If you read verses 15-17 carefully, it is obvious that the author is speaking of Jesus, not Melchizedek.

“IF ANOTHER PRIEST ARISES”

The word translated “arises” is “anistatai” (ἀνίσταται). It means to cause to stand up. It is to raise up. It means to come into existence.

The form of the word – present indicative middle:

- A. Present tense – begin and never stop – it describes a lifestyle
- B. Indicative mood – This is a simple declaration of action.
- C. Middle voice – The subject is involved in the action.

“ACCORDING TO THE LIKENESS OF MELCHIZADEK”

The word translated “likeness” is “amoiotae” (ἀμοιότης). It means likeness. It means in like manner. The author is talking about a priest. His point is this: Levitical priests are born. They are not raised up as Melchizedek was – by divine decree. The author was talking about a totally different priesthood and manner of institution. In one sense, one might consider replacing the “if” with the word “when”. It did happen and the author is getting ready to say it has happened again in Christ.

Who has become such not on the basis of a law of physical requirement, but according to the power of an indestructible life. Hebrews 7:16

“WHO HAS BECOME SUCH”

The word translated “become” is “gegonen” (γέγονεν). It means to enter into a new condition. It is to come to be; to be established.

The form of the word is perfect indicative active.

- A. Perfect tense – past action with present consequences
- B. Indicative mood – This is a simple declaration of action.
- C. Active voice – the subject performs the action.

There are serious implications to this statement. It speaks of becoming – The definition of the word indicates that Jesus is becoming something that he had not eternally been – the high priest, the human sacrifice. This is in the active voice – This is not something that was done to or for Jesus. It is rather something that He did in obedience to the Father.

“NOT ON THE BASIS OF A LAW OF PHYSICAL REQUIREMENT”

This is good Jewish teaching style. First you tell what it is not. You then tell what it really is.

The word translated “after” or “on the basis of” is “kata” (κατά). It is literally translated “from.” Can mean “by.” It can be translated “for the purpose of” It can also mean “according to.”

The word translated “law” is “entolae” (ἐντολῆς) which means commandment. A decree; An ordinance.

The word translated “flesh” or “fleshly” is “sarkinaes” (σαρκίνης) which literally means flesh. It describes the earthly or human life. It can be translated carnal.

“BUT ACCORDING TO THE POWER OF AN INDESTRUCTIBLE LIFE”

The use of the word “but” “alla” (ἀλλὰ) means on the other hand or but. This is a strong form for the word “but”. The use of this word indicates that a contrast is in process.

The word translated “power” is “dunamin” (δύναμιν) which means power. It is the source of our English word “dynamite.” The word translated “indestructible” is “akatalutou” (ἀκαταλύτου) which means never ending; never ceasing. The fact that Jesus is eternal places Him in a completely different class than any Levitical priest.

Observe that there is a contrast in this sentence. There is a contrast between earthly law on the one hand and the power of an endless life on the other.

The author’s intent is involved here. The Levitical priests were not chosen because of the quality of their lives – look at Eli’s sons. Levitical priests became such because the law in the Old Testament required that they must be priests and could not be available for any other vocation. The author is saying that understanding has been superseded and one has been chosen not because of tribal ancestry but because of his sinless life and the choosing of the Father. The author not only contrasts the two systems, but presents the priesthood of Jesus as vastly superior to that of the Levitical priests.

For it is witnessed of Him, "Thou art a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek." Hebrews 7:17

Again, the word “for” anticipates an explanation. The word translated “witnessed” is “martureitai” (μαρτυρεῖται). It is the source of our word “martyr”. It means witness. It is to declare. It is to testify.

The form of the word is present indicative passive:

- A. Present tense – begin and never stop – lifestyle
- B. Indicative – simple declaration of action.
- C. Passive – The subject receives the action.

The words “of Him” do not appear in the Greek text. Several translations include these words. No doubt that was the intent of the author of Hebrews. In Jewish debate, it was common to appeal to the

STUDY OF CHAPTER 7

Scriptures to support one's position. We have repeatedly pointed to this in our study of Hebrews. If you study the teaching of Jesus, you see Him use this time after time. If the debater challenges a point when you have supported your position with Scripture, he is challenging the Scripture and not your position. This is a quotation from Psalm 110:4 by David

The LORD has sworn and will not change His mind, "Thou art a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek." Psalms 110:4

It should be noted that Psalm 110 does not include the name "Jesus." We must remember, however, that this is a Messianic Psalm. We hold that this is inspired by the Spirit of God to point to the coming Messiah as do many other passages in the Old Testament.

"YOU ARE A PRIEST FOREVER"

The word translated "you" is "su" (σὺ). The use of this word adds strong emphasis to the statement.

The word translated "priest" is "hiereus" (ἱερεὺς) which means One who performs sacred rites. It identifies the common priest in contrast the High Priest. This raises the question, why would the author use the word priest when otherwise in the argument the author referred to Jesus as High Priest?

"AFTER THE ORDER OF MELCHIZADEK"

The word translated "after" or "according"; is "kata" (κατὰ) which means down or against. It was also translated "according to" as it is here.

The word translated "order" is "tachin" (τάξις) which is a term from royalty. It means a fixed succession. It means sequence and It describes order. This makes several changes in the law concerning priests.

It makes a change in relation to the tribal origin required for a person to be a priest. It makes a serious change in the length of service. The Levitical priests served from age 30 to age 50. Jesus was a priest forever. His priesthood did not terminate when he reached the age of 50. His priesthood is endless. It makes serious change in the sacrificial requirements of this sinless priest.

For, on the one hand, there is a setting aside of a former commandment because of its weakness and uselessness. Hebrews 7:18

Verses 18 and 19 are one sentence. The Greek word order is different: "setting aside, on the other hand, for, become, foregoing commandment, because of which, it (emphatic) weak and unprofitable." This is quite awkward in the Greek and even more so in the English. We will dissect this carefully.

The word translated "for" indicates the author is going to give a reason for previous statements. Some translations use the words "on the one hand." Other versions use "there is."

The word so translated is "athethsis" (ἀθέτησις). It can be translated "on the one hand." It can also be translated "in the first place."

The word translated "is" is "ginetai" (γίνεται). It means to be; to become; to arise.

The form of the word – present indicative middle:

A. Present tense – begin and never stop. This is the description of a lifestyle.

B. Indicative mood – a simple declaration of action

C. Middle voice – the subject is involved in the action.

The emphasis is on the event more than on the time.

"THERE IS A SETTING ASIDE OF A FORMER COMMANDMENT"

The word translated "setting aside" or "disannulling" is "athetaesis" (ἀθέτησις). It is to put away. It is to do away with. There is an issue here for some. They are troubled by the idea – God is changeless. If God is changeless, then why does He change the law concerning the Levites. There are several issues like this in Scripture. Here, at least, it is part of His overall design to help limited human beings grasp Who He is and what He does. The Old Testament priesthood was an object lesson for people to understand something

of the mercy of God so that later we could grasp just a little about what Jesus is all about. Ultimately, A. W. Tozer had it right – God never ceases to be, think or act as God. He never changes His nature.

The word translated “former” is “prougousaes” (προυγούσης) which means preceding; that which was before. The form of the word is- Present, active participle

- A. Present tense – begin and never stop – picture of a lifestyle.
- B. Active voice – subject performs the action.
- C. Participle –ongoing action.

You have two ongoing forms which equals a very strong emphasis.

The word translated “command” is “entolaes” (ἐντολῆς) which means a decree; an order; a command; a procedural directive.

“BECAUSE OF ITS WEAKNESS AND USELESSNESS”

Throughout this verse, the author is building his case to explain why the Levitical system needed to be replaced. His first reason is that the Scriptures, the Old Testament, teach that a new system will be established. He now seeks to deal with the element of effectiveness of this Levitical system.

The word translated “because” is “dia” (διὰ) which is usually translated “through.” This author on several occasions used it as “because” or “on account of” in an effort to express cause or reason. The author again used two demonstratives for purposes of emphasis.

“To autaes” (τὸ αὐτῆς) might be translated – “The it” or “the this.” The word translated “weakness” is asthenes” (ἀσθενες) which literally means sickness. It describes being inadequate. This is a hopeless condition. He is pointing to the fact that this system does not accomplish what is needed in the lives of people that God wishes to draw close to Himself.

The word translated “unprofitableness” or “uselessness” is “anofeles” (ἀνωφελές). It is more than simply being useless. It is that this system is literally harmful in that it does not do what the desperate need of the human race requires in order to restore estranged people to a relationship with God. The system is not only incapable of the required task, it actually makes matters worse.

(for the Law made nothing perfect), and on the other hand there is a bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God. Hebrews 7:19

We should keep in mind that verses 18 and 19 are a single sentence.

“(FOR THE LAW MADE NOTHING PERFECT)”

Though the Greek text does not include the parenthetical marks, the sense of the words is definitely parenthetical. The use of the word “for” indicates that a further explanation is forthcoming. The word translated “nothing” is “ouden” (οὐδέν) which is often translated “no one.” It is really more emphatic than that. A better translation might be, “not even one.”

The word translated “made perfect” is “eteleiosen” (ἐτελείωσεν). The word can mean “perfect” especially in Hebrews. It describes bringing something to its appropriate goal or conclusion. this to fully accomplish.

That is something that the old system is not doing. The form of the word – aorist indicative active:

- A. The aorist tense – simple past action.
- B. Indicative mood – a declaration of action.
- C. Active voice – the subject performs the action.

This is an emphatic way to insist that what was given to restore was actually working in reverse.

“AND ON THE OTHER HAND”

The word translated “on the other hand” is “de” (δέ). This word is most often translated “but.” It is a conjunction. It is sometimes translated “now” to indicate a change in the direction of the story. The use of “on the other hand” signifies a contrast. This is an appropriate use of the word here.

STUDY OF CHAPTER 7

“THERE IS A BRINGING IN OF A BETTER HOPE”

As earlier indicated, 7:18, 19 form a single sentence. The verb for both verses is in verse 18 – “ginetai” (γίνεται). In verse 19, the “there is” is understood.

The word translated “bringing in” is “epeisagogae” (ἐπεισάγωγῇ) which means Introduction; it is further; bringing in besides.

A. Further

B. Bringing in besides

The word translated “better” is “kreitton” (κρείττων) which means Superior; More useful; More profitable; Higher in rank. Note that in each instance the idea is a positive comparison.

The word translated “hope” is “elpidos” (ἐλπίδος). This means The expectation of a divinely provided future. This is a Christian attitude involving patient waiting, faith and love. It results in a positive expectation.

“THROUGH WHICH WE DRAW NEAR TO GOD”

The word translated “draw near is (ἐγγίζομεν). It means to approach. it is to be near. It is to draw near.

The form of the word is present active:

A. Present tense – It is to begin and never stop. It describes a lifestyle, not an action.

B. Indicative – a declaration of action

C. Active voice – the subject performs the action

Instead of writing “to God” he wrote “to the God.” The use of the word “τῷ ” translated “the” makes this a very emphatic statement. It stresses the fact that Jehovah is God. It also insists that there is no other God.

HEBREWS 7:20-25 – FORMER PRIESTS – LIMITED: JESUS – ETERNAL

Verses 20 – 22 are one complete sentence

And inasmuch as it was not without an oath Hebrews 7:20

Chapters five through ten form a double contrast. Contrast Jesus with the Levitical priests Contrast Jesus’ priesthood and the levitical priesthood.

The word translated “without” is (κοις). It means separate from. It means apart from. It can also mean “without.” Separate from or apart from are stronger statements and reflect the author’s intent.

The word translated “the” is “τω” This is a demonstrative adjective. It is translated “the”. This adds great emphasis.

The word translated “oath” is “men” (μέν). It means oath. But it is a very strong oath.

(for they indeed became priests without an oath, but He with an oath through the One who said to Him, "The Lord has sworn And will not change His mind, 'Thou art a priest forever'"); Hebrews 7:21

This verse is a parenthesis. The word translated “for” is “de.” The significance of this meaning is that “De” is usually translated “but.” This indicates a coming contrast. Here it is translated “for.” This indicates that an explanation is forthcoming. This is an explanation, but it explains a very strong contrast. This author prefers the word “but.”

The descendants of Levi became priests without an oath. They did not need one. These priests were installed because they were of the Levitical family. There is no guarantee in this. In the book of Judges, we know there was a Levite who did not serve. Jesus became a priest with an oath. The oath was not his. God the Father made the dependable oath.

There was no danger that the oath would not be honored because God is changeless.

So much the more also Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant. Hebrews 7:22

There are two things in this verse that indicate that the author will take the logical argument one step further.

The Superior Jesus

“so much the more.” This is a translation of “kata tesouto” (κατα τοσούτο.) It literally means “according to more.”

“Also” is a translation of the word “kai” (καὶ). Here again, the author signals that he wants to take the contrast between Jesus’ priesthood and the Levitical system one step further.

The word translated “better” is “kreittonos” (κρείττονος) which is a comparative form. It means better or more useful. It is also used to describe a higher ranking.

The word translated “covenant” is “diathakaes” (διαθήκης) which is a covenant. It describes a legal agreement that cannot be changed or broken. The form of the word is perfect indicative active:

- A. Perfect tense – it is completed with nothing to be added.
- B. Indicative – Simple declaration of action.
- C. Active – the subject performs the action.

The word translated “guarantee” is “enguos” (ἐγγυος) which is an adjective. The word means to guarantee. When used as an adjective, it carries the idea of good security. It suggests proof that the agreement will be kept.

The word that is translated “has become” is “gegonen” (γέγονεν) which means to become. The form of the word is perfect indicative active:

- A. Perfect tense – this is completed action which lacks nothing.
- B. Indicative mood – simple declaration of action.
- C. Active voice – the subject performs the action.

The author is building a case to insist that Jesus’ eternal priesthood is without valid challenge.

And the former priests, on the one hand, existed in greater numbers, because they were prevented by death from continuing, Hebrews 7:23

Verses 23 – 25 are a single sentence. This is a continuation of the contrast between the two priestly systems. The author observes that there were a large number of Levitical priests. This was because the whole tribe must serve in this manner. It was also because they could only serve for 20 years – ages 30-50. It was a requirement because they would all die.

But He, on the other hand, because He abides forever, holds His priesthood permanently. Hebrews 7:24

The word “but” indicates that we are in the midst of a contrast. The contrasted elements are:

- A. The huge number of Levitical priests.
- B. Jesus the single priest after the order of Melchizedek.

The reason the author offers is – He abides forever. He is eternal. The levitical priests would die, but Jesus would eternally continue His priesthood. This highlights the monumental difference between the two priesthoods. Keep in mind that the priest function is to represent the people before God and to represent God before the people.

Hence, also, He is able to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. Hebrews 7:25

The use of the word “hence” indicates that the author is going to express a consequence of the information he has presented. Because He lives forever, He is able to save forever those who draw near to God through Him.

This is the priestly function. He is to bring people near to God. His priestly ministry is to intercede on behalf of the people. Since He is eternal, He is able to intercede for them on an eternal basis.

HEBREWS 7:26-28 – PRIESTS-DAILY SACRIFICE: JESUS – SINGLE SACRIFICE

Verses 26-27 are a single sentence

STUDY OF CHAPTER 7

For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens; Hebrews 7:26

The contrast between the two priestly system continues. The author describes this high priest. He is holy. The word translated “holy” is “hosios” (ὅσιος) which identifies That which is undefiled by sin. It is to be free from wickedness; To be pure; Not purified, but never needing purification. He is innocent.

Word translated innocent is “akakos” (ἀκάκος) which Literally means, not bad

This is a compound word:

A. A= not

B. kakos = bad

It is to be harmless; Without guile; Without fraud.

He is undefiled. The word so translated is “amiantos” (ἀμίαντος) which means Not defiled.

It is a compound word:

a. A= not

b. miantos= defiled

It is to be unsoiled. He is separated from sinners.

The word translated “separated” is “choridzo” (χωρίζω). It means to be put apart. It is the idea involved in divorce.

He is exalted above the heavens. The word translated “exalted” is “hupsaelos” (ὕψηλός) which means to be high in esteem. It is to be lifted up – a symbol of power. It is to be held in greater esteem than heaven itself.

This is an awesome list of qualities. These Jewish people were too well acquainted to not be familiar for some of the outstanding priestly failures. The priests were notorious for their wanderings from the truth. They knew about Eli and his sons. They had attended the temple and knew well the atrocities of which the priests were guilty.

Who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins, and then for the sins of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. Hebrews 7:27

Having mentioned the qualities of Jesus as high priest, the author now turned his attention to the failures of the regular priesthood. They were well acquainted with the fact that the priests had to make a sacrifice for their sins before they were able to make any sacrifice for the sins of the people. They were familiar with the fact that the priest going into the Holy of Holies wore a chain around his ankles because he might die in the inner sanctuary if he had sinned and had not received the benefit of a sacrifice made on his behalf. The contrast is simple. Jesus was guilty of no sin so he made a sacrifice of himself once and never had to do that again. He was then free to focus his attention on the sins of the people.

For the Law appoints men as high priests who are weak, but the word of the oath, which came after the Law, appoints a Son, made perfect forever. Hebrews 7:28

These Jews knew the law concerning the priests and the temple. They were aware of the fact that the priests may serve in the immediate presence of god, but they were notorious sinners just like the rest of the people. The main characteristic of these priests was the fact that they were spiritually weak and needed the atonement as much as anyone else. The use of the word “but” indicates that there is a contrast between the weakness of the priests and the spiritual strength of the Lord stood in sharp contrast with each other. This single high priest was “made perfect forever.” We need to be quite clear about what the author meant in this statement. Though He was perfect, that is not the point of the author’s statement here. The author’s intent is that though all the Levitical priests were fallen human beings, still Jesus was able to help- because he was complete, totally prepared to serve as our high priest – without sin.

QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 8

HEBREWS 8:1 – 13

1. There are two paragraphs in Hebrews chapter eight. On the following table, write a brief summary of eight words or less for each paragraph.

8:1-6	
8:7-13	

2. In Hebrews 8:1-6 there are seven complete sentences.

- A. Hebrews 8:1, 2 form a complete sentence.
 - 1. The author indicated that this is a climax.
 - 2. What difference does it make where Jesus sits?
 - 3. Again, what difference does it make that the Lord pitched this true tabernacle, not men?
- B. Hebrews 8:3A is a complete sentence and would read as follows: **“For every High Priest is “appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices.”**
 - 1. The author highlighted the idea that “every High Priest was appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices.”
 - 2. What does this fact have to do with Jesus being a High Priest after the order of Melchizedek?
 - 3. Why is the idea of needing gifts and sacrifices to offer so important?
- C. Hebrews 8:3B is a complete sentence and would read as follows: **“Hence it is necessary that this High Priest also have something to offer”.**
 - 1. The author highlighted the idea that “every High Priest was appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices.”
 - 2. What does this fact have to do with Jesus being a High Priest after the order of Melchizedek?
 - 3. Why is that idea of needing gifts and sacrifices to offer so important?
- D. Hebrews 8:4 is a complete sentence.
 - 1. The use of the word “if” indicates that this is a conditional statement:
 - a. What is the condition?
 - b. What is the consequence?
 - 2. How would you explain what the author has presented in this verse?
- E. Hebrews 8:5A is a complete sentence and would read as follows: **“Who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things, just as Moses was warned by God when he was about to erect the tabernacle.”**
 - 1. The author stressed the fact that the tabernacle was a copy of the heavenly place of worship. What was he attempting to accomplish by this emphasis?
 - 2. What was Moses “warned” about?
 - 3. What was the author trying to say?
- F. Hebrews 8:5B is a complete sentence and would read as follows: **“For, “See,” He says, “that you make all things according to the pattern which was shown you on the mountain.”**
 - 1. The author quoted from Exodus 25:40 where instructions for the tabernacle were given.
 - 2. These Jews were very familiar with the reference the author has made. What is the point of this reminder?
- G. Hebrews 8:6 is a complete sentence.
 - 1. The use of the words “but now” indicate a change in the direction of the narrative and the existence of a contrast.
 - 2. What are the elements of the contrast?
 - 3. This is a very positive statement:
 - a. What does he mean by “More excellent ministry”?
 - b. What is he talking about when he mentioned Jesus is, “minister of a better covenant”?

The Superior Jesus

- c. What does he mean when he wrote, “Enacted on better promises”?
3. Hebrews 8:7-13 contain nine complete sentences.
- A. Hebrews 8:7 is a complete sentence.
1. The use of the word “if” indicates that this is a conditional statement:
 - a. What is the condition?
 - b. What is the consequence?
 2. If the first covenant was faulty, as this verse suggests, how can you explain God using it in the first place?
 3. Explain the logic the author used in this verse?
 4. What does this say about God?
- B. Hebrews 8:8A is a complete sentence and would read like this: **“For finding fault with them, He says,”**
1. The use of the word “for” indicates that this is an explanation. What was he explaining?
 2. He used the word “finding fault.”
 - a. What does this word mean?
 - b. Doesn’t the Bible condemn fault-finding?
 - c. How can you explain this?
- C. Hebrews 8:8B-9 is a complete sentence and would read as follows: **“Behold days are coming, says the Lord, when I will effect a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers, on the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; for they did not continue in my covenant, and I did not care for them,” says the Lord.”**
1. What difference would it make if the word “Behold” was omitted?
 2. Observe that the author quotes God as saying, “I will effect a new covenant.” How would Jewish people react to this statement?
 3. Why would this be necessary?
 4. What does God mean by the words, “New covenant”?
 5. God spoke of making this “new covenant” “With the house of Israel and the house of Judah.” Why wouldn’t God simply make the covenant with His people Israel?
- D. Hebrews 8:10A is a complete sentence and would read as follows: **“For this is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord.”**
1. Hebrews 8:8-12 is a quotation from Jeremiah 34.
 2. In Hebrews 8:8, the author quoted God as making a covenant with “the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.” In Hebrews 8:10A, he spoke of making a covenant with “the house of Israel.” How would you explain this change?
 3. What does Jeremiah mean when he wrote, “after those days”?
- E. Hebrews 8:10B is a complete sentence and would read as follows: “I will put My laws into their minds, and I will write them upon their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.”
1. Back in the Torah, God wrote His laws upon tablets of stone. Now, quoting from Jeremiah, God is going to “put His laws in their minds and write them upon their hearts.” What is the point of this change?
 2. The phrases, “I will be” and “they will be” do not appear in the Greek text. It simply reads, “Their God” and “My people.” This part of the covenant appears both in the Old and New Testaments. What is the point of this covenant that God alone is making?
- F. Hebrews 8:11A is a complete sentence and would read as follows: “And they shall not teach everyone his fellow citizen and everyone his brother, saying, “
1. From that day until now, in Israel, the knowledge of God passes from father to son.
 2. How would you describe the meaning of this prophetic statement?

QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 8

- G. Hebrews 8:11B-12 is a complete sentence and would read as follows: “Know the Lord, For all shall know Me, from the least to the greatest of them, (Hebrews 8:11B) for I will be merciful to their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more.” Hebrews 8:12
1. This is a quotation from Jeremiah 31 where he described what eternity would be like.
 2. What is the point of reviewing this prophetic statement to believers who are suffering for their faith a second time?
 3. In verse 12, the author continued his quotation from Jeremiah 31. What is the difference between “Be merciful to their iniquities” and “remember their sins no more”?
- H. Hebrews 8:13A is a complete sentence and would read like this: “When he said, “a new covenant,” he has made the first obsolete.”
1. This sentence is weighted heavily in logic.
 2. How would you explain his logic?
 3. How plausible is his argument?
- I. Hebrews 8:13B is a complete sentence and would read as follows: “But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear.”
1. Hebrews 8:13 A and 8:13B deal with the same issue. What would be the effect if 8:13B had been omitted?
 2. What was he really trying to describe?

STUDY OF CHAPTER 8

JESUS – BETTER MINISTRY, SANCTUARY, COVENANT

HEBREWS 8:1 - 13

There are only two paragraphs in Hebrews chapter eight. On the following table you will find a brief summary of each of these paragraphs.

8:1-6	BETTER PRIEST; BETTER SANCTUARY; BETTER MINISTRY
8:7- 13	NEW COVENANT OUTDATES THE OLD

HEBREWS 8:1-6 – BETTER PRIEST; BETTER SANCTUARY; BETTER MINISTRY

Now the main point in what has been said is this: we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, Hebrews 8:1

In chapter eight, the author continues and expands the contrast he has pursued in chapters five through seven.

The first paragraph in chapter eight is 8:1-6. This chapter is a summary statement for chapters 5-7.

Up to this point, the author has shown, in logical fashion, how Jesus is a superior high priest to the Levitical system. This is the priest that we have. He does not simply intercede on our behalf from within the Holy of Holies. He sits at the right hand of the throne of the heavenly majesty. This is a royal picture. The person who sits at the right hand of the king is the king's most trusted advisor.

His advice is trusted; the king will do what he advises or get a new advisor. He can expect his request to be granted, whatever it may be. This is the beginning of a contrast between the priesthood of Jesus and that of the Levitical priests. Levitical priests intercede from within the Holy of Holies. Jesus intercedes from the Father's right hand where he will not be refused.

A minister in the sanctuary, and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man. Hebrews 8:2

The contrast continues. He is a minister in the sanctuary. Again, the Levitical priests minister within the earthly tabernacle. Jesus, however, ministers within the heavenly sanctuary. The difference is, as before, that Jesus has a greater position in the heavenly sanctuary than the Levitical priests have in the earthly sanctuary. It is understood that His request will not be refused because of His position. This the Levitical High Priest cannot claim.

Observe that the author pointed out that Jesus was a minister within the "true" tabernacle. That being the true tabernacle, then all other tabernacles have a lesser position. The Tabernacle in which Jesus intercedes is a greater tabernacle than the one in which the Levitical priests intercede.

The heavenly tabernacle was built by God and not by men. In their thinking, if the builder was greater than another builder, then his building would be greater than the other person's building. This is especially true if the builder is God. The author is showing that in every respect the ministry of Jesus, in intercession, is greater than that of the Levitical priests.

For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices; hence it is necessary that this high priest also have something to offer. Hebrews 8:3

Again, the sentence begins with "for" and this indicates that an explanation is forthcoming. The author then pointed out that the offering of gifts and sacrifices is the requirement for every High Priest. The word translated "hence" is "hothen" (οθεν) and means because of this, for which reason or because this is true.

The author, in this verse, is using a logical argument that we need to study carefully. The steps in the logic are simple. Every High Priest is required to offer gifts and sacrifices. If Jesus is a High Priest, then He too must make the required sacrifices and offerings. But there is no design stated in the Old Testament to direct His sacrifices. Therefore someone must set that up.

Now if He were on earth, He would not be a priest at all, since there are those who offer the gifts according to the Law; Hebrews 8:4

The use of the word “now” indicates that the argument will either change direction or advance in the current direction. These conditional statements always begin with the word “if.” The condition – If Jesus was on earth. The result – He would not be a priest at all. The law identified the men of the tribe of Levi to make the sacrifices before God. Now, Jesus was of the tribe of Judah and not of the tribe of Levi. You may remember that a Jewish king went into the temple and made an offering which the priests should have made. At that point, the king’s reign was ended.

Who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things, just as Moses was warned by God when he was about to erect the tabernacle; for, "See," He says, "that you make all things according to the pattern which was shown you on the mountain." Hebrews 8:5

These Levitical priests served in a sanctuary which was a type; that which was just a shadow of the real sanctuary in heaven. The author drew a parallel which served to verify his position. The words “just as” identify a parallel situation. The evidence the author offered was the experience of Moses.

And see that you make them after the pattern for them, which was shown to you on the mountain Exodus 25:40

Moses was given a view of the heavenly tabernacle as he talked with God on Mount Sinai. The earthly tabernacle was to be made after the pattern of the heavenly tabernacle. We need to understand the emphasis. It is not being unfortunately precise about every detail. It was, indeed, because every detail had specific meaning and changing any part would prevent their understanding of the process.

But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises. Hebrews 8:6

The use of the word “but now” indicates that we are in the midst of a serious contrast. That which follows is a very strong logical argument. The word translated “more excellent” is a comparative form. It is a way of saying that this is greater than that and then give a reason for that. The author is saying that this ministry of Jesus is much greater than that of the Levitical priests.

HEBREWS 8:7 - 13 – NEW COVENANT OUTDATES THE OLD

For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second. Hebrews 8:7

The paragraph begins with the word “for” indicating that there is an explanation that is forthcoming. Verse seven is a conditional (IF...THEN...) statement. The first part of the sentence described the condition while the last part identifies the result. The condition – “If the first covenant had been faultless.” This is a negative presentation of the argument. Stated positively, it would read something like this: “there is a problem with the first covenant.” The result is that “There would be no occasion/need for a second covenant. The author’s logic is simple. The very fact that there is a second covenant is proof the first one was inadequate in some way.

For finding fault with them, He says, "Behold, days are coming, says the Lord, when I will effect a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; Hebrews 8:8

STUDY OF CHAPTER 8

We need to be reminded of the fact that 8:8 – 12 are quoted from Jeremiah 31:31-34. The Jewish people to whom this was written would be well aware of these circumstances.

“FOR FINDING FAULT WITH THEM”

The use of the word “for” indicates an explanation is forthcoming. This is a quotation from Jeremiah 31:31. This statement is unusually emphatic. The word translated “finding fault” is “memphomenos” (μεμφομένος). It means to find fault or to blame. It is to accuse. The form of the word is present middle participle.

- A. Present tense – begin and never stop. This describes a lifestyle.
- B. Middle voice – The subject is involved in the action.
- C. Participle – This is ongoing action.

The use of the participial form and the present tense together, which this author often does, gives one two forms which both stress continuing action. This is a way to add unusual emphasis to the words.

The author then added the very emphatic word “autous” (αυτούς) which means “them themselves.” It would be difficult for the author to make this statement more emphatic than he has.

“HE SAYS, ‘BEHOLD, DAYS ARE COMING, SAYS THE LORD,”

The word that is translated “he says” is “legei” (λέγει). The word means literally to say or to speak. The form of the word is present indicative active:

- A. Present tense – begin and never stop. This describes a lifestyle rather than a single act.
- B. Indicative mood – A simple declaration of action.
- C. Active voice – the subject performs the action.

This looks like it could be a problem. This statement obviously took place hundreds of years before the writing. Yet the author described it as taking place right then. This is a picture of reporting as if it were happening as the author wrote.

The word translated “behold” is “idou” (ἰδοὺ). This word is really a sentence in itself. It is intended to do two things:

- 1. It is to really get your attention – it did.
- 2. It is also the announcement of authority.

The word translated “days” is “aemera” (ἡμέρα). It is a way to speak of days plural. In this instance, the context indicates that it does not refer to a 24 hour day. In reality, it points to an indefinite time period indicating hundreds of years.

The word translated “are coming” is “erkomai” (ἐρχομαι). The meaning of the word is to come or to appear. The form of the word is present indicative passive:

- 1. Present tense – Begin and never stop – lifestyle
- 2. Indicative mood – A simple declaration of the action.
- 3. Passive voice – The subject receives the action.

“WHEN I WILL EFFECT A NEW COVENANT”

The word translated “when” is “kai” (καὶ) and is usually translated “and.” The use of the word “when” is more of an interpretation than a translation.

The word translated “I will effect” is “suntyleso” (συντελέσω) which means to complete; to bring to an end; it is to bring about. The form of the word is future indicative active:

- A. Future tense – action that will occur and continue
- B. Indicative mood – simple declaration of action. It gives strong emphasis.
- C. Active voice – the subject performs the action.

“WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AND WITH THE HOUSE OF JUDAH”

The Greek text includes the word “epi” (ἐπὶ) which normally means “upon.” In this instance the translator used the word “with.” We should deal with this choice of words. If you use the word “with” it describes

a joint activity. If you use the word “upon” as it is usually translated, it is different. Covenants usually involve two or more persons or groups. This covenant does involve two - God and His people. This covenant, at least, was initiated uniquely by God, but requires mutual compliance. Our preference would be “upon.”

The word translated “house” is *oikon* (οἶκον). The word is usually translated “house” and describes a family dwelling. The Jews, however, thought of their tribes and nation as an extended family with the ruler as the father figure. Thus the author spoke of “the house of Israel” and “the house of Judah.” This passage, as previously identified, is quoted from Jeremiah 31:31. We mention this because during the time of Jeremiah, there were two houses in Israel – Israel and Judah

The Greek text ends with two words:

A. “Diathaekaen” (διαθήκην) (it means covenant)

B. “kainaen” (καινήν) which means fresh or new.

These two words will take on greater significance later in this chapter.

Not like the covenant which I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; for they did not continue in My covenant, and I did not care for them, says the Lord. Hebrews 8:9

“NOT LIKE THE COVENANT WHICH I MADE WITH THEIR FATHERS”

This is the way the rabbi’s taught – first tell them what it is not and then tell them what it is. The word translated “not” is “ou” (οὐ). This word is a mild negative. both “ouk” and “oux” are stronger.

The word translated “like” is “kata” (κάτω) which is usually translated “down” or “against.” It appears that “according to” fits the context better than other options.

The words translated “which I made” are “aen epoiaesa” (ἣν ἐποίησα) which literally means “that I made.”

The form of (ἐποίησα) is aorist indicative active:

A. Aorist tense – simple past action.

B. Indicative mood – Simple declaration of action.

C. Active voice – the subject performs the action

Observe that the “aorist tense” and the “indicative mood” both place great emphasis on the action. Very often, this is the reason that an author will choose to use these forms.

The word translated “with” is “tois” (τοῖς). The word literally means “this.” It is sometimes trans, “that.”

It is a relational identifier. This is the reason the translators used the word “with”

The word translated “fathers” is *patrasin* (πατράσιν). This is a plural form. “Fathers” is an appropriate translation. We need to look at this plural form. As indicated it is a plural form. The reference, however, is understood. This is not a reference to a particular father of one family or of a couple of fathers. It is a way to identify a whole generation of people, all of whom were in the Exodus, but died in the desert.

The words “on the day” does not refer to a 24 hour period. It is a general reference in time. The word translated “I” is “mou” (μοῦ) which is “of me” rather than “I” (ἐγώ).

“ON THE DAY WHEN I TOOK THEM BY THE HAND”

This is a family picture. In that time, when family was going anywhere, the children would take the father’s hand and he would serve as their guide. It is like saying, I guided you out of Egypt the way a father would guide his children.

“TO LEAD THEM OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT”

There is a subtle message here. God is making it clear that their exit from Egypt was something that He caused to happen.

“FOR THEY DID NOT CONTINUE IN MY COVENANT”

The use of the word “for” indicates that an explanation is forthcoming. This is the first part of a cause and effect statement. Israel failed to keep their part of the covenant. When this happened, the covenant was automatically cancelled.

“AND I DID NOT CARE FOR THEM,’ SAYS THE LORD”

This is the result part of this cause-effect relationship. Israel did not observe the terms of the covenant and so God did not care for them. He was released from his part of the covenant because Israel failed to keep their part of the agreement.

“For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into their minds, and I will write them upon their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Hebrews 8:10

Again, the verse begins with the word “for” indicating that there is a forthcoming explanation. He will now identify the terms of the new covenant that God will make with Israel. The fact that this is a new covenant is quite significant. The giving of the second covenant indicates that the previous one had been broken by a violation of the terms by one of those involved in the agreement. The giving of a second covenant indicates that God is deeply interested in being in a covenant relationship with these people, even though they have previously failed.

“I WILL PUT MY LAWS INTO THEIR MINDS”

The emphasis here is that God is the one who initiates the action. The word translated “I will put” is “didous” (δίδους). It means to bestow authority. It is something given by a superior authority to one in a lower position. The form of the word is present active participle:

- A. Present tense – action begins and continues. It describes a lifestyle.
- B. Active voice – The subject performs the action.,
- C. Participle – the action is ongoing

Observe that the present tense and the participial form both indicate continuous action. This is always a means to provide strong emphasis. Observe that it is God’s law that He puts into their minds. It is not the culture or national law. God placed his law into their minds.

The word translated “minds” is “dianoian” (δianoian). This is the mind. This is the understanding. The intellectual function which results in comprehension. Now God writes them upon the intellect of mankind. Back at Sinai, God wrote them on tablets of stone. This is a way of saying that this new covenant is very personal.

“AND I WILL WRITE THEM UPON THEIR HEARTS”

The word “and” “kai” (καὶ) does not appear in the Greek text. The word translated “write” is really “put” “dido” (δίδω). It means to grant or furnish. It is to appoint; to grant as a commission.

The word translated “hearts” is “kardias” (καρδίας). This word is in the plural. Indicates that this is an individual matter, not national, but it will have national implications. The author here poses a serious contrast between the tablets and the heart.

“AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD”

The words “and I will be their” do not appear in the text.

“AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE”

The words “and they shall be” do not appear in the Greek text. The significance of this is that He is talking about a basic identification. It is not their God in contrast with other gods. It is that this is God and there are no other. Again, it is not that this is one people among many. It is that they will be God’s people in a way that there is no other.

"And they shall not teach everyone his fellow citizen, and everyone his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' For all shall know Me, from the least to the greatest of them. Hebrews 8:11

This verse is one of contrast. These are not the words of the author of Hebrews. This is a quotation from Jeremiah 31:33 and these Jewish recipients would be keenly aware of it. That fact would cause these recipients to pay even closer attention to this message. It is necessary to teach about divine presence because people do not know about it. The author, by quoting this, speaks of a time when the knowledge of God will be common. The prophet spoke of the way information was passed down within Judaism. – father to son. The author of Hebrews used this quotation to speak of what the future would be like in “Christ’s kingdom.”

"For I will be merciful to their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more." Hebrews 8:12

The word “for” is understood, but it does not appear in the Greek text. The word translated “merciful” is “hileos” (ἡλεος). This word only appears twice in the New Testament – Here and in Matthew 16:22 where Jesus prophesied Peter’s denunciation of knowledge of Jesus. It carries the idea of removing something from the realm of possibility. The author was saying that God will deal with His people in such a way that the awareness of past sins would seem ridiculous.

The word translated iniquities” is “adikia” (ἀδικία). It means unrighteousness of heart. It is that which violates the law and justice. It describes something fraudulent. The mercy of God will cover this from view.

The word translated “remember” is “mimnaeskomai” (μυμνήσκομαι) which means the inability to recall.

It can’t mean “to forget” because God is omniscient. He knows all things. It does mean that God will pardon the sins and will not hold them, against us. This is a forever promise.

The word translated “sins” is “hamartia” (ἁμαρτία). Sins, that which is offensive to God. Literally, to miss the mark; To be less than obedient. This is a violation of the law. We must keep in mind that it has to do with intent. Observe that we are dealing with two words that are both translated “sin.” We must ascertain what the difference is between them.

1. Iniquities – (ἀδικία) deals with a violation of the law.
2. Sins – (ἁμαρτία), on the other hand, also deals with a violation of the law, but the emphasis is on motive, intent. It is to miss the mark you attempted to hit.

When He said, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear. Hebrew 8:13

This verse attempts to deal with the logic of the prophetic statement. The author attempted to deal with the idea of a “new covenant.” The fact that there is a “new covenant” requires that there be an “old covenant.” The presence of the “new” takes the place of the “old.” It is a way of saying that the old covenant has come to the place where it holds no meaning or pertinence. When the author stresses the importance of the “new”, he at the same time reduces the value and meaning of the “old.” This is in keeping with the intent of the whole second section, chapters five through ten.

QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 9

HEBREWS 9:1 – 28

1. There are five paragraphs in Hebrews chapter nine. On the following table, write a brief summary of eight words or less for each paragraph.

9:1-5	
9:6-10	
9:11-14	
9:15-22	
9:23-28	

2. Hebrews 9:1-5 contains four complete sentences. The old tabernacle described.
- A. Hebrews 9:1 is a complete sentence.
 - 1. Remember, this epistle was written to Jewish believers. Every strict Jew knew exactly what the tabernacle looked like and what God had in mind for its use.
 - 2. What was to be gained by describing something that every believing Jew knew exactly?
 - B. Hebrews 9:2 is a complete sentence.
 - 1. In this verse, the author mentioned the two contents in the outer court; the Holy Place.
 - 2. What was the purpose of the lampstand?
 - 3. Why was the lampstand located in the outer court?
 - 4. What is the purpose of the table of showbread?
 - 5. Why was it located in the outer court?
 - C. Hebrews 9:3, 4 form a complete sentence.
 - 1. What is the difference between “the holy place” and “the holy of holies”?
 - 2. What do we know about the Holy of holies?
 - 3. What is the point of having both “a Holy place” and “the holy of holies”?
 - 4. In verse four, the author listed the content of the “holy of holies.” What is the purpose of the content of each item in the Holy of holies?
 - 5. What is the purpose for insisting that items in the Holy of Holies be covered with pure gold?
 - 6. How do these items assist in the worship of God?
 - D. Hebrews 9:5 is a complete sentence.
 - 1. What is the “mercy seat”?
 - 2. What would be different if there were no cherubim over the mercy seat?
 - 3. How would you account for the fact that the author listed all these things, but then decided not to give any more detail about them?
3. Hebrews 9:6-10 is a paragraph which contains 1 complete sentence.
- A. This paragraph gives a broad picture of what takes place in the tabernacle.
 - 1. The use of the word “but” at the beginning of verse 7 indicates that there is a strong contrast within this sentence. What are all the contrasted elements?
 - 2. Read verse 6 carefully. In view of this verse, how would you define “worship”?
 - 3. In view of the fact that people sin on a somewhat regular basis, why would the High Priest go into the holy of Holies only once a year?
 - 4. Observe that the author added the words “committed in ignorance” to his explanation. What would be the purpose of this addition?
 - 5. How would you explain the content of verse 8?
 - 6. What is it that The Holy Spirit used to indicate that the way into the Holy place has not yet been disclosed?

The Superior Jesus

3. To what did the author refer, in verse eight, when he used the words “the holy place”?
4. In verse 9, what did the author mean when he said, “which is a symbol for the present time”?
4. Hebrews 9:11-14
 - A. Hebrews 9:11, 12 form a complete sentence.
 1. What does the author mean when he wrote, “Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come”?
 2. In verse 11, the author described a different tabernacle. What was he talking about?
 3. What difference would it make whether or not it was made with hands?
 4. There is a contrast in verse 12. What are the elements of this contrast?
 5. In this contrast, the author mentioned that this is an “eternal redemption.” What is the importance of this fact?
 - B. Hebrews 9:13, 14 form a complete sentence.
 1. There is a contrast between verses 13 and 14. What are the contrasted elements?
 2. What is the difference in the accomplishment of the two sacrifices described here?
 3. What difference does it make that the sacrifice of Christ was made “through the eternal Spirit”?
5. Hebrews 9:15-22 contain eight complete sentences.
 - A. Hebrews 9:15 is a complete sentence.
 1. To what does the author refer when he wrote, “for this reason”?
 2. What does it mean to be the “mediator” of a covenant?
 3. He mentioned “since a death has taken place.” What was he trying to convey by these words?
 4. What does he mean by “redemption”?
 5. What is a transgression?
 6. What did he mean by “to those who have been called”?
 7. What did he mean by “redemption”?
 8. Does he receive an “eternal inheritance” or “the promise of an inheritance”?
 9. What would the difference be?
 - B. Hebrews 9:16 is a complete sentence.
 1. Read this verse carefully. How has he used the word “covenant” in this verse?
 2. Why would it be necessary for a death to occur?
 - C. Hebrews 9:17 is a complete sentence.
 1. Read verses 16 and 17 together. How do they relate to each other?
 2. Though the word “for” does not appear in the Greek text in each of the places it appears in the English text, but the idea is present. What effect does this have on our understanding of the text?
 - D. Hebrews 9:18 is a complete sentence.
 1. The word “therefore” always indicates a coming conclusion. What conclusion is presented in this text?
 2. How would you explain this to a new believer?
 - E. Hebrews 9:19-20A is a complete sentence and would read as follows: **“For when every commandment had been spoken by Moses to all the people according to the law, he took the blood the calves and the goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, saying.”**
 1. These Jewish believers would have been quite familiar with the information in verse 19.
 2. Why would it be important for him to review it with them?
 3. Once again, the word “for” indicates that an explanation is coming. What was he explaining?
 4. He has returned to a description to the old covenant. Why would he do that here?

QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 9

- F. Hebrews 9:20B is a complete sentence and would read as follows: **“this is the blood of the covenant which God commanded you.”**
1. He has explained this several times. Why would he do it yet again?
 2. How is he using the word “covenant” in this verse?
 3. How does 9:20B relate to 9:19?
- G. Hebrews 9:21 is a complete sentence.
1. This sentence is a symbolic statement. What does it symbolize?
- H. Hebrews 9:22 is a complete sentence.
1. To what LAW does he refer in this verse?
 2. Why would he say, “One may ALMOST say”?
 3. In what way does blood cleanse?
 4. What does he mean by the word “forgiveness”?
6. Hebrews 9:23-28 contains 4 complete sentences.
- A. Hebrews 9:23 is a complete sentence.
1. The use of the word “therefore” indicates that we are at the point of a conclusion.
 2. What conclusion is being made?
 3. What did he mean by “copies of things in the heavens”?
 4. What did he mean by “better sacrifices”?
- B. Hebrews 9:24 is a complete sentence.
1. In good Jewish fashion, the author tells us what it is not before telling us what it is.
 2. There is a contrast within verse 24. What things are being contrasted?
 3. The author described the place Christ did not enter in two ways. What are they? What does it mean?
 4. The author attached great significance to the idea “That Christ appears in the presence of God for us.” Why is this so important? What does it mean?
- C. Hebrews 9:25-26 form a complete sentence.
1. There is a double contrast in 9:25.
 - a. What are the four contrasted elements?
 - b. What does the author achieve by this very strong statement?
 2. In Hebrews 9:26, the use of the word “otherwise” or “because” indicates that this is an explanation.
 - a. Explain the logic of “otherwise he would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world.”
 - b. Again, the use of the word “but” indicates that we are in the midst of a contrast. What are the contrasted elements?
 - c. What does he mean by the words, “at the consummation of the age”?
- D. Hebrews 9:27-28 form a complete sentence.
1. The use of the word translated “and” indicates that this is a continuation of the content of 9:26.
 2. What does it mean, “It is appointed...”?
 3. What difference would it make if the author had omitted, “and after this comes judgment”?
 4. There is a comparison in 9:28. What items are being compared?
 5. To what does he refer when he wrote, “Shall appear a second time...”? Why would this be important?

STUDY OF CHAPTER 9

JESUS' SINGLE SACRIFICE

HEBREWS 9:1 – 28

There are five paragraphs in Hebrews chapter nine. On the following table you will find a summary of each of these paragraphs.

9:1-5	The Old Tabernacle Described
9:6-10	The Incomplete Former Sacrifice
9:11-14	Christ's More Effective Sacrifice
9:15-22	Christ – Mediator of a New Covenant
9:23-28	Single Sacrifice; Heavenly Intercessor

HEBREWS 9:1-5 – THE OLD TABERNACLE DESCRIBED

“Now even the first covenant had regulations of divine worship and the earthly sanctuary.”
Hebrews 9:1

The word translated “now” is “oun” (οὖν) which is usually translated “therefore.” IF the word should be “now,” then it identifies a change in the direction of the author’s thinking. IF, on the other hand, the word should be translated “therefore,” then it identifies a coming conclusion. A personal preference would be the use of the word “now” which seems to more completely follow the flow of the context.

The word translated “had” is “eixe” (εἶχε) which means to have or to hold. The form of the word is imperfect active indicative:

- A. Imperfect – this is action in progress in past time.
- B. Active voice – the subject performs the action.
- C. Indicative mood – simple declaration of action.

The use of the indicative mood adds serious emphasis in this statement. We would translate it, “it had...”

The word translated “even” is “men” (μέν). The meaning of this word is “even” or “surely.” The use of the demonstrative “this” or “the” adds strong emphasis. The word “covenant” does not exist in the Greek text. The idea of “covenant” is a bit strong for this sentence. It is a reference to the instructions for the tabernacle and the system as reported in Exodus and Leviticus.

The word translated “ordinances” is “dikaionomata” (δικαιώματα) which means ordinance, regulation or commandment. It is a reference to the divine design for the way priests conducted their intermediary work.

“HAD REGULATIONS OF DIVINE WORSHIP”

The list of regulations for their priestly service was very long. There were careful regulations regarding their clothing and the way they would wear them to priestly service. There were prayers that they had to say while they were performing their service. They indeed had to spend from age 25-30 learning all the things that they had to know before they could serve at the altar. In effect, their entire childhood and early adulthood was an apprenticeship to get them ready to serve at the altar. Even then, their opportunities to serve may have been extremely limited. Nevertheless, the years had to be invested in the time of preparation for that thirtieth birthday when they would be baptized and serve at the altar.

“AND THE EARTHLY SANCTUARY”

A very detailed design was given to Moses and he followed that carefully in the development of the desert tabernacle. This in turn was the model for the temple that was built in Jerusalem. The design had to be exactly as God had revealed it to Moses. The design indicated just how many clasps had to be on the

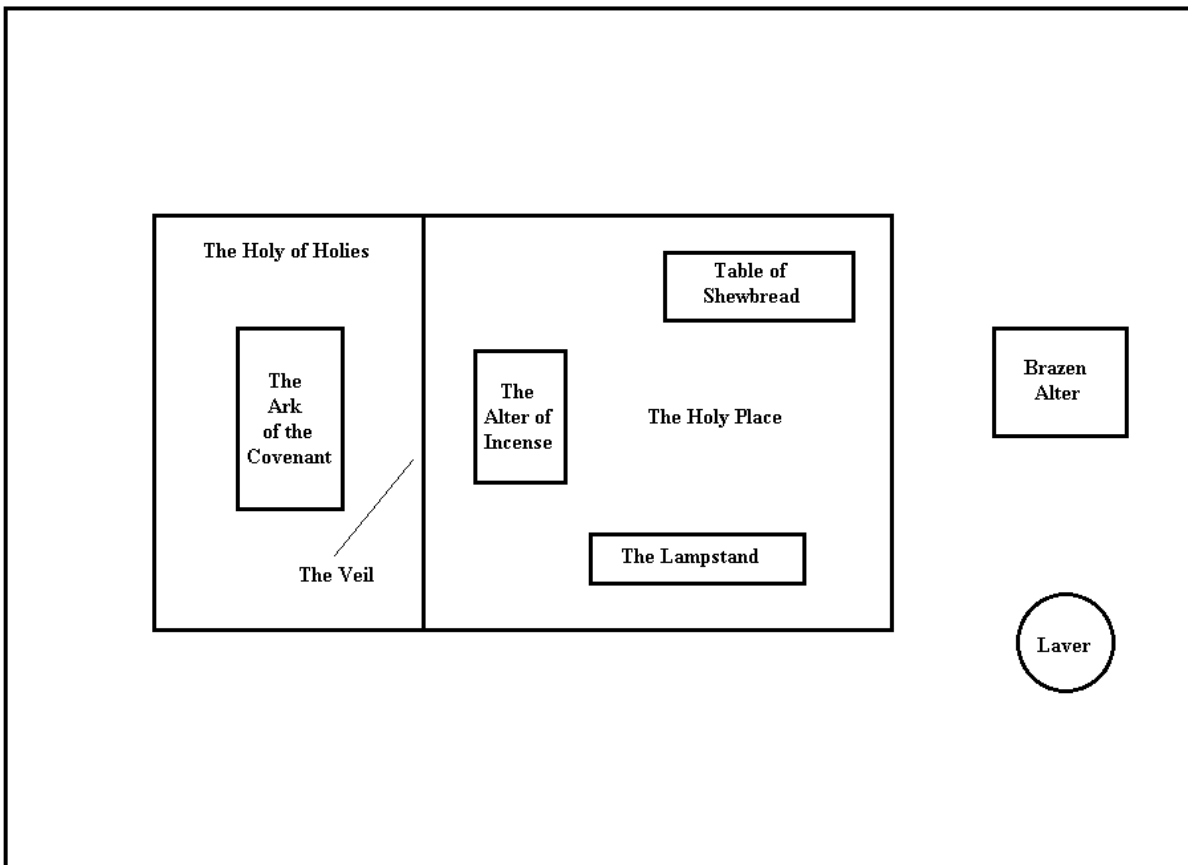
curtains. The design called for specific ingredients and nothing else would suffice. When gold was prescribed, nothing else would do. The contents of the tabernacle were carefully spelled out. Not only that, the metals out of which these things had to be made were specifically stated.

“For there was a tabernacle prepared, the outer one, in which were the lampstand and the table and the sacred bread; this is called the holy place.” Hebrews 9:2

“FOR THERE WAS A TABERNACLE PREPARED”

The entire structure for worship was called the tabernacle. It should be noted that each tribe had a specific location in which they pitched their tents around the tabernacle. There was a specific kind of wall around the tabernacle and it was made out of designated material. The hangings around that wall had to have a specific number of clasps on them. The material that covered the first part of the tabernacle had to be made out of specific kinds of material because there was more than one kind. This is called the “holy place” as opposed to the “holy of holies.” There were restrictions about the occupants of this “holy place.” Only those who were levitical priests were allowed into the “Holy place.” No one else was allowed. There had to be a great number of priests because of the vast need for those who made sacrifice on holy days. There were so many priests that they had to serve by divisions of the tribe. In the story of Elizabeth and Zechariah, Luke 1:5, indicates that Zechariah was a part of the division of Abijah.

“THE OUTER ONE IN WHICH WERE STANDING THE LAMPSTAND AND THE TABLE AND THE SACRED BREAD.”



“THIS IS CALLED THE HOLY PLACE”

This is the place where any of the Levitical priests on duty could go. No one else was allowed to be present in that area even if they were of the Levitical family.

“Behind the second veil there was a tabernacle which is called the Holy of Holies,” Hebrews 9:3

The second veil had not only to be made out of specific materials, but had to be woven in a specific way. It was a huge curtain that was pulled aside to allow the High Priest to enter the Holy of Holies on the day of Atonement. It is said that it would not be possible to tear this curtain from top to bottom because of the way in which it was woven. Nevertheless, the Gospel record informs us that this is exactly what happened when Jesus died. Inside the Holy of Holies, the second tabernacle, given Moses by design, there were specific items that must be present.

“having a golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, in which was a golden jar holding the manna, and Aaron’s rod which budded, and the tables of the covenant;” Hebrews 9:4

Everything about this tabernacle was symbolic. We must keep in mind that the Jews were a very symbolic people. This would have great meaning for them. This altar was the symbol of prayer. The design, the contents and the materials out of which the Ark of the Covenant was to be made was specifically given to Moses at Sinai.

The instructions included the exact size that the Ark of the Covenant must be. It was to be covered on all sides with gold. The metal-gold- was by this time the most precious metal. It had not always been. The golden Ark identified how important God was to be for these people. The contents of the Ark of Covenant were specific and symbolic: There was to be a golden jar in which the manna was kept. The manna was a reminder of the faithfulness of God in providing for their needs all through the desert trip. Aaron’s rod that budded was to be included. We know that this rod was especially used to demonstrate the power of God that superseded the power of the magicians of Egypt. The tablets of the law were also to be kept in the Ark. This was to be a vivid reminder to the people of Israel that God was a holy God and would be satisfied with nothing less than total obedience.

“and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat; but of these things we cannot now speak in detail.” Hebrews 9:5

The top or lid of the Ark of Covenant was called the Mercy seat. It was here that the blood of the sacrifice was sprinkled by the High Priest as he interceded for the sinful people of Israel. Above the Ark of the Covenant were two cherubim, angelic forms, called “the cherubim of glory.” Between these two angelic forms was the place where the visible presence of God resided. In effect, the blood on the mercy seat shielded the law from the presence of God lest all Israel be destroyed. Observe that the author knew the details of the tabernacle, but felt that there was not time at present to continue describing each item specifically. Frankly, we could wish he had taken the time to carefully describe each piece and explain its meaning and purpose. It could provide some very helpful information.

HEBREWS 9:6-10 – THE INCOMPLETE FORMER SACRIFICE

“Now when these things have been so prepared, the priests are continually entering the outer tabernacle performing the divine worship,” Hebrews 9:6

“NOW WHEN THESE THINGS HAVE BEEN THUS PREPARED”

The use of the word “now” indicates that the author is going to change the direction of his argument. The words “these things” refer to the design and furnishing of the tabernacle both Holy Place and the Holy of

Holies. They were prepared exactly as God had directed Moses at Sinai. The tabernacle could not be used until that time. Then and only then could it be put to use as God commanded.

“THE PRIESTS ARE CONTINUALLY ENTERING THE OUTER TABERNACLE”

The Scriptures do not give us a full picture of what all the priests had to do in the Holy Place. We know that the lamp stand had to be prepared for use each day. We know that the Bread of Presence had to be changed each day. We do not know much more about what they were to do in the Holy Place. It sounds as though there were a lot for them to do in that part of the tabernacle, but we cannot identify these things.

“PERFORMING THE DIVINE WORSHIP”

When we think of a service of divine worship, we tend to think of a congregational gathering; a carefully designed order of worship with singing and preaching. That is not what the author had in mind. We need to think of an experience of worship being conducted all day, every day. There were prayers being offered. There were sacrifices being made. The only people involved in all of this were the priests. This requires that we redefine what we mean by “worship.” The word translated “worship” is “latreias” (λατρείας). In the New Testament, it describes a service based upon the explanation of Scripture. It is an activity focusing one’s religious activity upon the service of God. Our problem, we completely associate the word “worship” with a public meeting in the church building. It could be even a job to do in a work situation.

“but into the second, only the high priest enters once a year, not without taking blood, which he offers for himself and for the sins of the people committed in ignorance.” Hebrews 9:7

The use of the word “but” indicates that we are in the midst of a strong contrast. The author is contrasting what happened in the Holy Place with what happened in the Holy of Holies. One of the pieces of this contrast is the fact that all the Levitical priests who were serving could enter the Holy Place. On the other hand, only the High Priest could enter the Holy of Holies and that only once in the year on the Day of Atonement. Priests could go into the Holy Place carrying bread or preparations for the lamp stand. Into the Holy of Holies, however, only the High Priest could enter and he had to have a container of blood with him to sprinkle on the mercy seat as he made intercession for his sins and those of the people of Israel. Observe that there is a limiting factor here – it is for the sins committed in ignorance. He does not tell us what they did with the sins that were not committed in ignorance.

“The Holy Spirit is signifying this, that the way into the holy place has not yet been disclosed while the outer tabernacle is still standing,” Hebrews 9:8

The author was saying that the Holy Spirit used the Old Testament system as a way to teach that and succeeding generations of the church. Observe that in this verse the author mentioned the “Holy Place.” The content, however, indicates that he was talking about what we call the “Holy Place” as opposed to the Holy of Holies. The Jews commonly spoke of what we term the “Holy Place” as the “first sanctuary” or the “first tabernacle. We need to keep this straight in our minds. The Spirit intended that the situation concerning the Holy of Holies is in itself a message about God’s planned revelation concerning His means of redeeming fallen human beings.

The way into “the Holy Place” (Holy of Holies) has not yet been disclosed because Jesus has not yet died at the time of which the author spoke. As long as the “outer tabernacle” (the Holy Place) still stands, the revelation of the New Covenant will not be completed for the people to understand.

“which is a symbol for the present time. Accordingly both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make the worshiper perfect in conscience,” Hebrews 9:9

In verse nine, the author points to a problem. The gifts and sacrifices are still being properly offered. The problem with this is that these gifts and sacrifices are not complete in order to make the worshiper complete. He made the sacrifice as a sinner, guilty before God. Having made the gifts and sacrifices, the

STUDY OF CHAPTER 9

worshipper is no longer guilty before God. That being the case, why would he again have to offer a sacrifice each succeeding year? The sacrifice dealt with the sins of the past, but did nothing to change the person. The superiority of the sacrifice of Jesus is that it was completely effective and did not need to be performed ever again.

“since they relate only to food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until a time of reformation.” Hebrews 9:10

These gifts and sacrifices deal only with food and drink and occasionally with regulations of washings. It is clear that this is a temporary measure. It was introduced on a temporary basis until the real sacrifice, the sacrifice of Jesus, was introduced. The details that the author mentioned are those that indicate just how inadequate the sacrifices really were.

HEBREWS 9:11-16 – CHRIST’S MORE EFFECTIVE SACRIFICE

“But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation;” Hebrews 9:11

This new paragraph begins with the word “but.” This indicates that we are in the midst of a strong contrast. It is important to identify the two contrasted elements:

- A. One of the contrasted elements is the limitations of the old priestly system – unable to make one perfect.
- B. The other part of the contrast is the ministry and priesthood of Jesus which was completely successful. He then detailed information about the priesthood of Jesus. Jesus is the High Priest of the good things to come. He entered not through the Jerusalem temple, but through a greater tabernacle. He also identified this temple as a more perfect tabernacle. He spoke of a tabernacle not made with hands as the first one was. This is a reference to the heavenly tabernacle which human beings did not build.

“and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.” Hebrews 9:12

The author continued the contrast. The first priestly system depended upon the sacrifice of goats and calves to bring about forgiveness. Jesus had a different sacrifice to bring, namely the sacrifice of Himself. The Levitical priests had to enter into the Holy of Holies once every year because their sacrifices were not eternal. Their sacrifices cancelled the past, but did nothing about the present and future. Thus, Jesus could enter in once and it was concluded forever. There could never be and would never need a repetition of the sacrifice because His sacrifice was eternally effective. The redemption of Jesus was eternally effective, not annually.

“For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh,” Hebrews 9:13

The sacrifice of the blood of bulls and goats, along with the ashes of a heifer being sprinkled on those who have been defiled cancelled the guilt of the past. It is not that they were totally ineffective. They had to be repeated. Their repetition was evidence of the fact that their usefulness was limited. In verse 13, the author spoke of the sprinkling of the ashes of a heifer. We need to point out what the author was referring to in this statement.

“This is the statute of the law which the Lord has commanded, saying, ‘Speak to the sons of Israel that they bring you an unblemished red heifer in which is no defect and on which a yoke has never been placed.’ Numbers 19:2

This passage describes how they are to kill this sacrificial animal and reduce the body to ashes. These ashes are to be sprinkled on the water which purifies the priests. When they reach the end of these ashes, another red heifer must be killed and the process repeated. Seven red heifers have been used in this fashion. The last pinch of ashes from a red heifer are used to purify the ashes of the next red heifer. You can have sacrifices without a temple or tabernacle, but you cannot sacrifice if you do not have the ashes of the red heifer. The Jews do not currently offer sacrifices, but it is not because there is no temple. It is because they do not have or admit that they have found the ashes of the last red heifer.

“how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?”
Hebrews 9:14

We should keep in mind that Hebrews 9:13 and 14 form a single sentence. Jesus is greater than the animal sacrifices that were offered by the Levites. That being the case, if the animal sacrifice was sufficient to sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, then the blood of Jesus is much more sufficient. Notice how the author presents this contrast. It is not just that the animal blood was sanctified for the sins of the people and Jesus' blood was also shed for the people. It is that the blood of Christ was shed. He offered Himself through the eternal Spirit. Jesus offered Himself without blemish to God. It does not just sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh. It also cleanses the conscience from dead works. It cleanses the conscience to serve the living God. This is much more than simply cancelling the sins of the past.

HEBREWS 9:15-22 – CHRIST- MEDIATOR OF A NEW COVENANT

“And for this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that, since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.” Hebrews 9:15

The use of the word “and” indicates that the author's line of thought continues in this verse. The words “this reason” refer back to verse 14 where the author spoke of the pure blood of Jesus cleansing our conscience from dead works in order to enable us to serve God. The words “for this reason” indicated that he is going to explain what the consequences of this greater sacrifice are.

“HE IS THE MEDIATOR OF A NEW COVENANT”

The word translated “He is” is “estin” (ἐστίν). The words “He is” convey the idea of a state of being. The form of the word is present indicative active:

- A. Present tense – begins and never ends – aa lifestyle.
- B. Indicative – simple declaration of action.
- C. Active voice – the subject performs the action.

It is like saying, He is and never ceases to be the mediator. The word translated “mediator” is “mesitae” (μεσίτης) which means a go-between. It is a reconciler; one who guarantees fulfillment of a contract.

The word translated “covenant” is “diathēkē” (διαθήκη) which is a covenant or contract; a treaty. It is a last will and testament.

“IN ORDER THAT SINCE A DEATH HAS TAKEN PLACE”

The word translated “has taken place” is “gennomenou” (γενομένου) which means – it has happened; it has come into being. The form of this word is aorist middle participle:

- A. Aorist tense – used to increase emphasis.
- B. Middle voice – the subject is involved in the action
- C. Participle – ongoing action.

This death is important because a covenant or “will” does not take effect until the person granting it has died. In this, their covenant or last will was much like our own.

“FOR THE REDEMPTION OF THE TRANSGRESSIONS”

The word translated “redemption” is “apolutrosis” (ἀπολύτρωσις) which means redemption. It is a release brought about by payment of ransom. It is deliverance. The word translated “transgressions” is “parabasis” (παράβασις) which literally means to step over a line. It is breaking the law. The terms of the first covenant are I will be your God and you shall be My people. The terms of the new covenant are the same – your God; My people. It is the means of maintaining the covenant that have changed:

- A. Old Covenant – repeated sacrifices
- B. New Covenant – single sacrifice forever

“THAT WERE COMMITTED UNDER THE FIRST COVENANT”

The words, “that were committed” do not appear in the Greek text. These words, however, are understood in the text. The author in this section laboriously goes back and forth between the first covenant and the new covenant. He is carefully showing the strength of the new covenant against the background of the weakness of the first covenant. We must continually remind ourselves that the readers were Jews for whom the old covenant was very important.

“THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN CALLED.”

The word translated “called” is “kaleo” (καλέω) which means to be named, to be invited. The form of this word is perfect participle:

- A. Perfect tense – identifies something as absolutely accomplished.
- B. Participle – identifies ongoing action.

There could be a difference of opinion concerning this form. One could say that it is always true that these people have been called.

“MAY RECEIVE THE PROMISE OF THE ETERNAL INHERITANCE.”

The word translated “may receive” is “lambano” (λαμβάνω) which means to take to oneself; to claim or lay hold upon. The form of this word is aorist subjunctive:

- A. Aorist tense – places emphasis on the action, not the time.
- B. Subjunctive – identifies the action as possible. This is the reason for the word “may.”

The word translated “promise” is “epangelia” (ἐπαγγελία). This word is usually translated “promise” in a good sense. It is sometimes translated “message” or “announcement.”

The idea of an eternal inheritance would certainly grasp the Jewish reader’s attention. As with us, the idea of an inheritance suggests availability at the time of the giver’s demise. The author’s mention of an eternal inheritance takes effect upon the demise of the recipient.

The word translated “inheritance” is “klaeronomia” (κληρονομία) which means property received upon the death of the giver. It is a share of the possessions of the deceased. The problem in the story of the Prodigal Son was that he did not want to wait until his father died. This is an eternal inheritance that is only available upon the death of the recipient.

***“For where a covenant is, there must of necessity be the death of the one who made it.”
Hebrews 9:16***

In this verse, the word “covenant” means a last will and testament. It is because a will is only legal when the one who made it has died. Verse 16 is a legal definition of the terms of a “covenant.”

“For a covenant is valid only when men are dead, for it is never in force while the one who made it lives.” Hebrews 9:17

In both instances (verses 16 and 17) the word “for” does not appear in the Greek text. The word does, however, fit the logic of the rest of the text. Verses 16 and 17 are two statements of the same message. This is a way to add serious emphasis to the text. A covenant or will is just words on a piece of paper until the person who made it dies.. At this point, it becomes a legal document.

“Therefore even the first covenant was not inaugurated without blood.” Hebrews 9:18

The word translated “therefore” is “hothen” (ὅθεν) which is usually translated “wherefore.” The word “therefore” is a translation of the word (οὖν). Our word here is a weaker form which indicates a coming weaker conclusion.

The use of “even as” is not a strict translation. It is usually translated “neither” or “not even.” It fits, but it is not the most careful translation of the term.

The author is giving the Jewish recipients a reminder. The idea of the sacrifice of Christ is not a new idea. The original covenant was secured by the sacrifice of the blood of a lamb. The exact same idea prevails in the giving of the New Covenant. In this instance, however, it is the blood of the Son of God, rather than the blood of a lamb.

“For when every commandment had been spoken by Moses to all the people according to the Law, he took the blood of the calves and the goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people,” Hebrews 9:19

The word “for” does not appear in the Greek text. It is a logical necessity in this instance. In this verse, the author was speaking of the long list of commands that Moses gave during the Exodus. When the listing of commands was completed, Moses made a sacrifice. He sacrificed both calves and goats. He sprinkled blood on these sacrifices, upon the tabernacle and all of its furnishings. This was a symbolic act of cleansing. He even sprinkled the scroll which the author referred to as “the book.” The author also spoke of the use of water, scarlet, wool and hyssop.

“saying, “This is the blood of the covenant which God commanded you.”” Hebrews 9:20

This is a quotation from Exodus 24:8. The word translated “commanded” is “entello” (ἐντέλλω) which means to charge with or to enjoin upon. The form of this word is aorist tense. This form focuses attention on the action rather than on the many shades of meaning involved in the commanding.

“And in the same way he sprinkled both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry with the blood.” Hebrews 9:21

The words “and in the” do not appear in the Greek text. The word translated “the same way” is “homoios” (ὅμοιος) which literally means “exactly the same.” This is a strict comparison between the cleansing of the old covenant and now the new covenant in the blood of Jesus. The word translated “sprinkled” is “rantidzo” (ραντίζω) which means to sprinkle. It means to purify by sprinkling. The form of this word is aorist tense which emphasizes the action, not the time. In this verse, the author used the idea of cleansing of the individuals as it was necessary for the priests to be cleansed in the old covenant.

“And according to the Law, one may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.” Hebrews 9:22

“AND ACCORDING TO THE LAW”

In this verse, the author, again, seeks to stress the importance of cleansing. He is also dealing with the cleansing of sinners seeking forgiveness/ cleansing. “According to the law,” is a way of saying that if you study the law Moses gave, this is what you will find.

“ONE MAY ALMOST SAY”

The words “one may” do not appear in the Greek text. The use of the word “almost” is telling. It is usually translated “almost” or “nearly.” He is not stating an absolute fact. Observe how he wrote. First, he used the restricted word, “almost.” He then used the omnibus word “all.” This is a way to add strong emphasis. This is exactly how he is writing in this section. You will see more of this as we continue the study.

“ALL THINGS ARE CLEANSED WITH BLOOD”

The word translated “cleansed” is “katharidzo” (καθαρίζω) which means to cleanse or purify. This is a spiritual cleansing, not a physical one. The form of the word is present tense which identifies action that begins and does not stop – a lifestyle. One might translate the word, “all things are being cleansed.”

“AND WITHOUT THE SHEDDING OF BLOOD”

Observe the way the writer orchestrates his idea. First he made a very strong but limited statement. He then followed this with an absolute statement. The result is that he has used this to build to a crescendo. There are no exceptions – blood shed is absolutely essential if forgiveness is to be received.

“THERE IS NO FORGIVENESS”

The exact wording is, “without shedding blood no forgiveness.” The word translated “forgiveness” is “aphesis” (ἄφεσις) which means to pardon or deliver. It is the remission of the penalty.

HEBREWS 9:23-28 – SINGLE SACRIFICE: HEAVENLY INTERCESSOR

“Therefore it was necessary for the copies of the things in the heavens to be cleansed with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.” Hebrews 9:23

“THEREFORE IT WAS NECESSARY”

The word translated “therefore” is “oun” (οὖν) which is a strong connective. It indicates that a conclusion is forthcoming. The word translated “it is necessary” is “anagkai” (ἀνάγκη) which means to constrain; to require.

“FOR THE COPIES OF THE THINGS”

The words “for the” do not appear in the Greek text, but are appropriate for understanding. The word translated “copies” is “hupodeigma” (ὑπόδειγμα) which means a pattern; an example; a representation. The words “of the things” do not appear in the text, but they are understood.

“IN THE HEAVENS TO BE CLEANSED WITH THESE”

The author described two tabernacles. One is the real tabernacle in the heavens. The other is a copy here on earth which the Jews knew about very well. The word translated “cleansed” is “katharidzo” (καθαρίζω) which means to clean out; to purify; and in the moral sense it means to free from the defilement of sin. It is the basis for the English word “catharsis.” The form of this word is present infinitive: describes action that begins and never quits. The present infinitive might be translated “to be being cleansed.”

“BUT THE HEAVENLY THINGS THEMSELVES”

The words “but the” do not appear in the Greek text, but they are understood. These are the real heavenly tabernacle after which the earthly tabernacle was patterned. The author is in the process of establishing the fact that Jesus, the superior High Priest, serves in a superior tabernacle, a heavenly one.

“WITH BETTER SACRIFICES THAN THESE.”

Again, the word “with” does not appear in the Greek text, but it is understood. The word translated “better” is “kreiton” (κρείττον) which is a comparative.

“For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us;” Hebrews 9:24

“FOR CHRIST DID NOT ENTER A HOLY PLACE MADE WITH HANDS”

The word “for” does not appear in the Greek text, but it is understood to be present. In good Jewish fashion, the author first tells us what it is not and then tells us what it is. Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands. The words “did not” do not appear in the Greek text, but are understood to be present. The word translated “enter” is “eiserchomai” (εἰσέρχομαι) which means to enter; to take possession. The form of the word is aorist tense which emphasizes the action rather than the time.

The word translated “holy place” is “hagios” (ἅγιος) which literally means “holy.” Observe that the author formerly used the word (καθαρίζω) which means cleansed and now uses the word “hagios” (ἅγιος). We must establish the difference between these two words:

A. (καθαρίζω) identifies something that was unclean, but was cleansed.

B. (ἅγιος) identifies something that has never been unclean.

This is a very significant difference.

“A MERE COPY OF THE TRUE ONE”

The word translated “mere” does not appear in the Greek text, but it is anticipated. The word translated “copy” is “antitupos” (ἀντίτυπος) which means something formed after a pattern. It is something that resembles something else. The copy is always inferior to the real thing.

The word translated “true one” is “alaethinos” (ἀληθίνος) It was always translated “true” on 27 occasions. It is the opposite of counterfeit.

“BUT INTO HEAVEN ITSELF”

The words “but into” do not appear in the Greek text. They are anticipated. Christ entered heaven itself. This was a very important doctrinal focus in the first century. There was high debate about whether or not Jesus really died and went to heaven. This, however, is not an issue for us.

“NOW TO APPEAR IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD FOR US”

The word translated “now” is “nun” (νῦν) and is most often translated “now.” The word translated “appear” is “euphanidzo” (εὐφανίζω) which is a legal term. It means to appear as a witness who comes to the court to give witness in a case. The form of the word is aorist tense which stresses the action and not the time. The word translated “presence” is “prosopon” (πρόσωπον) which means in front of. It is a royal term which describes what it means to be called before the throne of the king to give witness. It is sometimes translated “in the face of.” God is the object of this portion of the verse. This is an important point in the thinking of the author. He is presenting Jesus as the High Priest. This superior High Priest appears not in the holy of holies, but in the immediate presence of the God of Israel. The words translated “for us” are understood, but they do not appear in the Greek text.

“nor was it that He would offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the holy place year by year with blood that is not his own.” Hebrews 9:25

“NOR WAS IT THAT HE SHOULD OFFER HIMSELF OFTEN”

The word translated “nor” is “oude” (οὐδέ) which is a strong negative indicator. In most instances it was translated “nor.”

The words, “was it that he would” do not appear in the Greek text. The word translated “he should offer” is really “he offer” and is “prosphero” (προσφέρω) and means to bring to. It was occasionally translated “offers up” as in this instance. It means to bring to. The word translated “himself” is “heautou” (ἐαυτοῦ). This was used as a strong emphasis on the fact that He did it Himself. The pronoun adds serious emphasis. The word translated “often” is “pollakis” (πολλάκις) and the word “often” is the most common translation. There were occasions when it gives the idea of repeatedly. (One should note just how often we have had to write that certain words do not appear in the text, but were understood. This gives us an indication of just how complicated this portion of the text really was.)

“AS THE HIGH PRIEST ENTERS THE HOLY PLACE YEAR BY YEAR”

The words “as the” do not appear in the Greek text. The translation helps us see this is a direct comparison. The High Priests do enter the Holy of Holies every year. The word translated “enters” is “eiserchomai” (εἰσερχομαι) and means to go in. The form of the word is present tense. This is a reference to what is commonly known as the “Holy of Holies” and means the inner sanctum. The author was reminding his readers repeatedly that the High Priests of the Levitical family returned to the Holy of Holies each year.

“WITH BLOOD NOT HIS OWN”

The writer had one final contrast between Jesus and the Levitical High Priests. Jesus entered the heavenly Holy of Holies, but with His own blood.

“Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.” Hebrews 9:26

“OTHERWISE HE WOULD HAVE NEEDED TO SUFFER OFTEN”

The word translated “otherwise” is “epei” (ἐπεὶ) which is most often translated “because.” It has been translated “otherwise” on four occasions. All of these occurrences, however, are in an explanatory role.

The word translated “he would have needed” is “dei” (δεῖ) and is most often translated “must.” The basic idea is that of necessity. The form of this word is present tense. Which describes a lifestyle. The word translated “suffer” is “pascho” (πάσχω) which is commonly translated as suffering. It can also mean to be vexed. It is an expression of great passion. The word translated “often” is “pollakis” (πολλάκις) which means repeatedly.

“SINCE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD”

The author is pointing out that creation is thousands of years old. In the Levitical system he would have had to sacrifice during each of these thousands of years. This idea is central to the author’s major premise in chapters five through ten.

“BUT NOW ONCE AT THE CONSUMMATION OF THE AGES”

The word “but” fits the situation, but does not appear in the Greek text. The word translated “now” is “nuni” (νυνί) and is appropriate. The word translated “once” is hapax” (ἁπαξ) and is always so translated. The word translated “consummation” is “sunteleia” (συντέλεια) and is always translated as the end or completion of something. In this instance the author was speaking of the ages.

“HE HAS BEEN MANIFESTED”

The one word that is translated as “he has been manifested” is “phaneroo” (φανερόω) and it means to appear or to make known. The form of the word is perfect tense which emphasizes the absolute completeness of the action.

“TO PUT AWAY SIN”

The word translated “put away” is “athetaesis” (ἀθέτησις) and means to abolish or to reject. This is the only place where it is translated put away.” It is sometimes translated to set aside. The word translated “sin” is “hamartia” (ἁμαρτία) which means to miss the mark; an offense; to err. It is to wander from the path of righteousness.

“BY THE SACRIFICE OF HIMSELF”

The words “by the” do not appear in the Greek text., but they are appropriate. The use of these words was the translators way to help us understand the direction of his thinking. The word translated “sacrifice” is “thusia” (θυσία) which means a sacrifice or victim. Both the Levitical High Priests and Jesus made sacrifice for sins. The basic differences are these:

- A. Jesus made a single sacrifice where the High Priest made yearly sacrifices
- B. Jesus sacrificed Himself where High Priests sacrificed helpless animals.

“And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment,” Hebrews 9:27

The word translated “appointed” is “apokeitai” (ἀπόκειται) which is only translated “appointed” once and that is this occasion. It carries the idea of being determined in advance. The form of this word is present tense. This stresses the fact that this is always true. The word translated “die” is “apothnaesko”

(ἀποθήσκω) and every usage of this word has to do with dying. In a few instances, it refers to suffering after death. The form of the word is aorist tense. As the author has been doing, he used the aorist tense to stress the action, not the time. There is an emphasis on the word “once.” Every human being dies once. The word translated “judgment” is “krisis” (κρίσις) which means judgment. The emphasis in the use of this word is most often the negative – punishment.

“so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him.” Hebrews 9:28

The words translated “so” are “outos kai” (οὕτως – καὶ) which is so also. This is a very strong comparative and points out two parallel situations. Notice that the author chose to use the name “Christ” rather than “Jesus.” There is a good reason for this change. The name “Christ” means anointed one and is the way the Jew identified the Messiah. The name “Jesus” means “savior” and the emphasis is on His redeeming ministry.

The word translated “once” is “apadz” (ἅπαξ) and is well translated. The Greek word order is much stronger – “Christ once offered.” The word translated “offered” is “prosenchtheis” (προσενεχθείς) which means to bring; to present. The form of this word is aorist participle which stresses both emphasis on the action and ongoing activity. The author was trying to stress the action while at the same time indicate that this is always the case.

The word translated “to bear” is “anenegein” (ἀνενεγείν) which means to carry or to lead up as to the temple sacrifice. Every Jew would recognize this as a way to describe the bringing of the sacrifice. Again the form of the word is aorist tense. There is a subtle contrast in this statement. The author speaks of a single sacrifice but one that covers the sins of many. This would bring a whole different understanding to the Jewish sacrifice. This is exactly what the author was attempting to point out in chapters five through ten.

The subject of the word translated “shall appear” is Christ. The word translated “shall appear” is “ophthaesetai” (ὀφθήσεται) which means to see or be seen, to perceive. The English text omits the word “Himself.” This is a way to add serious emphasis that it is the Christ who does this. The form of this word is interesting – future passive. The future tense identifies something that has not as yet come to pass. It is interesting that the author used the passive form with this word. It is a subtle way to suggest that this is not an action that Christ initiated, but one in which he was the recipient of the action.

The words in the English text, “a second time” do not appear in the Greek text, but are understood. The word translated “for sin” is “harmartias” (ἁμαρτίας) which means to miss the mark. The intent is not as drastic as some other words translated in this way. The words in the English text “without reference to” do not appear in the Greek text, but can be assumed to be intended. The word translated “those” is a good translation, but it is a stronger term than the English text suggests. The word translated “eagerly awaits” is “apekdexomenois” (ἀπεκδεχόμενοις) which is very strong and graphic. It means to find it difficult to restrain oneself. The form of the word is quite appropriate – present participle. Both of these forms describe ongoing action. It is a way to emphasize eagerness that remains ongoing and almost out of control. The English text reads “awaits Him.” The Greek text is a bit different. It uses the word “sotaerian” (σωτηρίαν). Granted, to await Him is to await salvation, but deliverance is more specific.

QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 10

HEBREWS 10:1 – 39

1. There are five paragraphs in the tenth chapter of Hebrews. On the following table, write a brief summary of eight words or less for each paragraph.

10:1-10	
10:11-18	
10:19-25	
10:26-31	
10:32-39	

2. Hebrews 10:1-10 contains 10 complete sentences.

A. Hebrews 10:1 is a complete sentence.

1. In this verse, the author used the words “make perfect.” What did he mean by these words?
2. There is a contrast in this verse. What two elements are being contrasted?
3. If the sacrifices do not “make perfect the one who sacrifices them,” what is their purpose?
4. What does he mean by the descriptions:
 - a. “Only a shadow”?
 - b. “The very form of things”?
5. What is the difference between the descriptives: “year by year” and “offer continually”?

B. Hebrews 10:2 is a complete sentence.

1. Verse two is a logical argument.
2. There are three steps to his logical argument. What are these steps?
3. How would a Jewish reader react to this logical statement?

C. Hebrews 10:3 is a complete sentence.

1. The use of the word “but” indicates that we are in the midst of a strong contrast. What are the contrasted elements?
2. What did the author mean when he wrote, “There is a reminder”?

D. Hebrews 10:4 is a complete sentence.

1. This verse is an explanation.
2. Read the verse again. IF “it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin, THEN why would God command them to do this?”

E. Hebrews 10:5 contains two complete sentences.

1. Hebrews 10:5A is a complete sentence and reads as follows, “**Therefore, when He comes into the world.**”
 - a. The use of the word “therefore” suggests that this is a conclusion. What is concluded in this statement?
 - b. Who is “He” as mentioned in this sentence?
 - c. What did he mean when he wrote, “comes into the world”?
2. Hebrews 10:5B is a complete sentence and reads as follows, “**Sacrifices and sins Thou has not desired, but a body Thou hast prepared for me.**”
 - a. This sentence is partially quoted from Psalm 40. As you compare Psalm 40 with Hebrews 10:5B, what did you discover?
 - b. Who is “Thou” as mentioned in this sentence?
 - c. To what was he referring when he mentioned “sacrifices and offerings”?
 - d. To whom does he refer with the word “Me”?
 - e. What does it mean when he wrote, “A body Thou hast prepared for Me”?

The Superior Jesus

- F. Hebrews 10:6 is a complete sentence.
1. Compare the content of Hebrews 10:5B and 10:6. What did you discover?
 2. Why would the author do this?
- G. Hebrews 10:7 is a complete sentence.
1. Hebrews 10:7 is a quotation from Psalm 40:7, 8. Why would the author make this quotation?
 2. As you observe these two passages, what did you observe about the text? Why would he do this?
 3. To who does the author refer by the word “I”?
- H. Hebrews 10:8 and 9A form a complete sentence that would read as follows: **“After saying above, “sacrifices and offerings for sin Thou hast not desired, nor hast thou taken pleasure in them” (which are offered according to the law) Then he said:”**
1. Reread 10:6 and 7. Then read 10:8. What did you discover?
 2. Look again at the parenthesis in verse 8. What does it add to the message?
- I. Hebrews 10:9B and 10 form a complete sentence which would read as follows: **““Behold, I have come to do thy will.” He takes away the first in order to establish the second. By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”**
1. In Hebrews 10:9B, the author quotes, “I have come to do thy will”.
 - a. To whom does he refer by the word “I”?
 - b. To whom does he refer by the word “thy”?
 2. In 10:9B, the author wrote, “He takes away the first in order to establish the second.”
 - a. What is the “first”?
 - b. What is the “second”?
 3. In Hebrews 10:10, the author wrote, “By this will we have been sanctified.”
 - a. To what does he refer by the word “will”?
 - b. What does he refer to by the word “sanctify”?
 4. What difference would it make if he had omitted the words “Once for all”?
3. Hebrews 10:11-18 – EFFECTIVE – NEW SACRIFICE; NEW COVENANT
This is a paragraph which contains six complete sentences.
- A. Hebrews 10:11-13 form a single complete sentence.
1. The Greek text reads “and INDEED every priest stands daily...” What is accomplished by the use of the word “indeed”?
 2. Though it is not announced by the word “but,” there is a contrast between 10:10 and 10:11.
 - a. What are the contrasted elements?
 - b. What difference does it make?
 3. Hebrews 10:11 contains two very strong emphases:
 - a. What point is the author trying to make when he wrote, “Offering time after time the same sacrifices”?
 - b. What is the logic behind the author’s insertion of the words, “Which can never take away sins”?
 4. There is a contrast between 10:11 and 10:12
 - a. What are the contrasted elements?
 - b. Why is this important?
 5. What is the importance of the priests standing in verse 11 and Jesus seated in verse 12?
 6. What is the significance of Jesus being seated at God’s right hand?
 - a. In Hebrews 10:13, what is the author suggesting by the use of the word “until”?
 - b. What does the author mean by the words, “His enemies be made a footstool for his feet”?
- B. Hebrews 10:14 is a complete sentence.
1. The use of the word “for” indicates that this is an explanation. What is being explained?

QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 10

2. There are two words in this short sentence that need definition:
 - a. What does he mean by “perfected”?
 - b. What does he mean by “sanctified”?
3. What is the importance of his use of the phrase “for all time”?
- C. Hebrews 10:15 is a complete sentence.
 1. Read verses 14 and 15 once more. What is their relationship to each other?
 2. What does the author mean when he wrote, “The Holy Spirit also bears witness to us...”?
- D. Hebrews 10:16A is a complete sentence and would read as follows: **“This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord.”**
 1. A covenant could never be broken, but God, through the author, is claiming to make a “new covenant” with Israel. How can you explain this?
 2. To what does the author refer by the words, “after those days...”?
 3. Why would he refer to the Son of God as “Lord” rather than “Jesus Christ” or “Christ Jesus”?
- E. Hebrews 10:16B-17 is a complete sentence and would read like this: **“I will put my laws upon their heart, and upon their mind I will write them, He then says, “And their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.”**
 1. God’s law was first written on stone, but in this sentence the law was written on their hearts and minds. What would the difference be?
 2. Other statements of the law included the words, “I will be their God and they shall be My people.” Why would the author omit that phrase in this quotation from Jeremiah 31:33?
 3. Hebrews 10:17 is a quotation from Jeremiah 31:34, Review the statements in Jeremiah 31:33 and 31:34. What did you learn?
 4. Hebrews 10:16 identifies the change God made in this process. What does 10:17 point out?
 5. What is the difference between “sins” and “lawless deeds”?
- F. Hebrews 10:18 is a complete sentence.
 1. The use of the word “now” indicates a change in the direction of the narrative. What direction change can you discover?
 2. What did he really mean by the word “forgive”?
 3. This is really a conditional statement:
 - a. What is the condition?
 - b. What is the consequence?
 4. What would the difference be if the author instead of writing, “There is no longer any offering for sin,” had written, “There is no offering for sin”?
4. Hebrews 10:19-25 – OUR RESPONSE TO THE NEW SACRIFICE
This is a paragraph in which there are only two complete sentences.
 - A. Hebrews 10:19 – 22 is a single complete sentence.
 1. The use of the word “therefore” indicates a conclusion is forthcoming. What is the conclusion here?
 2. The author addressed the recipients as “brethren” or “holy brethren” four times in this epistle. (3:1; 3:12; 10:19; 13:22) Review the context around each of these salutations to see if you can find anything they share in common. If so, what is it?
 3. How has the author used the word translated “confidence” in this verse?
 4. What did he mean when he wrote, “to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus”?
 5. In 10:20, he spoke of a “new and living way.” What did he mean?
 6. In verse 20, he wrote, “Through the veil, that is, His flesh.” What did he mean?
 7. In verse 21, the author mentioned “a great High Priest.” How is this different from a “High Priest”?
 8. The author began verse 22 with the command, “Let us draw near.” What does this mean?

The Superior Jesus

9. In this verse, the author used four descriptive phrases:
 - a. What did he mean by “with a true heart”?
 - b. What did he mean by “In fullness of faith”?
 - c. What did he mean by “having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience”?
 - d. What did he mean by “having our body washed with pure water”?
- B. Hebrews 10:23-25 form a single complete sentence in which there are four commands..
 1. What did the author mean when he wrote, “Let us hold fast the confession of our faith”?
 2. The author then explained, “for He is faithful who promised.” How would you explain this explanation?
 3. In verse 24, he wrote, “Let us consider one another.” What does this mean?
 4. He also wrote, “To provoke unto love.” Provoking seldom leads to love. What did he mean?
 5. Verse 25 contains a strong contrast. What are the contrasted elements? How do they relate to each other?
 6. Why is the “assembling together” so important when the very act of assembling placed their lives in danger?
 7. What did he mean by the phrase, “As you see the day drawing near”?
5. Hebrews 10:26-31 – THE DANGER OF IGNORING JESUS CHRIST
This is a paragraph in which there are eight complete sentences.
 - A. Hebrews 10:26, 27 form a complete sentence which would read as follows: **“For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins (Heb. 10:26) but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and a fierceness of fire, which shall devour the adversaries. Hebrews 10:27**
 1. The use of the word translated “for” indicates that this is an explanation. This explanation is in the form of a conditional statement:
 - a. What is the condition?
 - b. What is the consequence?
 2. Read the verse again. How would you explain the idea that God, because of Jesus forgives sin, but does not forgive this sin?
 3. There is a strong contrast between verse 26 and 27. What are the contrasted elements?
 4. How would you describe the depiction of judgment mentioned here?
 - B. Hebrews 10:28 is a complete sentence.
 1. How does his reference to “the law of Moses” fit in here?
 2. What is the purpose of mentioning “two or three witnesses”?
 - C. Hebrews 10:29 is a complete sentence.
 1. In this verse, the author presented three charges against a believer who goes on sinning.
 - a. What did he mean, “...Who has trampled under feet the Son of God”?
 - b. What does he mean, “...(who) has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified”?
 - c. What does he mean, “...(who) has insulted the spirit of grace”?
 - D. Hebrews 10:30A is a complete sentence and reads as follows: “For we know Him who said...”
 1. Read Deuteronomy 32:34-41. Now read this sentence again. What did you discover?
 2. How should we consider vengeance?
 - E. Hebrews 10:30B is a complete sentence and would read as follows: **“And again.”**
 1. These two words would not qualify as an English sentence, but would be acceptable in Greek.
 2. What would be different if the author had not included these two words?
 - F. Hebrews 10:30C is a complete sentence and would read as follows: **“Vengeance is mine, I will repay.”**

QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 10

1. This claim for vengeance is a divine decree. If vengeance is wrong for us, how come God claims it as His own prerogative?
- G. Hebrews 10:30D is a complete sentence and would read as follows: **“The Lord will judge His people.”**
 1. Read Deuteronomy 32:35, 36 again. What does the text claim to be the purpose of divine vengeance?
 2. What is the difference between human and divine vengeance?
- H. Hebrews 10:31 is a complete sentence.
 1. What difference would it have made if the author had written “into the hands of God,” rather than, “into the hands of the LIVING God”?
 2. What message is he trying to convey in this sentence? Why?
6. Hebrews 10:32-39 – REMEMBER PAST PERSECUTION AND ENDURE
This is a paragraph in which there are seven complete sentences.
 - A. Hebrews 10:32, 33 are a complete sentence which reads as follows: **“But remember the former days, when after being enlightened, you endured a great conflict of sufferings, (Hebrews 10:32) Partly by being made a public spectacle through reproaches and tribulations, and partly by becoming sharers with those who were so treated.”** Hebrews 10:33
 1. The word “but” introduces a contrast between verses 31 and 32. What are the contrasted elements?
 2. What does the author mean by the word “enlightened”?
 3. To what might he be referring by the word “suffering”?
 4. Verse 33 contains two entities which describe the sufferings mentioned in verse 32.
 - a. How do these entities relate to each other?
 - b. How do they differ?
 5. What is meant by the word “gazing stock”?
 - B. Hebrews 10:34 is a complete sentence.
 1. In this very strong explanation, the author commended the recipients for two things. What are they?
 2. What did he mean by “Sympathy for the prisoners”?
 3. How does one “accept joyfully the seizure of your property”?
 4. How does the author describe the basis of their unusual response to persecution?
 - C. Hebrews 10:35 is a complete sentence.
 1. This verse serves as a conclusion. What would make it necessary for him to write these words?
 2. What does he mean by “confidence”?
 3. What difference would it make if the words “which has a great reward” were omitted?
 - D. Hebrews 10:36 is a complete sentence.
 1. The use of the word “for” indicates that this sentence is an explanation. What does it explain?
 2. Why would he write, “You have need of endurance”?
 3. The word translated “so that” introduces a statement of purpose. What is it?
 4. What did he mean when he wrote, “When you have done the will of God”?
 5. What was “promised”?
 - E. Hebrews 10:37 is a complete sentence.
 1. This sentence is an explanation of the previous explanatory sentence.
 2. What explanation does he offer?
 3. Is this explanation valid?
 4. What is the difference between “Will save” and “Will not delay”?
 5. What does this explanation tell us about the mental state of the recipients?
 - F. Hebrews 10:38 is a complete sentence.

The Superior Jesus

1. This sentences announces a contrast. What are the contrasted elements?
 2. To whom does he refer by using the words, “My righteous one”?
 3. In this sentence, the author contrasted two situations in the form of a conditional statement:
 - a. What is the condition?
 - b. What is the consequence?
 4. What does it mean when he wrote, “My soul has no pleasure in him”?
- G. Hebrews 10:39 is a complete sentence.
1. Review verses 38 and 39 in terms of his use of the words “shrink back.” What is he trying to accomplish?
 2. There is a contrast within verse 39. What are the contrasted elements?
 3. What does he mean by “destruction”?
 4. What does he mean by “preserving the soul”?

STUDY OF CHAPTER 10

JESUS ACCOMPLISHED FORGIVENESS ONCE

HEBREWS 10:1 – 39

There are five paragraphs in Hebrews chapter ten. On the following table you will find a brief summary of each paragraph.

10:1-10	Old sacrifices are ineffective
10:11-18	Effective – new sacrifice; new covenant
10:19-25	Our response to the new sacrifice
10:26-31	The danger of ignoring Jesus Christ
10:32-39	Remember persecution and endure

HEBREWS 10:1-10 – OLD SACRIFICES ARE INEFFECTIVE

“For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things, can never, by the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year, make perfect those who draw near.” Hebrews 10:1

The use of the word “for” indicates an explanation is forthcoming. The subject of this sentence is “law.” This does not identify just the 10 commandments. It also identifies the regulations governing the Levitical priests and priesthood. There are two clauses that describe this law:

- A. “Since it has a shadow of the good things to come.
- B. Not the very form of things.

The first of these clauses is, “since it has a shadow of the good things to come.” At best, God’s full plan of redemption needs to be described. The Old Testament system was not everything God’s plan of redemption included. It was a start, an initial revelation that would be extended centuries later with the coming of Jesus. It was the disclosure that if understood would enable one to comprehend, as fully as possible, God’s real plan in the sacrifice of Jesus.

“NOT THE VERY IMAGE OF THINGS.”

It is what God always intended for redemption. It was not an afterthought. The Old Testament system is a precursor, an initial revelation to enable us to comprehend something of His loving attempt to redeem us. The basic sentence here is, “the law can never make perfect those who draw near.” This is a simple statement of fact. The author used modifying statements:

“BY THE SAME SACRIFICES YEAR BY YEAR.”

They made the same sacrifices every year. It did not solve the problem. They then made the same sacrifices again. This gives no hope of solution.

“WHICH THEY OFFERED CONTINUALLY”

This is really a repetition of the previous phrase a third time and way. He wrote of “year by year,” and “by the same sacrifices.” To add even greater emphasis, he wrote, “which they offered continually.”

“Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have had consciousness of sins?” Hebrews 10:2

This is a presentation of a logical statement. It is stated conditionally. It is like saying, “IF the law was effective, THEN they would not have had to repeat the sacrifices over many decades. The word “because” suggests an explanation is forthcoming. Once more he presented the logical idea. The worshippers, if cleansed, would have no longer been aware of their sins. Observe the steps he presented:

- A. The law was to cleanse from sin.

- B. If so, this would remove the very awareness of sinfulness
- C. The fact that it was repeated gives conclusive evidence that the plan failed to remove sin.

“But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins year by year.” Hebrews 10:3

The use of the word “but” indicates that a contrast is in progress. “In these sacrifices, (literally, in them) there is a reminder of sins year by year.” The people made the sacrifices in order to rid themselves of the awareness of their sin. The annual sacrifices served as a yearly reminder rather than as a covering. This is a very important distinction.

“For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.” Hebrews 10:4

Again, the use of the word “for” indicates that yet another explanation is coming. There is no inherent power in the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. The author has given us a series of logical statements verifying the ultimate futility of the Old Testament system. If God intended the Old Testament system to be the final offer of grace, then it would be a failure. God having intended the Old Testament system to be an explanatory foretaste, it became exactly what He intended it to be.

“Therefore, when He comes into the world, He says, “SACRIFICE AND OFFERING YOU HAVE NOT DESIRED, BUT A BODY YOU HAVE PREPARED FOR ME;” Hebrews 10:5

This is a quotation from Psalm 40:6. The word “therefore” indicates that a conclusion is forthcoming. Observe that the author summarized his logical approach with a quotation from Isaiah 40:6. If you compare these two quotations – Psalm 40:6 and Hebrews 10:5 – you will observe that the author quoted the information, but did so selectively. As you compare the two statements, it becomes clear that verse six is a repeat of the essence of verse five. This is for the purpose of unusual emphasis.

“IN WHOLE BURNT OFFERINGS AND sacrifices FOR SIN YOU HAVE TAKEN NO PLEASURE.” Hebrews 10:6

This verse identifies two designations of offerings. First, the burnt offering which is often referred to as “whole burnt offering” because the entire animal was consumed by the flames. Then, “the sacrifice for sin” has the same ultimate purpose as the burnt offering. The issue here, according to the translation, is that “God takes no pleasure” in these sacrifices. The question ultimately follows, If God takes no pleasure in these sacrifices, then why did He command that they be given? The words translated, “thou has taken no pleasure” are quoted from Psalm 40:7. The form of the word is aorist tense which means that there is very strong emphasis intended by the author. The content points to the fact that these sacrifices were effective in forgiving sin, but were not all that God had in mind because they had to be repeated annually.

““THEN I SAID, ‘BEHOLD, I HAVE COME (IN THE SCROLL OF THE BOOK IT IS WRITTEN OF ME) TO DO YOUR WILL, O GOD.’ ”” Hebrews 10:7

The use of the word “I” is not clarified in this text. The rest of the sentence makes it clear that “I” is a reference to Jesus. The words of this verse are quoted from Psalm 40:7. There are no parentheses anywhere in the Greek text. The issue here is that Jesus purposed to do the Father’s will. The Father’s holy will included the requirement that sin was so repulsive that the death of the sinner, not the sacrificial animal, was required to cancel the guilt. Jesus obeyed the Father’s command that He take our place and pay the ultimate penalty for our sin.

“After saying above, “SACRIFICES AND OFFERINGS AND WHOLE BURNT OFFERINGS AND sacrifices FOR SIN YOU HAVE NOT DESIRED, NOR HAVE YOU TAKEN PLEASURE in them” (which are offered according to the Law),” Hebrews 10:8

Hebrews 10:8, 9, are a commentary on the information that the author has quoted. Hebrews 10:8 is a compressed version of Hebrews 10:6, 7. The author concluded verse 10:8 with a parenthesis. In this

STUDY OF CHAPTER 10

parenthesis, he affirms that the sacrifices mentioned in 10:8 are, in fact, offered properly according to the law.

“then He said, “BEHOLD, I HAVE COME TO DO YOUR WILL.” He takes away the first in order to establish the second.” Hebrews 10:9

Again, Hebrews 10:9 is a commentary on verse seven. In 10:9, the author includes the words “to do Thy will” in his quotation, “I have come.” In the final sentence of this verse, the author explains the logical results of the previous statement. When he spoke of “take away the first,” he was talking about the first covenant. When he spoke of “establishing the second” he was talking about the second covenant that was made in order to establish the High Priesthood of Jesus.

“By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” Hebrews 10:10

This verse contains the most important difference between the two covenants. The Levitical priests and High Priest were dealing with an ongoing series of sacrifices that had to be repeated each year. Jesus’ High Priesthood dealt with the one sacrifice He made of Himself which was once for all history. Observe that He spoke of the fact that we have been “sanctified.” The word translated “sanctified” is “hagiasmenoi” (ἁγιασμένοι) and means to make holy; to consecrate or dedicate; to be set apart./ This word always has two foci:

- A. To purify
- B. To set apart for God.

The form of this word is perfect participle. The perfect tense is completed action in the past. The participle, however, describes ongoing action. This form is a way to emphasize the fact that the anticipated action did, in fact, take place.

HEBREWS 10:11-18 – EFFECTIVE – NEW SACRIFICE; NEW COVENANT

“Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins;” Hebrews 10:11

The word order in the Greek text differs from our English translations. It would read, “And indeed every priest has stood by day by day serving and the same frequently offering and keep on offering sacrifice. We will study this verse in this order.

“AND INDEED EVERY PRIEST STANDS DAILY.”

The word translated “and” is “kai” (καί). The use of this word, at this point, indicates that the previous statement, “We have been sanctified through the offering of Christ,” and the following statement, “every priest stands daily ministering and offering,” are distinctly tied together. In the Greek text, the author inserted the word “men” (μέν) which should be interpreted “indeed.” The translation would then read, “and INDEED every priest.” This is yet another way to place an even stronger emphasis on the fact that these sacrifices are so daily. The use of the words “every priest” leaves no room for any exception whatsoever. That, of course, is exactly the idea the author wanted to convey.

The word translated “stands” is “estaeken” (ἑστηκεν) and means to stand, but it is more than that. It includes the idea of permanently doing this. The form of the word is perfect tense. This places strong emphasis on completed action. In the Greek text, you will see the word “kath” (καθ) which means “by” or “from.” This adds emphasis to the fact that this was being done every single day. The word translated “daily” is “haemeran” (ἡμέραν) which identifies a 24-hour period. It does this, however, in a very emphatic way. As we go along, you will increasingly notice that this author has a way of using extra emphases on important ideas.

“MINISTERING AND OFFERING”

The word translated “ministering” is “leitourgon” (λειτουργῶν) which means to serve, minister or worship. The interesting thing about the word is the form – present participle. The present tense means to begin and never stop – a picture of a lifestyle not a single action. The participle describes action that never stops. You will find that the author repeatedly uses the present participial form to add very strong emphasis to the idea that the action being described is a lifestyle and not a single act. This form, however, is seldom carefully translated in our English text. The word “autos” (αὐτός) means “He Himself.” It is, again, the author’s way of adding strategic emphasis that it is this very same priest. The word translated “offering” is “prosfero” (προσφέρω) which literally means to carry something into the presence of someone. The form of both words is the same – present participle. It is the author’s way to very strongly emphasize the fact that they do this and never stop doing it. The fact that the author used two different words indicates that he is presenting two different ideas. We must distinguish the difference he is presenting between serving and offering. The word translated “serving” means to perform a religious service. It is a broad general category. It covers all the things that a priest does in the temple. The word “offering,” however, literally means to carry something into a person’s presence. The Jews would understand exactly what the author meant. The people would bring the sacrificial animal to the temple. The priest killed the animal and collected the blood. The High Priest offered the blood, which he had carried into the Holy of Holies, and sprinkled it on the altar before the Lord.

“TIME AFTER TIME THE SAME SACRIFICES”

The words translated “time after time” do not appear in the Greek text. It is an emphatic way to present the author’s intent when he said, “by day.” This was a translator’s attempt to convey the real intent of the author. The thing that does appear is a phrase :

“Many times” – Pollakis” (πολλάκις)

“Offer and keep on offering” – present participle of “prosferon” (προσφέρον)

“Sacrifices” – “thusias” (θυσίας)

It would be difficult to place a stronger emphasis on the repetition of the sacrificial act.

“WHICH CAN NEVER TAKE AWAY SIN”

The word translated “which can never” is “oudepote” (οὐδέποτε) which is a compound word:

A. “ou” (οὐ) means not, never

B. ”de” (δὲ) means which

C. “pote” (πότε) means at any time.

This is a very emphatic conclusion – which not at any time. The word “able” is “dunantai” (δύνανται) which means powerful; able. The form is present tense and could be translated “to be unable and never stop being unable.” The word translated “take away” is “perielein” (περιελεῖν) which literally means to lift up or to take away. Notice, again, the emphasis the author has presented:

A. It happens every day, over and over

B. The sacrifices are exactly the same

C. The process is never successful

“but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD,” Hebrews 10:12

“BUT HE”

The word translated “but” is “de” (δὲ) and the use of this word always indicates a coming contrast. It will contrast the previous statement (useless repeated sacrifices” with what follows:

The English text says “He”. The Greek text is much more emphatic. The words “outos mian” (οὗτος – μίαν) is a very emphatic way to say, “this specific one.”

“HAVING OFFERED ONE SACRIFICE FOR SINS FOR ALL TIME”

The word translated “having offered” is “prosenegkas” (προσενέγκας) which means to bring before. The form is aorist participle. The aorist tense emphasizes the action while the participial form describes ongoing action. This raises a question: The author was saying that this is a single sacrifice, but he used the participial form which describes ongoing action. This is a very careful choice on the part of the author. The aorist tense emphasizes the completed action the author is attempting to stress. The participial form stresses the ongoing effectiveness which will be spelled out in the next phrase – one sacrifice for sins for all time. The Greek text is quite direct: The word translated “sacrifice” is “thusian” (θυσίαν) and means an offering or sacrifice. The next phrase is quite dynamic:

- A. The word “eis” (εἰς) means unto.
- B. The word “to” (τὸ) means an emphatic “THE.”
- C. The word “diaenekes” (διηνεκές) which means uninterrupted, perpetual, continuous.

The contrast in the author’s statement is stark.

THE OLD SYSTEM	JESUS’ MINISTRY
The sacrifices are always the same	Jesus offered Himself once
The sacrifices are offered every day	The sacrifice was successful
The sacrifices can never take away sin	The sacrifice was eternally effective

“SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD”

The word translated “sat down” is “ekathisen” (ἐκάθισεν) which means to be seated like a judge. The form of the word is aorist tense. This places an emphasis on the action, but not on the timing. Every Jew and Gentile would understand that this is a portrayal of a throne scene. Those who were seated on the throne along with the king would have the ear of the king. Their petitions would be granted. The author was saying two things:

- A. Jesus’ sacrifice would be accepted and effective.
- B. He would also be able to successfully intercede on our behalf.

This, of course, is the position of the priest. Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Father. The person on the right hand of the king was his most trusted advisor. Not only was his request carefully granted, He was the chief advisor to the king.

“waiting from that time onward UNTIL HIS ENEMIES BE MADE A FOOTSTOOL FOR HIS FEET.”
Hebrews 10:13

“WAITING FROM THAT TIME ONWARD”

The word translated “waiting” is “edexomenos” (ἐδεχόμενος) which means to anticipate; to wait for. The form of this word is, again, present participle which is a way of adding emphasis by using two forms both of which deal with actions that do not end – a lifestyle. The word “loipon” (λοιπόν) means that which is remaining; until a time or event. The word “tethosin” (τεθῶσιν) which means a set time or event. The form of this word is aorist subjunctive. The aorist tense places emphasis on the action. The subjunctive is the form of possibility. He will wait until something specific could happen, but the subject, Jesus, will not be the one who makes it take place.

“UNTIL HIS ENEMIES BE MADE A FOOTSTOOL FOR HIS FEET”

The word translated “enemies” is “extroi” (ἐχθροὶ) which means one who is hated, an enemy or adversary. The word for “footstool” is “hupopodion” (ὑποπόδιον) which literally means footstool. There was such a piece of furniture. When speaking of enemies becoming a footstool, it is a way to describe their deserved humiliation. The words “podon – autou” (ποδῶν – αὐτοῦ) which means the feet of Him. This is a reference to Jesus. It adds emphasis to the fact that the enemies of Jesus will one day be humiliated under the power of His throne. It points out that one day, Jesus will be in ultimate control of all things.

“For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.” Hebrews 10:14

“FOR BY ONE OFFERING”

The use of the word ‘for’ (γάρ) indicates that the author is going to give us an explanation of the previous statement. The word ‘by’ does not appear in the Greek text. At this point, the Greek text reads, “mia” (μία) which means “in one.” The word translated “offering” is “prosphera” (προσφορά) which means sacrifice; a victim offered.

“HE HAS PERFECTED FOR ALL TIME”

The word translated “perfected” is “teteleioken” (τετελείωκεν) which means to finish; to consummate; to complete. The form of the word is perfect tense. This form identifies completed past action. It is a milder emphasis on the fact that everything is finished’ nothing is left undone. As previously stated, in verse 12, the author used the idea of “unto perpetuity” to express “for all time. It is a way of saying that the one sacrifice was sufficient for all times in contrast to the daily sacrifices offered by the Levitical priests.

“THOSE WHO ARE SANCTIFIED”

The word translated “those” is “tous” (τούς) which might be just as appropriate to translate it “the ones.” The word translated “who are sanctified” is “hagiadzomenous” (ἁγιαζομένους) which means “holy.” This word has two foci:

A. It describes those who have been cleansed.

B. It also describes those who have been set apart for divine appointment. The form of this word is present participle as we have seen so often in this epistle. It would be appropriate to translate the word, “those continually being made holy.”

“And the Holy Spirit also testifies to us; for after saying,” Hebrews 10:15

“AND THE HOLY SPIRIT”

The word “and” does not appear at the beginning of this verse as indicated in the English text. The word “de” (δέ) does appear and it is usually translated “but.” This word tells of a coming contrast. The word “kai” (καί) does appear later in the verse where in this instance it means “also.” The words “the Holy Spirit” are a bit more emphatic in the Greek text. It appears in this way – “to-pneuma” (τὸ-ἄγιον) THE Spirit; “to – hagian” (τὸ-ἅγιον) THE Holy.” The way this is written places strong emphasis on this activity of the Spirit.

“ALSO TESTIFIES TO US”

The word translated “testifies” or “bears witness” is “marturei” (μαρτυρεῖ) which means one who proclaims a message. It is the source of our word “martyr.” The form of this word is present tense. It might be appropriate to translate the word, “He testifies and never stops testifying.” The word translated “to us” is “haemin- (ἡμῖν).

“FOR AFTER SAYING”

The use of the word “for” (γάρ) prompts us to anticipate an explanation of the previous statement. The word translated “saying” is “eirakenai” (εἰρηκέναι) which means to speak. The form of this word is aorist perfect. The aorist tense emphasizes action, not the time. The perfect tense focuses on completed action. It is an emphatic way to indicate that he really said it.

““THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THEM AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS THE LORD: I WILL PUT MY LAWS UPON THEIR HEART, AND ON THEIR MIND I WILL WRITE THEM,” He then says,” Hebrews 10:16

This sentence is a quotation from Jeremiah 31:33 and every Jew would recognize that fact. Notice, however, that the author did not quote the entire verse. He omitted the final statement of the verse – “I will be their

STUDY OF CHAPTER 10

God and they shall be My people..” It is interesting that the author should omit that statement since it is the basic relationship that shows up in every covenant that God made with His people.

Here is a contrast in this statement. Covenants were either written down like the ten commandments, written on stone, or acted out in visual form, like the agreement between Jacob and Laban. This new covenant is not written on stone, but upon the human heart and mind. This is a move from the communal to the personal. It should be noted that in either case, there are laws which God has prepared and expects to be observed.

““AND THEIR SINS AND THEIR LAWLESS DEEDS I WILL REMEMBER NO MORE.”” Hebrews 10:17

Just as Hebrews 10:16 is a quotation from Jeremiah 31:33, so Hebrews 10:17 is a quotation from Jeremiah 31:34. It should be noted, however, that the content of 10:17 does not immediately follow the content of 10:16 in Jeremiah’s prophecy. As happens sometimes in the New Testament, the writers will pick and choose when they quote from the Old Testament documents. Further, the statement in 10:17 is not word for word taken from Jeremiah 31:34. The author of Hebrews edited the statement, but did not change the meaning in the process. The author of Hebrews had something specific in mind. First, it is essential that the content of 10:17 follow the content of 10:16. Hebrews 10:16 identifies the change God is making in this process. Hebrews 10:17 points out that the change was absolutely effective. It was to result in divine forgiveness of all their sin. This, of course, is what the process of sacrifice for sin was all about. They needed a way to cancel their responsibility for wrongs done and laws ignored.

“Now where there is forgiveness of these things, there is no longer any offering for sin.” Hebrews 10:18

“NOW WHERE THERE IS FORGIVENESS OF THESE THINGS”

This verse opens up with the use of the word “now” “de” (δε). The word “de” can be translated now,” but it is more commonly translated “but.” Now is a good word choice in this instance. Here, however, we can anticipate a change in the direction of the author’s thought. The content of this verse is really a cause and effect statement. The cause – “where there is forgiveness.” The word translated “forgiveness” is “aphesis” (ἀφεσις) which means deliverance from captivity; it is pardon or forgiveness.

“THERE IS NO LONGER ANY OFFERING FOR SIN”

The word translated “no longer” is “ouketi” (οὐκέτι) which is a compound word:

A. (οὐκ) means not.

B. (ετι) means longer, still. It is a very strong way to emphasize the idea of “never, ever.” This is a statement of logic. The point of the sacrifice is the forgiveness of sins. Therefore, IF sins are forgiven, THEN there is no possible reason to offer the sacrifice. There is no more sin to forgive.

HEBREWS 10:19 – 25 – OUR RESPONSE TO THE NEW SACRIFICE

“Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus,” Hebrews 10:19

We should note that 10:19-22 form a complete sentence. The word “since” is not found in the Greek text. The use of the word “brethren” appears eight times in the book of Hebrews. In five of these situations, it was used to address the recipients as Christian brothers. This is more than a nice way to address each other. If you are my brother, then I have responsibilities to you and you have the same to me. That is exactly what the author was emphasizing. Observe that in these five appearances it was always used as introduction to a verify an important concept that the author is presenting to his readers. Therefore, when we see this word, we should be doubly aware that there will probably be a very difficult concept with which the people must deal.

“WE HAVE CONFIDENCE”

The word translated “we have” is “echontes (ἐχοντες) which means to hold in your hands. The form of the word is present participle. One might translate this word “we are having continually.” The word translated “confidence” is “parraesion” (παρρησίαν) which means an attitude of openness which comes from freedom and a lack of fear. This is boldness and courage.

***“by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh,”
Hebrews 10:20***

The words “by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us,” refer to verse 19 where he mentioned entrance into the Holy of holies. In the old sacrificial system, we would not be allowed to enter the Holy of Holies, the intimate presence of God on pain of death. Because of Jesus’ sacrifice, on our behalf, we are able to personally and uniquely talk with God without fear. This is because of the sacrifice of Jesus on our behalf. Observe that the author describes this situation as “new and living way.” The word translated “new” identifies something that never existed before. The word translated “living” presents the intent to form a contrast with the sacrificial system which was no longer in effect. This sacrifice would never cease to be effective on behalf of any person who accepted Christ as their savior.

“and since we have a great priest over the house of God,” Hebrews 10:21

Hebrews 10:21 is also part of the sentence 10:19-22. The use of the word “and” ties the content of verse 21 to that of 10:20. As mentioned in our study of chapter five, chapters 5-10, the second section of the epistle, focus completely upon Jesus as “the great High Priest” who is far superior to all High Priests who preceded Him. Hebrews 10:21 and 22 are the two parts of a conditional statement.

A. Verse 21 – THE CONDITION – “as Jesus is the High Priest over the house of God.”

B. Verse 22 – THE CONSEQUENCE – “Let us draw near.”

***“let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled
clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.” Hebrews 10:22***

“LET US DRAW NEAR”

The word translated “let us draw near” is “proserchometha” (προσερχόμεθα) which means to approach; to associate with. The form of this word is present subjunctive. This has less to do with drawing close as it has to do with staying close, associating constantly with God.

The words “draw near” come from the courts. The king would hold sessions when his people could come before him with their requests. If the king did not wish to meet their request he would simply dismiss them. If he was in favor of their request, he would tell them to “draw near” come closer and let us talk about how this can be done.

“WITH A SINCERE HEART”

The word translated “sincere” is “alaeqinaes” (ἀληθινῆς) which means real or genuine. The word translated “heart” is “kardias” (καρδίας) which literally means bowels. The Jews thought that the mid-part of the human body was the center of emotions and moral values. It is the entire mental and moral elements of one’s life.

“IN FULL ASSURANCE OF FAITH”

The word translated “full” is “pleroforia” (πληροφορία) which means complete certainty. The word translated “faith” is “pisteos” (πίστεως) which means trust; a state of certainty. There is clarification that is needed. If the word (πληροφορία) means certainty; trust; and if (πίστεως) means trustworthiness, THEN don’t they mean essentially the same thing? We need to look to see how the two words differ.

A. (πληροφορία) is a confidence based upon the actions of God.

B. (πίστις) is an assurance based upon the character of God. This is a Pauline tool to both place very strong emphasis as well as add additional strength to the meaning.

“HAVING OUR HEARTS SPRINKLED CLEAN FROM AN EVIL CONSCIENCE”

The word translated “having” does not appear in the Greek text. The word translated “heart” is “kardias” (καρδίας) which identifies the part of the human body that pumps blood. This is not the author’s intent. He has used the word figuratively. The word came to stand for the moral and emotional part of the human life. This is where the will is functioning.

The word translated “sprinkled” is “perantismenoi” (περαντισμένοι) which literally means to sprinkle. We must keep in mind that the recipients are Jews. The author has drawn a parallel – AS the priest sprinkled animal blood on the mercy seat to purge the sins of the people, SO our hearts are sprinkled by the blood of Jesus. The form of this word is perfect participle. The perfect tense reflects completed action. The participle describes ongoing action. The word is implied, but not stated. The word translated “conscience” is “suneidaeseos” (συνειδήσεως) which is a compound word:

A. (sun) means with.

B. (oida) means total knowledge.

It is the means by which one discerns the will of God for life and conduct; that which prompts us regarding that which is good and that which is evil. It is that inner voice.

The word translated “evil” is “ponaeras” (πονηρᾶς) which means corrupt, guilty, worthless. Every conscience begins good. Conscience can change depending upon the character of the person. If it is good, it can become even better. If it is bad it can become even worse. The practice of evil deadens one’s response to God’s urgings. There is an additional insight in these words. We think of the blood of Christ as cancelling our guilt and that is true. It is more. It has a changing effect upon the conscience as well. We need to affirm that equally.

“AND OUR BODIES WASHED WITH PURE WATER.”

The word translated “AND” is “kai” (καί). The intent of the use of this word is to make it a way of saying that “bodies washed with pure water” is just as important as “sprinkling the hearts from an evil conscience.” The word translated “having” does not appear in the Greek text. The word translated “washed” is “lousmenoi” (λουσμένοι) which means to bathe. It is more like a shower. In a tub, the body is still coated with some of the dirt that has been washed off. Sprinkling/ pouring water over them removes this. The form of the word is perfect participle. The perfect tense describes completed action. The participial form is action that never ceases. The word “with” does not appear in the Greek text. The word translated “water” is “hudate” (ὕδατε) which means water. The word translated “pure” is “katharo” (καθαρό) which means pure. There are at least two ways for something to be “pure.” First, it is to be pure, never impure. The second is to cleanse something that has become impure. The latter form was used in this instance.

“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful;” Hebrews 10:23

“LET US HOLD FAST THE CONFESSION OF OUR HOPE”

The word translated “hold fast” is “katechomen” (κατέχωμεν) which is a compound word:

A. (kata) means down

B. (echō) means to hold down

This means to possess; to prevent from losing; to hold firmly. The form of this word is present subjunctive. The present tense describes ongoing action. The subjunctive mood is the mood of possibility. This is the reason for the words “let us.”

The word translated “confession” is “homologian” (ὁμολογίαν) which is a compound word.

A. (homo) means the same.

B. (logos) means word or testimony. It is an excellent way to describe one’s testimony.

The word translated “hope” is “elpidos” (ἐλπίδος) which means looking forward; confident expectation.

“WITHOUT WAVERING”

This word is “aklinae” (ἀκλινῇ) which means firm resolve; to be inflexible

“FOR HE WHO PROMISED IS FAITHFUL”

The word “for” is (γάρ) which suggests that an explanation is forthcoming. The word translated “he who promised” is “epangelamenos” (ἐπαγγελιάμενος) which is a compound word:

- A. (epi) means upon
- B. (angelos) is a messenger . The form of this word is aorist middle participle.
 - A. Aorist tense is ongoing action.
 - B. Middle voice the subject receives the action.
 - C. The participial form identifies ongoing action.

It is like saying, “the one who is always promising.”

The word translated “faithful” is “pistos” (πιστός) and means one who is always reliable; worthy of total trust.

“and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds,” Hebrews 10:24

“AND LET US CONSIDER ONE ANOTHER”

The use of the word “and” ties two ideas of equal importance together. The word “for” is (γάρ) which suggests that an explanation is forthcoming. The word translated “he who promised” is “epangelamenos” (ἐπαγγελιάμενος) which is a compound word:

- A. (epi) means upon
- B. (angelos) is a messenger. The form of this word is aorist middle participle.

The form of this word is aorist middle participle

- A. Aorist tense is ongoing action.
- B. Middle voice the subject receives the action.
- C. The participial form identifies ongoing action.

It is like saying, “the one who is always promising.” The word translated “let us consider” is “katanoeo” (κατανοέω) which means to give careful consideration; to be deeply concerned about. It is to discover through direct observation. The form of the word is present subjunctive. The present tense describes ongoing action. The subjunctive mood is the mood of possibility. Again, this form is responsible for the words “let us.”

The word translated “one another” is “allaelous” (ἀλλήλους) which means “each other.” It can also be translated “one another.”

“HOW TO STIMULATE TO LOVE AND GOOD WORKS.”

The word translated “stimulate or provoke is “paraodzusmon” (παροξυσμόν) which means to encourage; to stir up; provide mutual support. The word translated “love” is “agapae” (ἀγάπη) which is love just because you love. It is love without limits and identifies a God kind of love. Notice the use of the word “and” which is “kai (καί). This word places that which precedes and that which follows on equal footing and importance. The word translated “good” is “kalon” (καλῶν) which means fine moral character. It stands for great value and has high status. The word translated “works” is “ergon” (ἔργον) which means an assigned task; to work.

It is not difficult for Christians to stir each other up. It takes great care, however, to stir up one another so that love and good works are produced. The order in which these two qualities are mentioned is not accidental. If we can stir each other up to love, the good works will follow. We can only stir people up to love by loving them.

“not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.” Hebrews 10:25

“NOT FORSAKING OUR OWN ASSEMBLING TOGETHER”

The word translated “not” is “mae” (μή) which is a moderate negative word. The word translated “forsaking” is “egkataleipontes” (ἐγκαταλείποντες) which is a compound word:

- A. (en) means in.
- B. (kata) means against/ behind
- C. (leipo) means to leave.

This is a very strong word that means to abandon or forsake. The form of this word is present participle. Both of these forms describe action that is ongoing. The triple-compound word and the two forms which both indicate ongoing action combine to place as much emphasis on the word as it was possible for the author to place.

The word translated “assembling” is “episeugwgaen” (ἐπισευγαίνω) means to gather together separated parts. This is a triple-compound word:

- A. (epi)- - means upon
- B. (sun) – means with.
- C. (ago) means to bring

In Thessalonians, this word was used to describe the gathering of the saints. It is used here to describe the regular gathering of Christians for daily worship. The word translated “of ourselves” is “eauton” (ἐαυτῶν) and is the plural of “self.”

“AS IS THE HABIT OF SOME”

The word translated “as” is “kathos” (καθὼς) which identifies a coming comparison. The author was comparing what these believers are doing with what he would like for them to do. The word translated “custom/habit” is “ethos” (ἔθος) which describes a customary act. It is often one that is prescribed by law. It is a habit developed by repeated performance.

The word translated “of some” is “tisin” (τισίν) which is an indefinite pronoun. It should be translated as “something” or “someone.”

“BUT ENCOURAGING ONE ANOTHER”

The word translated “but” is “alla” (ἀλλὰ) which is one of the strongest forms of this word. It indicates that a serious contrast is in progress. The word translated “encouraging” is “paraklountes” (παράκλουντες) which is a compound word:

- A. (para) means beside
- B. (kaleō) means to call

This is the word we use to identify the ministry of the Holy Spirit to be the source of our help and encouragement – our paraclete. The form of the word is present participle. Both of these forms describe ongoing action and this provides strong emphasis on the way they should encourage each other. The words “one another” do not appear in the Greek text, but they are implied.

“AND ALL THE MORE “

The word translated “and” is “kai” (καὶ) which ties two equally important issues together. The author’s intent was that he was saying that these believers should be seriously encouraging each other. In the same way, he was saying that they should do so with greater strength because of what he called “the day approaching.”

The word translated “all the more,” is “tosouto” (τοσοῦτω) which is a demonstrative pronoun and identifies a comparative degree. The word (τοσοῦτω) is followed by another pronoun (ὅσω) which would also be translated “as much as.” The author used these two pronouns of similar meaning for strong emphasis.

“AS YOU SEE THE DAY DRAWING NEAR.”

The word translated “you see” is “blepete” (βλέπετε) which means to look at. It is the strongest of several words that are translated “to see.” This is more than simply a visual image. The form of this word is present tense and would be translated “you are seeing.”

The word translated “draw near” is “eggizousan” (ἐγγίζουσιν) which means to approach; to draw near. The form of this word is present participle. As both of these forms describe ongoing action, this is a way to add serious emphasis.

HEBREWS 10:26-31 – THE DANGER OF IGNORING JESUS CHRIST

“For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,” Hebrews 10:26

The word translated “for” is “gar” (γάρ) and indicates that an explanation is forthcoming. The word translated “willfully” is “hekousios” (ἐκούσιως) which means “by choice;” by an action of the will. The word translated “go on sinning” is “hamartanonton” (ἁμαρτανόντων) which means to miss the mark; to do less than you know to do. The form of this word is present participle in which both forms describe ongoing action and create intense emphasis. This is the reason that the translator used the words “go on.” When the author wanted to describe a single sin, he usually used the aorist tense. When he wanted to describe ongoing sinfulness, he usually used the present participle as he has here. He was talking about continuing a sinful lifestyle after knowing the truth. The word translated “after” does not appear in the Greek text. The word translated “receiving” is “labein” (λαβεῖν) and means to receive or acquire. It also means to experience something and that is closer to the author’s intent. The form of this word is aorist infinitive which adds substantial emphasis to the statement.

“THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH”

The word translated “knowledge” is “epignwsin” (ἐπίγνωσιν) which is a compound word.

A. (epi) means above or superior

B. (gnosis) means growing knowledge.

This is more than basic suspicions. It is total certainty without being God. The word translated “truth” is “alaetheias” (ἀληθείας) which means that which is in accord with the facts.

“THERE NO LONGER REMAINS”

This portion is not a word for word translation. The ideas are present, nonetheless. The word translated “no longer” is “apoleipetai” (ἀπολείπεται) which literally means “to leave behind.” A better translation would be the word “exists.”

“A SACRIFICE FOR SINS”

The word translated “sin” is “hamartion” (ἁμαρτιῶν) which means to miss the mark; to do less than we know to do. The word translated “offering” or “sacrifice” is “thusia” (θυσία) which means an offering to God because of one’s sins. In this verse, the author appealed to the basic meaning of the sin sacrifice. The sacrifice for sin is more than the removal of guilt or responsibility. It is made up of two essential parts:

A. It does remove the guilt of past sins.

B. It also requires the transformation of the person so that the sinful ways cease to be their lifestyle.

Unless both parts are present, there is no real forgiveness.

“but a terrifying expectation of judgment and THE FURY OF A FIRE WHICH WILL CONSUME THE ADVERSARIES.” Hebrews 10:27

In this verse the author has multiplied images of how fearsome this must be like. Notice the three images that he presented:

A. Fearful expectation of judgment.

B. Fierceness of fire.

C. Devour the enemies.

These definitely are intended to invest with frightening trembling.

“BUT A CERTAIN FEARFUL EXPECTATION OF JUDGMENT”

The word translated “but” is “de” (δὲ) and indicates that it is not a serious contrast. This word indicates that a contrast is in progress. The word choice indicates the severity of the contrast.

A. (ἀλλὰ) identifies the strongest contrast.

B. (δὲ) identifies a more moderate contrast is in progress. That is what the author has in mind here.

The word translated “fearful” is “phobera” (φοβέρα) which means frightening, terrifying. It is to be filled with fear to the point of immobility. The word translated “expectation” is “ekdoxae” (ἐκδοχή) which is a compound word:

A. (ἐκ) means from.

B. (δοξή) means glory.

It describes the frightening response that occurs when one becomes aware of the immediate presence of the holy, omnipotent God.

The word translated “judgment” is “kriseos” (κρίσεως) which identifies a legal judgment. It is the anticipation of punishment as a result of being judged.

“AND A FIERCENESS OF FIRE”

The word translated and” is “kai” (καὶ) and identifies the second of two parts that are equally important in the sentence. The word translated “fierceness” is “zaelos” (ζήλος) which means extremely intense. This is an ultimate statement. The word translated “fire” is “puros” (πυρός) which literally means fire. It is a way to describe a place of punishment. It is a serious cause to be ashamed.

“WHICH SHALL DEVOUR THE ADVERSARIES”

The word translated “devoured” is “esthiein” (ἐσθίειν) which literally describes the consumption of food. It was sometimes used to describe the shocking way in which punishment destroyed the guilty. The form of the word is present tense, which describes ongoing action.

The word translated mellontos” (μέλλοντος) means hostile, that which pertains to the enemy.

“Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.” Hebrews 10:28

There is a severe contrast between verses 28 and 29. This is pointed out by the use of the words “how much severer” at the beginning of verse 29. Verse 28 is an affirmative statement. It is not new information for these Jewish recipients. This indicates that the author had a different reason to mention it at this point. The author used this factual statement to set a benchmark for other statements that he is going to make. He reminded his readers of this well-known information in order to set the stage for a serious contrast which is to follow.

“ANYONE WHO HAS SET ASIDE THE LAW OF MOSES”

The word “tis” (τίς) means one or “the one who.” The word translated “set aside” is “athetaesas” (ἀθετήσας) which means much more than just set aside. It means to regard as invalid; to treat as meaningless and inappropriate. The form is aorist participle:

A. Aorist tense places strong emphasis on the action.

B. Participle – describes ongoing action.

The reference to the “Law of Moses” is a reference to the five books of Moses.

“DIES WITHOUT MERCY”

The word translated “dies” is “apothnaeskei” (ἀποθνήσκει) which means to die; to cease to be. The form of this word is present tense and not aorist. We must ask the questions, Why is this present tense and not aorist? The present tense emphasizes ongoing action while the Aorist tense just places emphasis on the

action, not time. This author would usually use the aorist tense for emphasis. Here he used the present tense. He is stressing the fact that anyone who violates the law of Moses was living a lifestyle of constant death.

The word translated “without” is “chopris” (χωρίς) which is usually translated “separately.” In this instance it is used to present the idea of without. The word translated “compassion” is “oiktirmon” (οἰκτιρμῶν) which identifies the stomach area. This is considered the area of human emotions.

“ON THE TESTIMONY OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES”

The words “on the testimony of” do not appear in the Greek text. The words “two or three” are well translated and very important. This was not a casual choice, but a biblical requirement.

“A single witness shall not rise up against a man on account of any iniquity or any sin which he has committed; on the evidence of two or three witnesses a matter shall be confirmed.” Deuteronomy 19:15

“How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?” Hebrews 10:29

“HOW MUCH SEVERER PUNISHMENT”

The author is drawing a very strong comparison which he leaves up to the reader’s imagination. The word translated “severer” is “keiaronos” (χείρονος) and means worse or very bad. The word translated “punishment” is “timorias” (τιμωρίας) which means to punish; it is the pain of remembrance.

“DO YOU THINK HE WILL DESERVE”

The word translated “deserve” is “adziothaesetai” (ἀδζιωθήσεται) which means to regard worthy; to consider fitting. The form of this word is future passive:

- A. Future – an act that will occur at a later time.
- B. Passive voice – this is action the subject receives rather than initiates.

“WHO HAS TRAMPLED UNDER FOOT THE SON OF GOD”

The word translated “trampled” is “katapataesas” (καταπατήσας) which means to despise; to trample under feet. The form, again, is aorist participle which emphasizes ongoing action. There is a contrast here between “the law of Moses” and “the Son of God.” It is a lopsided comparison/contrast and is intended to point out just how foolish it is to despise the teachings of Jesus by neglect.

“AND HAS REGARDED AS UNCLEAN THE BLOOD OF THE COVENANT”

The word “and” ties together two or more equally important ideas. In this case, the ideas are:

- A. Trample under foot the Son of God.
- B. Regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant.

The word translated “regarded” is “aegaesamenos” (ἡγησάμενος) which means to be of the opinion; to consider; to regard. Once again, the form is aorist participle. This is very forceful construction to say the least.

The word translated “unclean” is “koinon” (κοινόν) which means worthless; impure; defiled.

The author spoke of the “blood of the covenant” which is a very strong statement for a Jew. Every covenant was sealed with the blood of the participants. If there was no blood; then there was no covenant. The author suggested that they would be treated as unimportant without the blood that gives us standing before God in the first place.

“BY WHICH HE SANCTIFIED”

The word translated “sanctified” is “aegiasthaē” (ἁγιάσθη) which means to dedicate; to make holy. This describes a life which has two characteristics:

- A. Set apart for God.
- B. cleansed from sin.

It is interesting that the form here is aorist passive. The passive voice describes action to or for the subject rather than action the subject initiates. Being cleansed and set apart is something God does for us, not something that we achieve.

“AND HAS INSULTED THE SPIRIT OF GRACE”

Again, the word “and” ties two or more equally important ideas together. In this instance the ideas are:

- A. Regard the blood of the covenant as unclean
- B. Insult the Spirit of Grace.

The word translated “insulted” is “enubrisas” (ἐνυβρίσας) which means to insult. His reasoning would be as follows: If a person disobeys the law of Moses and it is confirmed by two or three witnesses, he will die. It is a far worse thing to disregard the gift of God in Christ.

Though it does not seem so in the English, there are four sentences in Hebrews 10:30.

“For we know Him who said, Hebrews 10:30A

This sentence begins with the word “for” which indicates an explanation is coming. The word translated “we know” is “oida” (οἶδα) which is the strongest word so translated. It is like saying we know beyond a shadow of a doubt. The form of this word is perfect tense which strongly presents action that is totally completed. It is like saying we really know. The word “Him” does not appear in the Greek text. It literally reads, “the one.” The word translated “who said” literally translates “having said.” This is because the form of this word is aorist participle.

- A. Aorist tense emphasizes the action, not time.
- B. Participle identifies action that is ongoing.

The result is that the author has placed a very strong emphasis on what we “really know.”

“VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY.” Hebrews 10:30B

This is a complete sentence. It is a free style quotation of Deuteronomy 32:35 which reads, “vengeance is mine and retribution; in due time their foot will slip, for the day of their calamity is near, and the impending things are hastening upon them.” Now, if the author had said this on his own, the people would have debated his statement. The fact that he quoted their scriptures left no room for debate whatsoever.

And again, Hebrews 10:30C

This is surprising, but it is a sentence. It does not qualify as a sentence in English, but it does in Greek. In this sentence, the author used these words to indicate that he has still more information to describe the conditions that they are facing.

“THE LORD WILL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE.”” Hebrews 10:30D

This sentence contains a partial quotation from Deuteronomy 32:36, which reads, “For the Lord will vindicate His people and will have compassion on His servants, when He sees that their strength is gone, and there is no remaining bond or free.”

Throughout the sentences in this verse, the author is trying to emphasize just how frightening it is to disobey the commands of God in Christ.

“It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.” Hebrews 10:31

This is a complete sentence. There is a translation of this sentence which reads, “It is fearful to fall into the hands of an ANGRY God.” We will deal with the literal translation momentarily. Suffice it to say, now, that the word for “angry” does not appear in the Greek text and there is no problem with the Greek text.

The word translated “fearful” is “phoberon” (φοβερόν) which the context indicates that it means to tremble which is a very strong statement because of the aorist tense which was used. The word translated “to fall” is “emperen” (ἐμπερῆν) which means to experience somewhat suddenly that which is very difficult. Once more, the author has used the aorist tense. The image of “falling” emphasizes the helplessness of the situation. When falling, there is nothing one can do to help oneself. That is exactly the image the author wants to convey.

The word translated “into the hands” are “eis – cheiras” (εἰς – χεῖρας) - which is well translated. The word translated “of God” is “theo” (θεῶ). The word translated “the living” is “zontos” (ζώντος). The form of the word translated “living” is present participle. Both of these forms describe ongoing action with great emphasis.

HEBREWS 10:32-39 – REMEMBER PAST PERSECUTION AND ENDURE

“But remember the former days, when, after being enlightened, you endured a great conflict of sufferings,” Hebrews 10:32

The author begins the new paragraph with the use of the word “but.” This indicates that he is going in a strong contrasting direction. He has been talking about the dangers of the disobedient life. He will now turn their attention to a reflection on their times of disobedience.

“REMEMBER THE FORMER DAYS”

This is a command. These former days identify their life in Jerusalem after their conversion when they had to flee to their present homes to avoid being martyred. The word translated “remember” is “anamimnaeskesthe” (ἀναμνησέσθε) which means to remind someone; to cause them to remember. The form of this word is present imperative.

The word translated “days” is “haemeras” (ἡμέρας) which refers to a 24 hour period, but can also refer to former times. Only the context can clarify the author’s intent. It is clear that in this instance the author was pointing to an extended period of time in the past.

“WHEN AFTER BEING ENLIGHTENED”

The word translated “enlightened” is “fotidzo” (φωτίζω) which means to invest with saving knowledge. This is a way of speaking of a person who has been born again.

“YOU ENDURED A GREAT CONFLICT OF SUFFERINGS”

The word translated “endured” is “hupemeinate” (ὑπεμείνατε) means to suffer; to persevere under impossible conditions; to hold fast. The form of this word is aorist tense. It places strong emphasis on the action, but not on the time.

The word translated “conflict” is “athlaesin” (ἀθλήσιν) which means to test one’s ability to resist; to respond to difficulty.

The word translated “suffering” is “pathaematon” (παθήματων) which means unfortunate pain; misfortune. Frankly, this is something that they would rather forget. It was important to the author, however, that they remember just what they had been through.

“partly by being made a public spectacle through reproaches and tribulations, and partly by becoming sharers with those who were so treated.” Hebrews 10:33

The word translated “public spectacle” or “gazingstock” is “oveidismois” (ὀνειδισμοῖς) which means to be insulted; to be disgraced: a public reproach. The Greek word (μέν), which means “indeed,” was not translated for some reason. The purpose of this word is to add strong emphasis. One might translate it “in fact.”

STUDY OF CHAPTER 10

The word translated “tribulation” is “thlipseis” (θλίψειςιν) which means trouble; oppression or tribulation. The word translated reproaches” is “theatrizomenoi” (θεατριζόμενοι) which means to shame publically; to make a public spectacle. This was sometimes accomplished by dragging a man’s wife through the city streets naked. The word translated “sharers” is “koinonia” (κοινωνία) which means to partner; to have in common.

The word translated “with them” is “anastrephero” (ἀναστρέφω) which means on behalf of; it is to behave in a specific way. The form of this word is present participle. As previously indicated, both of these forms describe ongoing action and thus result in strong emphasis.

The word translated “by becoming” is “genaethentes” (γενηθέντες) which means to come into existence; to begin something that you were not previously. The form of this word is aorist participle. As you know, the aorist tense places emphasis on the action, not the time. The participle stresses ongoing action. In this verse, the author described the readers conduct in two different ways: They were personal recipients of persecution. They became personally involved with those who were also persecuted. This was a very important picture that the author painted.

“For you showed sympathy to the prisoners and accepted joyfully the seizure of your property, knowing that you have for yourselves a better possession and a lasting one.” Hebrews 10:34

Though the English text begins with the word “the,” the Greek text, however, begins with “kai-gar” (καὶ γάρ). The word (καὶ) means “and” or “also.” The word (γάρ) means “for.” The result is that the Greek text is a much stronger statement. The use of the word “for” shows at least two things: It tells us that an explanation is coming. It also identified just how very important this explanation really is.

The word translated “showed sympathy” is “sunpathaesate” (συνπαθήσατε) which is a compound word:

A. The word (sun) means with.

B. The word (pathos) means to feel

It means to share suffering; it is to have sympathy. You may remember that this is the summary we saw in chapters 1-4 where the author emphasized that Jesus has undergone every temptation that confronts us and he feels this with us.

The word translated “prisoners” is “desmiois” (δεσμίους) which means one under arrest; a prisoner. The author gives two different pictures of the recipients in this verse: They have a deep concern for others who suffer. At the same time, they also suffer themselves. This is very significant because people in struggle for their lives typically become very self-centered. That is not the case in this instance. This is exactly the same picture the author presented in verse 33.

The use of the word “and,” which is “kai” (καὶ), indicates that the author is tying together two equally important ideas. The author is increasingly presenting greater emphasis. In the English text, it simply says “accepted.” The Greek text is more emphatic. The use of the word “humon” (ὁμῶν), which means you, adds strong emphasis to the statement.

The word translated “accepted” is “huparchonton” (ὑπαρχόντων) which means beginning or accepting. The form of the word is, again, present participle. As you know, both of these forms describe ongoing action. This is the strongest possible emphasis. As we have seen, this author likes to use this form as often as possible.

The word translated “seizure” is “harpagaen” (ἄρπαγὴν) which means a violent seizure; it is to plunder. It involves both the loss of the property, but the visible destruction of it. The word translated “joyfully” is “charas” (χαρᾶς). This is not the usual response to the plundering of one’s possessions. Plunder usually arouses anger; the desire to see justice done. This is an advanced expression of grace. The word translated “knowing” is “ginoskontes” (γινώσκοντες) which means a growing sense of awareness. This is not a

single action, but a lifestyle response to every form and expression of abuse. It is the mental attitude behind every response to plundering.

The word translated “you have” is “prosededzasthe” (προσεδέξασθε) which means to receive for yourself. The form of this word is aorist tense which emphasizes the action, not the time. The Greek word (ἐαυτούς) means “of himself.” This is the second presentation of the idea that this is for themselves. It is a much stronger emphasis than the English translation. The word translated “to have” is “echein” (ἔχειν)

Again, it is the second mention of the fact that these suffering Christians have something better than what they lost.

The word translated “better” is “kreitona” (κρείτονα) which means something superior; something preferable. The word translated “possession” is “huardain” (ὑφαινεῖν) which means property; possessions. The word translated “and” is “kai” (καὶ) which ties two descriptions together as equals. The word translated “lasting” is “menousan” (μένουσας) which means something that remains; something that abides. The form of this word is present participle. Both of these forms describe ongoing action. The definition of the word also describes something that is ongoing. Here you have three forms that all say the same thing. This is the strongest possible emphasis.

“Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward.” Hebrews 10:35

The word translated “therefore” is “oun” (οὖν). There are several words that are so translated, but this one is the most common. The word “therefore” indicates that a conclusion is coming. The author of Hebrews uses different words for different levels of conclusions. In 12:1, you will find the strongest form (τοιγαροῦν) which identifies a conclusion for the major segment of the entire book. The word (οὖν) usually identifies a conclusion within the content of a major section of the book.

The word translated “throw away” is (apoballaete) (ἀποβάλλετε) which means to throw away like old clothes. The form of this word is aorist subjunctive.

A. Aorist tense emphasizes the action, not the time.

B. The subjunctive mood is the mood of possibility.

The author created a situation in which the statement is emphatic, but it is expected to be obeyed, but is not a command. It is clear, however, that the author would be surprised if they did not obey.

The word translated “your” is “humon” (ὑμῶν). This is the second person plural of “you.” Quite often, when this word is used, it is not necessary, but is inserted to add a very strong emphasis. That is the case here.

The word translated “confidence”: is “parraesian” (παρρησίαν) It means confident or boldness. The word translated “which” is an indefinite pronoun and can be used as “which.” The word translated “has” is “echei” (ἔχει) which means to possess; to have in your hand. The form of this word is present tense which describes ongoing action. It is a way to say that this confidence always has great reward.

The word translated “great” is “megalaen” (μεγάλην). This word was sometimes translated important or surprising. The word translated “reward” is “misthapodosian” (μισθαποδόσιαν) which may also be translated recompense for obedience.

“For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised.” Hebrews 10:36

The use of the word “for” indicates that an explanation is forthcoming. The word translated “you have” is “echete” (ἔχετε) which means to possess; to experience. The form of this word is present tense which describes a lifestyle. The word translated “need” is “chreian” (χρείαν) which means to lack; it identifies what should be. The word translated “endurance” is “hupomonaes” (ὑπομονῆς) which means perseverance; patience. It comes from the Trojan army and means to stand under authority when defeat seems imminent. It is not just quiet waiting. It is to be steadfast in the face of impossible conditions. The word translated “so that” is “hina” (ἵνα) which indicates that a statement of purpose is about to be given.

STUDY OF CHAPTER 10

The word translated “when you have done” is “poiaesantes” (ποιήσαντες) which means to make or perform. The form, again, is aorist participle. These forms together emphasize the action and describe action that continues. One might translate it, “when you make a lifestyle out of doing.” The word translated “will” is “thelaema” (θέλημα) and means “desire.” The English text reads, “of God.” The Greek text is more emphatic – “of THE God.” This wording emphasizes that there is only one God. As you know, this author is writing to believers who live among a host of people who worship many gods.

The word translated “you may receive” is “komisaesthe” (κομίσησθε) which literally means to cause to experience. The form of this word is aorist subjunctive. It is the use of the subjunctive that accounts for the author’s use of the word “may.” The words “what was” do not appear in the Greek text, but they are understood. The word translated “promised” does appear as “epaggelian” (ἐπαγγελίαν) which is a compound word.

A. (ἐπι) means upon.

B. (ἀνγγελλω) means to announce.

This compound word identifies a gift graciously bestowed.

***“FOR YET IN A VERY LITTLE WHILE, HE WHO IS COMING WILL COME, AND WILL NOT DELAY.”
Hebrews 10:37***

Once again, the author began with the word “for” which indicates a coming explanation. The word translated “in a very little while” is “hoson” (ὅσον). This word is used twice, one right after the other. This is a way of adding serious emphasis.

The word translated “come” or “coming” also appears twice in this sentence. Note however, that the author used two very different words to say this:

A. “He who is coming” is “erchomenos” (ἐρχόμενος) which means to become. It literally means to move forward. The form of this word is present participle. As you know, these two forms together add serious emphasis to the statement. It is like saying one will never fail to come.

B. “He will come” is “haedzei” (ἥξει) which means to arrive or to happen. This is the future form. It has not happened yet, but it cannot fail to happen. The use of the word “and” ties two items of equal importance together.

The word translated “he will come” is “haedzei” (ἥξει) is future tense. This word is tied to the word “chronisei” (χρονίσει) which is future tense and means “he will come.” There are many Bible critics who look at this statement and consider it a mistake. Not necessarily. It is possible that a person live in daily anticipation of the coming of the Lord. A. B. Simpson, founder of The Christian and Missionary Alliance, would go to his living room window each night before retiring, lift the curtain, look up and say, “maybe tonight.”

“BUT MY RIGHTEOUS ONE SHALL LIVE BY FAITH; AND IF HE SHRINKS BACK, MY SOUL HAS NO PLEASURE IN HIM.” Hebrews 10:38

Whenever we become aware of a contrast, it is most important to identify the elements of that contrast. In this instance, it is really a double contrast.

A. (10:38-39)

1. “My righteousness shall live by faith and if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him

B U T - (δὲ) –mild contrast

2. (10:39A) (-)We are not of those who shrink back to destruction.

B U T - (ἀλλὰ)- strong contrast

3. (10:39B) (+) (we are) of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul.

The word translated “but” is “de” (δὲ), a word of medium emphasis. It always indicates that we are in the midst of a contrast. The author contrasts the content of verse 37, the coming of Jesus, with the content of verse 38, the redeemed either live by faith or face the displeasure of God.

The word translated “righteous” is “dikaios” (δικαίος) which means righteous or just. It is to be proper, in accord with God’s compelling standards. The word translated “my” is “mou” (μοῦ). This word is often understood to be involved in the sentence. It is sometimes used to provide strong emphasis for the point of the statement. In this instance, the author used this word to stress the fact that these people belong to God and have His specific qualities of life.

The word translated “they shall live” is “dzsetai” (ζήσεται) which means to live and the form is future tense. It can be like the present tense initiated in the future. The word “by” is understood, but not printed in the Greek text. The word translated “faith” is “pisteos” (πίστεως) but can have one of two meanings: It can mean what can be believed. It can also mean the quality of life of the believer. The content will indicate the choice.

The word “and”, again, ties together two separate items as equals. The word translated “if” is “ean” (ἐάν) and indicates that this is a conditional IF...THEN... statement. The word translated “he shrinks back” is “huposteilaetai” (ὑποστείλῃται) which is a compound word:

A. (ὑπο) means upon or under

B. (στέλλω) means to avoid

Together these words mean to withdraw; to avoid. The form of the word is aorist which adds serious emphasis.

The word translated “soul” is “psuchae” (ψυχῇ) which is the innermost self; the mind, the place where values are determined. The word translated “of me” is, again, “mou” (μοῦ), and was used to add special emphasis to the statement. The word translated “no pleasure” is “dudokei” (εὐδοκεῖ) which means to be pleased with. The form is present tense which identifies action that is ongoing. This is a quotation from Habakkuk:

“Behold, as for the proud one, His soul is not right within him; But the righteous will live by his faith.” Habakkuk 2:4

“But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul.” Hebrews 10:39

The use of the word “but” which is “de” (δὲ), is a mild contrast, and indicates that we are in the midst of this contrast. The word translated “we” is “haemeis” (ἡμεῖς) and is usually used to add emphasis to the statement. The word translated “are” is really “we are” “esmen” (ἐσμέν). Observe that this would make the translating “we-we are”. The word translated “not” is “ouk” (οὐκ) which is a medium negative word.

The word translated “shrink back” is hupostolaes” (ὑποστολῇς) which means a senseless waste of resources. It is destruction or ruin. The word translated “but” is “alla” (ἀλλὰ) which represents a much stronger form of contrast than the word “de”. Again, the word translated “faith” is “pisteos” (πίστεως). This genitive form would naturally be translated “of faith.”

The words “to the” do not appear in the Greek text, but are understood. The word translated “preserving” is “peripoiaesin” (περιποίησιν) means to keep; to preserve. The word translated “soul” is psuchaes” (ψυχῆς) and literally means breath; a reference to the inner self.

QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 11A

HEBREWS 11:1 – 16

1. There are three paragraphs in Hebrews 11:1-16. On the following table, write a brief summary of eight words or less for each paragraph.

11:1-7	
11:8-12	
11:13-16	

2. Hebrews 11:1-7 is a paragraph containing eight complete sentences.
(In this paragraph, the author chose three illustrations from the Old Testament to illustrate what he was saying. It is important that we view these in the light of that fact.)
- A. Hebrews 11:1 is a complete sentence.
1. Hebrews 11:1 is a definitive statement about faith. How would you explain this to a new believer?
- B. Hebrews 11:2 is a complete sentence.
1. What does he mean by “approval”?
 2. If by faith “they gained approval,” what is the case if they have no faith?
- C. Hebrews 11:3 is a complete sentence.
1. Read this verse again carefully. What does it mean when he wrote, “By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God”?
 2. What does this verse say about those who have no faith?
 3. There are two parts to this sentence. How do these parts relate to each other?
 4. What qualities of character would be required to enable one to do this “by faith”?
- D. Hebrews 11:4 is a complete sentence.
1. What does he mean by “better sacrifice”?
 2. How does faith change the nature of Abel’s sacrifice?
 3. How can Abel speak now when he has been dead for centuries?
 4. What qualities of character would be required to enable one to do this “by faith”?
- E. Hebrews 11:5 is a complete sentence.
1. Read this sentence carefully. How does the author explain the basis for Enoch avoiding death?
 2. What qualities of character would be required to enable one to do this “by faith”?
- F. Hebrews 11:6 contains two complete sentences.
1. Hebrews 11:6A is a complete sentence and reads as follows: **“And without faith it is impossible to please Him”**
 - a. The word translated “and” sometimes indicates a contrast. What are the contrasted elements?
 - b. How would you explain the author’s intent when he used the word “to please”?
 2. Hebrews 11:6B is a complete sentence and would read as follows: **“For he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.”**
 - a. This sentence is an explanation. What is it explaining?
 - b. There are several word clarifications in this sentence:
 3. What does it mean, “Comes to God”?
 4. How would you define the word “rewarder”?
 5. What does it mean to “seek him”?
- G. Hebrews 11:7 is a complete sentence.

The Superior Jesus

1. The format of this sentence is exactly the same as in verses four and five. All three of these references are used as illustrations to support the author's position in 11:1-3.
 2. What did he mean when he wrote, "In reverence prepared an ark"?
 3. In what way did Noah "Condemn the world" by building the ark?
 4. In what way did building the ark enable Noah to become an heir of righteousness?
 5. What qualities of character would be required to enable one to do this "by faith"?
3. Hebrews 11:8-12 is a paragraph in which there are five complete sentences.
- A. Hebrews 11:8 is a complete sentence in which he used exactly the same format as he had used in verses 4, 5 and 7.
 1. What does it mean, "When he was called"?
 2. What does it mean, "To a place which he was to receive for an inheritance"?
 3. What would be the difference if he omitted the phrase, "Not knowing where he was going"?
 4. What qualities of character would be required to enable one to do this "by faith"?
 - B. Hebrews 11:9 is a complete sentence in which he again used exactly the same format he had used in verses 4, 5, 7, and 8.
 1. What is an "alien"?
 2. Why does the author refer to the place as "the land of promise"?
 3. What does the author mean by the comparative, "As in a foreign land"?
 4. What is added by including the words, "Dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise"?
 5. What qualities of character would be required to enable one to do this "by faith"?
 - C. Hebrews 11:10 is a complete sentence.
 1. This sentence is an explanation. What has been explained?
 2. What would he mean by, "He was looking for a city which has foundations"?
 - D. Hebrews 11:11 is a complete sentence.
 1. What difference would it make if the author had omitted the word "herself"?
 2. In Genesis 18:12, Sarah laughed at the thought of bearing a child in her old age. Here, however, the author reported that, "She considered Him faithful who had promised." How can we account for this?
 3. What does this report tell us about faith?
 4. What qualities of character would be required to enable one to do this "by faith"?
 - E. Hebrews 11:12 is a complete sentence.
 1. The use of the word "therefore" indicates that a strong conclusion is coming. In what way is this a strong conclusion?
 2. Read this verse carefully again. Now, read Genesis chapter 15. What did you discover?
4. Hebrews 11:13-16 is a paragraph containing six complete sentences.
- A. Hebrews 11:13 is a complete sentence.
 1. In good Jewish teaching style, the author first indicated what did not happen and then indicated what did happen.
 - a. What did not happen? What does this mean?
 - b. What three things did happen? What does each one mean?
 2. How would you define strangers"?
 3. How would you define "exiles"?
 4. What is the difference between them?
 - B. Hebrews 11:14 is a complete sentence.
 1. The use of the word "for" indicates that this is an explanation. What has he explained?
 2. How does this relate to faith?

QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 11A

- C. Hebrews 11:15 is a complete sentence.
1. The use of the word translated “and” ties this complete sentence to the previous one. What does the author mean by the use of this sentence?
 2. What is implied by this statement?
- D. Hebrews 11:16A is a complete sentence and would read as follows: **“But as it is they desire a better country, that is a heavenly one.”**
1. In this sentence, the author speaks emphatically and draws a strong contrast. What are the contrasted elements?
 2. This is a difficult, awkward statement. How would you explain what he said?
- E. Hebrews 11:16B is a complete sentence and would read as follows: **“Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God.”**
1. What does this sentence mean?
 2. The word translated “therefore” would usually be translated “for this reason.” Please explain what the author meant by these words.
 3. What is the opposite of this statement?
- F. Hebrews 11:16C is a complete sentence and would read as follows: **“For He has prepared a city for them.”**
1. To what city does he refer?
 2. What does this say about God?
 3. What does this say about the people of faith?

STUDY OF CHAPTER 11A

FAITH PRACTITIONERS

HEBREWS 11:1 – 16

There are three paragraphs in this section of Hebrews chapter 11. On the following table you will find a brief summary of each of these paragraphs.

11:1-7	Creation, Abel, Enoch and Noah
11:8-12	Abraham and Sarah
11:13-16	Summary – All died in faith

HEBREWS 11:1-7 – CREATION, ABEL, ENOCH AND NOAH

There are seven sentences in this paragraph.

“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” Hebrews 11:1

The word translated “now” is really “de” (δε) which is almost always translated “but.” The context is the determiner of which word should be used. If the word is “now” it indicates a change in the direction of the content. If the word is “but,” it would indicate that we are in the midst of a contrast. In this case, the context favors the word “now.” Hebrews 11:1 is not contrasted with Hebrews 10:39.

The word translated “faith” is “pistis” (πίστις) which identifies that which is trustworthy; strong certainty regarding belief; complete trust. It is to act on that which one believes.

The word translated “is” is “estin” (ἐστίν) which is in the present tense. It describes a situation that never changes. The word translated “assurance” is “hupostasis” (ὑπόστασις) which is a compound word:

- A. (ὕπὸ) means through or upon.
- B. (ἵσταμαι) means to stand

This is conviction contrary to visible circumstances.

The word translated “hoped for” is “elpizomenon” (ἐλπίζομένων) which means confident expectation; an attitude of anticipation: confident hope. This is active anticipation that something will happen when there is no physical reason to expect it to be so. The form of this word is present participle. Both of these forms describe ongoing action and present strong emphasis.

The word translated “evidence” is “elegchos” (ἐλεγχος) which means conviction based upon proof. Our text includes the words “of things,” but this does not appear in the Greek text. The word that does appear is (πραγμάτων) which means events. The word translated “not” is “hou” (οὐ) which is a negative of moderate strength. The word translated “of being seen” is “blepomenon” (βλεπομένων) which is well translated and emphasis is added to the form by the use of both the present tense and the participle which both emphasize ongoing action.

“For by it the men of old gained approval.” Hebrews 11:2

The word translated “for” indicates that the author is going to give an explanation. The words “by it” is a reference to “faith” which is highlighted in this chapter. The word translated “men of old” is “presbuteroi” (πρεσβύτεροι) which means elders. It is a reference to the people of old who are mentioned in this chapter. The word translated “gained approval” is “emarturaethesan” (ἐμαρτυρήθησαν) which means to speak well of someone; to commend them highly. This is the aorist tense which emphasizes the action, not the time. He was saying that by faith, ancient men gained approval. The opposite of this statement would then be that without that faith, they would not have gained this approval. It speaks of the great importance of one’s faith.

“By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.” Hebrews 11:3

“BY FAITH WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE WORLDS WERE PREPARED”

Hebrews 11:3 is a complete sentence. Throughout this chapter the word translated “faith” is “pistis” (πίστις) and in each case points to a firm persuasion; involving trust and leads to a firm conviction. Most translations use the words “by faith.” The word, however, is in the dative case and might well be translated “in faith.”

Our grasp of creation is a product of our faith. The word translated “we understand” is “nooumen” (νοοῦμεν) which means to think carefully about something. It is to conceive of an idea. The form of the word is present tense and describes ongoing understanding. This is not a passing thought but something that constantly remains. The word translated “worlds” is “aionas” (αἰῶνας) which would be better translated “ages.” There is a strong theological difference between the two words:

A. If one translates the word “worlds,” it would be a reference to creation.

B. If one translates the word “ages, it would be a reference to divine guidance of all the ages past.

It is our humble opinion that the author probably had both of these ideas in mind when he chose this word. The word translated “prepared” is “katartisthai” (καταρτίζεσθαι) which means to put in order, not just created from nothing. This word is in the perfect tense and describes action thoroughly completed.

“BY THE WORD OF GOD”

The word translated “logos” identifies the singular, a single word. The word here, however, is “raema” (ραῆμα) identifies a proclamation and is more in line with what the text is saying – both in Genesis and in Hebrews. The word translated “of God” is “theou” (θεοῦ). This is the genitive form and is used to identify a source. It is a way to emphasize that God is indeed the source of all creation.

“SO THAT WHAT IS SEEN”

The words “so that” do not appear in the Greek text, but they are understood. The word translated “things which are seen” is “phainomenon” (φαινόμενον) which means that which becomes visible; that which is made known. Once more, the form of the word is present participle. The word translated “what is seen” is “blepomenon” (βλεπόνον) which deals with that which is visible. It also involves that which is understood. It involves thinking about an issue and paying close attention to the results. The form of this word is present participle which both stress ongoing action. The words “so that” do not appear in the Greek text.

“WAS NOT MADE”

The word translated “NOT” does not appear in the Greek text. The word translated “made” is “gegonenai” (γεγονέναι) which means to happen; to come into existence. The form of this word is perfect tense which emphasizes completed action.

“OUT OF THINGS WHICH ARE VISIBLE”.

The English text reads, “out of things which are visible.” The Greek text, however, reads, “from visible.” Now the English text is an attempt to explain the Greek meaning. The Greek word translated “visible” is “fainomenon” (φαινόμενον) which literally means to cause to appear; to give light; to shine. The form of the word is present participle and emphatically suggests that the elements of creation had no previous mis-sion or existence.

“By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous, God testifying about his gifts, and through faith, though he is dead, he still speaks.” Hebrews 11:4

“BY FAITH ABEL OFFERED TO GOD”

This story is told in Genesis chapter four. There is no clarification concerning the nature of the trouble between Cain and Abel. Matthew mentions “righteous Abel” in Matthew 23:35. The word translated “by

faith” is exactly the same form as we saw previously in this chapter. Abel is the second son of Adam. He was a herdsman. The text indicates that “he offered” which is “prosaenegken” (προσήνεγκεν) which means to bring; to present. The author added emphasis to this word by the use of the aorist tense. The word translated “sacrifice” is “thusian” (θυσίαν) which identifies an offering to God.

“A BETTER SACRIFICE THAN CAIN”

The word translated “better” is “pleiona” (πλεῖονα) which means greater. It can mean greater quality.

Cain was Adam’s older son and heir. He was a farmer raising crops. In both instances the offering was “to God.” The text never identifies what made Abel’s sacrifice better than that of Cain. If you study the Old Testament instructions for sacrifices, it is clear that the size or worth of the offering is not a determining factor for acceptance.

“THROUGH WHICH HE OBTAINED THE TESTIMONY”

The word translated “by/through which” is a reference to the sacrifice. The word translated “he obtained testimony” is “emarturaethae.” (ἐμαρτυρήθη) which means to witness or to speak well of someone. The form is aorist passive. The aorist tense emphasizes the action. The passive voice indicates that the subject received the action, he did not create it.

The word translated “he was” is “einai” (εἶναι) which literally translates “he IS” because this is the present tense. The word translated “righteous” is “dikaïos” (δίκαιος) which means to be upright; to be in a right relationship.

“THAT HE WAS RIGHTEOUS”

The word translated “testifying” is “martuountos” (μαρτυροῦντος) which is the same word we saw previously. The form is, again, present participle. Both forms describe ongoing action and this adds serious emphasis to the statement. The author’s words would be well understood if he had omitted the word “autos” (αὐτός) which means “he.” The text would literally translate He himself is.” It would be carefully understood if not written. The word translated “righteous” is “dikaïos” (δίκαιος) which means just; to be without prejudice of the judgment of God.

“GOD TESTIFYING ABOUT HIS GIFTS”

The Greek text literally reads “THE God.” The addition of the word “the” adds very serious emphasis to the statement. The word translated “testifying” is “martuountos” (μαρτυροῦντος) which means a witness; a testimony. Again, the form of this word is present participle which adds serious emphasis because both forms describe ongoing action.

The translated words “though he is dead” are “dorois” (δωροῖς) which means “being dead.” The form is aorist participle. The aorist tense emphasizes the action. The participle describes ongoing action. This is the reason for the word “being.” The word translated “he still speaks” is “lalei” (λαλεῖ) which means to talk. This is in the present tense which is the reason for the words “he still...”

“By faith Enoch was taken up so that he would not see death; AND HE WAS NOT FOUND BECAUSE GOD TOOK HIM UP; for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God.” Hebrews 11:5

The story of Enoch is found in Genesis chapters four and five. The words translated “by faith” are exactly the same as we saw in verse four. Enoch was the father of Methuselah. Genesis 5:22 speaks of him saying “he walked with God 300 years. In 5:24 it says that “Enoch walked with God.” Enoch did not experience death. God took him without experiencing the human dilemma of death. If you look in Luke chapter three, you will note that Enoch was in the lineage of Jesus. In Jude 14, the writer speaks of Enoch as a prophet.

“BY FAITH ENOCH WAS TAKEN UP”

The words “by faith” are the same words and forms as mentioned previously. The word translated “was taken up” is “metetethae” (μετετέθη) which means to depart; to be changed. The form here is aorist passive. The aorist tense emphasizes the action. The passive voice presents the subject as RECEIVING the action.

“SO THAT HE SHOULD NOT SEE DEATH”

The word “so that” does not appear in the Greek text, but is certainly understood. The word translated “should not see” is “idein” (ἰδεῖν). Here again, the aorist tense emphasizes the action, not the time. The word translated “death” is “thanaton” (θάνατον).

“AND HE WAS NOT FOUND”

The use of the word “and” indicates that the author is going to tie together two equally important ideas. The word translated “not” is “ouch” (οὐχ) which is the strongest negative assertion. The word translated “was found” is “haeurisketo” (ἠρίσκειτο) means to discover. The form of this word was imperfect passive.

- A. The imperfect tense deals with action going on in the past.
- B. The passive voice indicates that the subject is the recipient of the action.

“FOR GOD TOOK HIM UP”

The word translated “for” is really “dioti” (διότι) which is often translated “because.” Instead of writing “God” the author actually wrote (ὁ-θεός) which means “THE God.”

The author often added the word “the” as a way to emphasize that there is only one God. The word translated took up” is “metethaeken” (μετεθήκεν) which means to depart; to be changed. The form of this word is aorist tense which places strong emphasis on the action. The passive voice indicates that the subject was the recipient of this action.

“SO THAT HE SHOULD NOT SEE DEATH”

The words “so that” do not appear in the Greek text, but they are understood. The words translated “not see” are interesting. The words so translated are “tou-mae-idein” (τοῦ-μα-ἰδεῖν), which literally means “of the not to see.” This seems unusual in the English translation, but adds serious emphasis in the Greek. The word translated “death” is “thanaton” (θάνατον) which is how they described physical death. This removes the doubt about whether or not Enoch died or fell into a trance.

“FOR HE HAD OBTAINED THE WITNESS”

The use of the word “for” indicates that an explanation is forthcoming. The word translated “he obtained witness” is “memarturetai” (μεμαρτύρηται) which means testimony; a witness. The form of this word is perfect passive. The perfect tense describes action in the past. The passive voice indicates that this is something that happened to or for the subject.

“THAT BEFORE HIS BEING TAKEN UP”

The word “that” does not appear in the Greek text. The word translated “before” is “pro” (πρὸ) and means prior to. The word translated “taken up” is “metatheseos” (μεταθέσεως) describes a change of location.

“HE WAS PLEASING TO GOD”

The word translated “pleasing” is “euaresstakenai” (εὐαρεστήκεναι) which means cause to be pleased. The form of this word is perfect tense which describes accomplished action. Observe that the English text reads “of God” but the Greek text is more emphatic, “of THE God.” Written this way, it stresses the fact that Jehovah is the only God.

“And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.” Hebrews 11:6

“AND WITHOUT FAITH”

The word translated “and” is “de” (δέ) and is usually translated “but.” The use of this word inevitably indicates that a contrast is in motion. In this instance, the contrasted elements are as follows:

A. 11:5 – by faith Enoch – a strong example of faith

BUT

B. 11:6 – Without faith it is impossible to please God.

The word translated “faith” is the word usually used – “pisteos” (πίστεως)

“IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO PLEASE HIM”

The word translated “impossible” is “adunaton” (ἀδύνατον) which means not able. The word translated “to please” is “euairesthai” (εὐαρεστῆσαι) which means to cause someone to be well disposed toward you. The form of this word is aorist tense which places strong emphasis on the content. The author is trying desperately to help his readers to realize how important faith is in their relationship with God.

“FOR HE WHO COMES TO GOD”

The word translated “for” is “gar” (γάρ) and indicates that an explanation is coming. The English text reads “he who comes” The Greek text adds the word “dei” (δεῖ) which means “it is necessary.” Again, the English text reads “he who comes,” But the Greek text reads “for the one who is coming.” The words translated are “the one – “ton” (τόν) “who is drawing near” (προσερχομενον) which means to draw near; to associate with. The form of this word is present participle. Both of these forms describe ongoing action and bring emphasis to the word. Instead of meaning “to God” the Greek text reads “to-theo” (τῷ-θεῷ) which once again places emphasis on the fact that Jehovah is the only God.

“MUST BELIEVE THAT HE IS”

The word “must” does not appear, but it is essential. The word translated “believe” is the same as the word for faith – (πιστεῶ). The word translated “he is” is “estin” (ἐστίν) is often understood to mean that this is evidence of existence. It is that, but it is more. It also affirms that God is eternal.

“AND THAT HE IS THE REWARDER”

The word “and” ties together two things one must believe in order to draw near to God. The addition of the word “THE rewarder” indicates that there is no other. The word translated “rewarder” is “misthapodotes” (μισθαποδότης) which means the one who pays wages. No one else can do this.

“OF THOSE WHO SEEK HIM”

The Greek text reads “he becomes” which is “ginetai” (γίνεται). The form of this word is present tense and would be translated “he is becoming.” The word translated “seek Him” is “ekzaetousin” (ἐκζητοῦσιν) which literally means to diligently seek him. The form is present participle and thus would be translated “be diligently seeking Him.”

“By faith Noah, being warned by God about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.” Hebrews 11:7

The story of Noah is found in Genesis chapters 6-8.

As we proceed, you will note that this verse places a serious emphasis on the use of the aorist tense.

“BY FAITH NOAH”

The use of the dative case on the word translated “faith” would be better translated “in.” It is a way of asserting that faith is the basis for one’s actions as they serve God. The use of Noah as an illustration and as the first illustration would be appropriate, for the recipients were Jews and they would know that story completely.

“BEING WARNED BY GOD”

The word translated “being warned” means to make known a divine revelation. Surprisingly, the words “by God” do not appear in the Greek text, but they would be understood.

The form of the word translated “warned” is aorist participle. The aorist tense adds serious emphasis. The participial form indicates ongoing action and accounts for the use of the word “being.”

“ABOUT THINGS NOT YET SEEN”

The word “things” does not appear in the Greek text, but it would be understood. The wording “not yet” is a bit unusual and for that reason would add serious emphasis to the statement. The word so translated is “maedepo” (μηδέπω) which means “not yet.” The word translated “seen” is “blepomenon” (βλεπομένων) is used to convey the idea of seeing, but it also carries the idea of understanding. The form of this word is present passive participle. This is significant:

The passive voice indicates that this understanding was not something that Noah did, but it was done for him. Both the present tense and the participle describe ongoing action and thus add emphasis. One would really translate this “being seen.”

“IN REVERENCE PREPARED AN ARK”

The word translated reverence” is “hulabaethis” (ὕλαβηθεῖς) and means holy fear; awe. The form of this word is aorist participle. The aorist tense adds emphasis. The participial form indicates ongoing action. It was a way of saying that this reverence was an ongoing relationship. One must ask what the difference is between building an ark with reverence and building an ark without reverence. As we defined reverence as holy awe, this would then have to be building the ark in thorough conviction that God promised to send a flood and though it appeared impossible, Noah had an urgency for the construction because God was going to be God and the impossible would become reality. The word translated “prepared” is “katekrinen” (κατέκρινεν) which means to build or prepare. The word is in the aorist tense which emphasizes the fact that Noah did this in this way.

“FOR THE SALVATION OF HIS HOUSEHOLD”

The word translated “for” is really “eis” (εἰς) which means “for the purpose of.” The word translated “salvation” is “sotaerian” (σωτηρίαν) this word means “salvation,” but it was also used to describe deliverance. The words translated “of his household” literally means “of the house of him.” This was a Jewish way to refer to one’s family. It had nothing to do with the building in which they lived, but everything to do with the people whom he claimed as his family.

“BY WHICH HE CONDEMNED THE WORLD”

The words translated “by which” are “di – haes” (δί – ἧς) which would be translated “through which.” The word translated “he condemned” is “katekrinen” (κατέκρινεν) which means to judge someone as being guilty. The form of this word is aorist tense which adds strategic emphasis to his strong statement. We must ask, just how does one condemn the world by building a boat? Noah had been preaching to the people all during the years it took him to build the ark. He told them that the flood was coming and they mocked him. He was not deterred. He finished building the boat that had no lake in which to float. The fact that the flood came was in itself a condemnation of those who refused to hear and change.

“AND BECAME AN HEIR OF RIGHTEOUSNESS”

The use of the word “and” indicates that this phrase is an integral part of the previous one. The word translated “he became” is “egeneto” (ἐγένετο) is well translated and the form is again aorist tense which adds strong emphasis. The word translated “heir” is “klaeronomos” (κληρονόμος) which means to gain as a possession as a gift. It is not something one does for himself. The word translated “righteousness” is “dikaiosunaes” (δικαιοσύνης) which means doing what God requires. The question arises, how does building a boat qualify to make one an heir of righteousness? Building a boat does not qualify one. It is

STUDY OF CHAPTER 11A

the faith in God's instructions that is expressed in this construction job to build a huge boat in an area where there is no water in which to float it.

“WHICH IS ACCORDING TO FAITH”

The words “which is” do not appear in the Greek text, but they are understood. The words translated “according to faith” are “kata-pistin” (κατὰ- πίστιν) which really translates “according to faith.” As you look back over this portion of the chapter, one needs to review this portion to discover the qualities of character which are involved in this expression of faith. There are at least four:

- A. The COURAGE to stand alone for what God has commanded him to do.
- B. The PERSEVERANCE to do the right under persecution when it is not a logical command.
- C. The DETERMINATION to build when people mocked and derided him.
- D. The INNER STRENGTH to do what others considered stupid even though he could not logically defend his position.

These are at least the qualities involved in acting in faith.

“HEBREWS 11:8-12 - ABRAHAM AND SARAH”

“By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going.” Hebrews 11:8

The story of Abraham is told in Genesis 11:27 – 25:9. You should note, as you proceed through the balance of this chapter, that the illustrations of faith are considered in chronological order. In the first section of the chapter 11:1 – 16, there are three major illustrations.

“BY FAITH ABRAHAM”

The word translated “in faith” is “pistei” which is the dative case for faith. Observe that this represents a time after his name was changed from Abram to Abraham. The name “Abram” means exalted father.” The name “Abraham” meant “father of a multitude.” In that era, every name had important meaning and it was carefully observed.

“WHEN HE WAS CALLED”

The word translated “called” is “huaekousen” (ὤπήκουσεν) it literally means answer the door; to respond. The form of this word is, again, the aorist tense which adds serious emphasis to the statement.

“OBEYED BY GOING OUT”

The word translated “obeyed” is “huaekousen” (ὤπήκουσεν) and means to obey by paying attention. The form of this word is, again, aorist tense which adds emphasis. The word translated “going out” is “echelthein” (ἐξελθεῖν) which means to go out; to leave. Once again this is aorist tense.

“TO A PLACE WHICH HE WAS TO RECEIVE”

The words translated “unto a place” are “eis – topon” (εἰς – τόπον). The word translated “that” is “hon” (ὅν) and is well translated. The word translated “which” is understood, but does not appear in the Greek text.

The word translated “he was to receive” is “lambanein” (λαμβάνειν) which means to receive from the giver. The form of this word is present tense and would be translated to be receiving.

“FOR AN INHERITANCE”

The word translated “for” is “eis” (εἰς) and is usually translated “unto.” The word translated “inheritance” is “klaeronomian” (κληρονομείν). The idea of inheritance had more meaning in that culture than in ours. For us, it is receiving a valued item. Their understanding included that, but it was also an affirmation of being family which was extremely important to them.

“AND HE WENT OUT”

The word “and” ties this phrase to the previous one as equals. The word translated “went out” is “echaelthen” (ἐχῆλθεν). The form of this word is, once more, aorist tense adding serious emphasis.

“NOT KNOWING WHERE HE WAS GOING”

The word translated “not” is “mae” (μὴ) which is a moderate negative expression. The word translated “knowing” is “epistamenos” (ἐπιστάμενος) which means the possession of information with the implication of understanding the significance of it. He was quite clear that he was going to a place that he did not know and would not know until God made that clear.

It is important that we focus our attention on what it takes to do what Abraham did “by faith.” It takes phenomenal perseverance to keep going through this very dangerous fertile-crescent when you do not know where you are actually going. One does not undertake this dangerous, questionable mission without unlimited submission to the leading of God. In that time, one’s wealth was assessed by the size of the herds he possessed. For such a wealthy man to dare take his family and herds through the robber-infested fertile crescent demanded great courage. One would require great determination and will power to attempt such a trip. The decision to go just because God commanded required an indescribable love for God. There is the need for unusual personal strength required to undertake such a dangerous mission.

“By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise;” Hebrews 11:9

“BY FAITH HE LIVED AS AN ALIEN IN THE LAND OF PROMISE”

Once more, the word translated “by faith” is “pistei” (πίστει) which uses the dative case and is the reason for the word “in.” The word translated “he lived” is “parokaesen” (παρώκησεν) which really means “he lived transiently.” The word translated “alien” is “allotrian” (ἄλλοτρίαν) which means belonging to others.

It is aorist tense to add emphasis. The addition of the word “transiently” gives strong emphasis to the fact that he was a foreigner with no rights or privileges. With the wealth he had, this was a very dangerous situation. Also, he was used to being a person of power. That would not be his position in such a situation.

“AS IN A FOREIGN LAND”

The Greek text would read, literally, “as belonging to others.” Abraham was a man of wealth. In an alien situation, such a person would need to be on the alert at all times because he would have no rights whatsoever.

“DWELLING IN TENTS WITH ISAAC AND JACOB”

The word translated “dwelling” is “katoikaesas” (κατοικήσας) which means to reside; to dwell. The form, again, is aorist participle. The aorist tense adds emphasis and the participle describes ongoing action. The word translated “tents” is “skaenais” (σκηναῖς) which literally means a tent, not a house made of cloth. The problem is that the tents in that part of the world are made up of several rooms all made of cloth. Again, this is not what Abraham had become used to in his former place of residence.

The words “with Isaac and Jacob” were very important, but it was a fact that every Jew would completely understand. It was a way of saying that this covenant was not exclusively with Abraham, but also with his heritage.

“FELLOW HEIRS OF THE PROMISE”

This phrase is even more emphasis about the covenant. The mention of Isaac and Jacob reminds the readers of the covenant. Now the author makes it even more explicit. When a covenant is made with Abraham, his heirs are included in that promise. They are as required to keep the conditions as Abraham was.

The Greek text of this phrase reads “fellow heirs of the SAME promise.” This is just one more layer of emphasis that the author has chosen to place on this statement.

Living in an unforgiving atmosphere with no hint of change required a great deal of patience. A person of pride could never endure the obvious tensions that accompany such a situation. It requires a depth of humility. Simply because he had no idea of how long he would be exposed to this most uncomfortable situation required an unusual endowment of perseverance.

“for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.” Hebrews 11:10

“FOR HE WAS LOOKING FOR THE CITY”

Observe that in the English text, the word “for” appears twice. In the Greek text, however, the first of these is missing. The translators have added the word because this is an explanation. The word translated “he was looking,” is “echedeceto” (ἐξεδέχeto) which means to wait expectantly for; to look forward to. The form of this word is imperfect – that which is not yet realized.

Again, the English text reads “for a city,” but the Greek text reads “to be having a city.” The word translated “to have” is “echousan” (ἔουσσαν) which means to possess. The form of this word is present participle. The intent here is not that they will just possess this city, but that they will never stop possessing this city.

“WHICH HAS FOUNDATIONS”

They understood “foundations” as that on which a structure is built. Their tents did not have and did not need foundations. Their stay in that location would not require a foundation. This is a way to stress the permanency of this gift that God is promising to give them.

“WHOSE ARCHITECT AND BUILDER IS GOD”

The word translated “architect” is “technitae” (τεχνίτης) which literally means craftsman; the one who does the work. The word “and” here ties the previous qualification to the one which follows. It is a way to say the one responsible has both of these qualities. The word translated “builder” is “daemiouros” (δημιουργός) which means the one in charge. The one responsible for both design and building.

Where the English text reads “God,” the Greek text reads “of THE God.” The difference is, once more, that this is a way of saying that there is no other God.

“By faith even Sarah herself received ability to conceive, even beyond the proper time of life, since she considered Him faithful who had promised.” Hebrews 11:11

“BY FAITH EVEN SARAH HERSELF”

As in previous illustrations, the word translated “By faith” literally reads “In faith” because of the use of the dative case. Again, the English translation reads, “even Sarah.” The emphasis here expresses some surprise that Sarah was capable of this kind of faith. The Greek text reads differently and more strongly. It is “Sarah herself,” which places strong emphasis on the fact that it was indeed Sarah who at one point did not really believe, but now she did. Observe, also, that as in the case with Abraham, this deals with the time after her name was changed from “Sarai” to “Sarah.” Biblically, there was always a reason for the changing of a person’s name. Every name had meaning. The name Sarai meant “my princess.” The name Sarah meant “princess” which was understood to be of greater importance. Though the English text does not include it, the Greek text adds the word “sterile.” The word so translated is “steira” (στεῖρα) which means the inability to conceive and bear a child.

“RECEIVED ABILITY TO CONCEIVE”

The word translated “received” is “helaben” (ἔλαβεν) which means to receive a benefit for which the initiative rests with the giver. It is a subtle way to say that she had nothing to do with this, but that God had bestowed this gift upon her. The form of this word is, again, aorist tense which adds serious emphasis to the statement.

The word translated “ability” is “dunamin” (δύναμιν) which literally means power. The word translated “to conceive” is “katabolaen” (καταβολήν). The word translated “seed” is spermatos” (σπέρματος).

“EVEN BEYOND THE PROPER TIME OF LIFE”

The word translated “even” is “kai” (καί) which is usually translated “and.” In either case, an explanation will follow. The word translated “beyond” is “para” (παρά) which means from or beyond. The translation of the word “time” is an unusual emphasis. There are two basic words by which the Greeks expressed time:

A. (κρόνος) which identifies time on the clock.

B. (καιρός) which identifies very special time – the time of birth would be one of these.

The word “kairos” would have been sufficient, but the author used the word “haelikias” (ἡλικίας) which means mature time of life; old age.

“SINCE SHE CONSIDERED HIM FAITHFUL”

The word translated “since” is (ἐπεὶ) which is sometimes translated “because.” Whether it is “since” or “because” it definitely identifies that a reason is forthcoming. The word translated “considered” is “haegae-sato” (ἡγήσατο) which means to contemplate with great care. The form of this word is aorist tense which adds serious emphasis to the statement. The word translated “faithful” is (πιστόν) which was viewed in two ways:

A. PASSIVE – To be trusted; to be reliable.

B. ACTIVE – Believing, trusting.

From the usage here, it appears that the author used the passive. She considered God to be trustworthy and reliable. The author was considering who God is rather than the age of Sarah.

“WHO HAD PROMISED”

The word translated “promised” is (ἐπαγγελάμενον) which is a legal term that means to proclaim that which must be carried out. It identifies a gift graciously given rather than a promise secured through harsh negotiations.

“Therefore there was born even of one man, and him as good as dead at that, as many descendants AS THE STARS OF HEAVEN IN NUMBER, AND INNUMERABLE AS THE SAND WHICH IS BY THE SEASHORE.” Hebrews 11:12

“THEREFORE ALSO, THERE WAS BORN EVEN OF ONE MAN”

The word translated “therefore” is (διὸ) which is an emphatic word so translated and indicates that a conclusion is coming. Of the words translated “therefore” this one is medium in emphasis.

The word translated “also” is (καὶ) which is usually translated “and.” The inclusion of this word is strictly for emphasis. The meaning would not be lost if it were omitted. The words translated “there was born even of one man” are a translation of two words (ἓν – ἐνός) which simply means “from one.”

“AND HIM AS GOOD AS DEAD AT THAT”

The words “and him” are a translation of the words “(καὶ – τοῦτο) which could be translated “and this one.” The words “as good as dead” are a translation of (νεκρωμένου) which means having been put to death. The form of this word is perfect participle.

A. Perfect tense – Completed action.

B. Participle – ongoing action.

One could translate this, “having been dying.” Abraham had been in this delicate condition for some time. The words “at that” provide strong emphasis, but they do not appear in the Greek text.

“AS MANY DESCENDANTS AS THE STARS OF HEAVEN IN NUMBER”

This portion of the verse is quoted from Genesis 22:17. The words “as many” are a translation of the word (καθώς) and mean “as much as”. The word “descendants” is certainly implied in the text, but the word

does not appear there. The image of “the stars” was a strong visual picture which the Jews often used. With no street lights, they were keenly aware of their inability to count the stars.

“AND INNUMERABLE AS THE SAND”

This portion was also quoted from Genesis 22:17. We should keep in mind that Jewish writers and readers loved to quote from the Bible. This accomplishes two things. First it lends authenticity which would cause them to not challenge the statement. The second is that if they quote Scripture, the opponents would not be able to argue with them because they would be arguing with the Scriptures.

“WHICH IS BY THE SEASHORE”

The Greek text reads – “Which by the shore of the sea innumerable.” This is an awkward statement, but this lends even more emphasis to the statement.

“HEBREWS 11: 13-16 - SUMMARY – ALL DIED IN FAITH”

“All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.” Hebrews 11:13

“ALL THESE DIED IN FAITH”

Verse 13 is a very emphatic complete sentence. The sentence forms a summary statement concerning verses 1-12. The author was referring to seven Old Testament experiences. Each of these had one thing in common – they acted by faith.

The author’s statement, “All these died in faith.” Is most significant. The author implied two things with this wording.

- A. They acted “by faith” in the recorded experiences.
- B. That experiences concluded, they lived the balance of their lives by that same faithfulness until the time of their death.

It is a way to assert that they finished their course just as they had dealt with the recorded difficulty.

“WITHOUT RECEIVING THE PROMISES”

This phrase literally translates – “not having received the promises.” The form of the word translated “having received” is aorist participle:

- A. AORIST TENSE – It emphasizes the action, not the time.
- B. PARTICIPLE – This form identifies ongoing action.

One should emphatically translate the word, “Having received.” This is a very strong statement. There are several words which are translated “not.” These words differ in the amount of emphasis the author wishes to use. This particular word is (μή) which provides medium emphasis.

“BUT HAVING SEEN THEM”

This is the first of three descriptive phrases which identify what these people realized, but did not receive before they died.

As with the words translated “not,” there are several words translated “but.” These words also differ by the amount of emphasis the author wished to place on the statement. In this case, the Greek word is (ἀλλὰ) which is the most emphatic of these words. It indicates that this sentence is one that the author really wants to emphasize strongly.

The word translated “having seen” is (ἰδόντες) and means to see; to view. The form of this word is, again, aorist participle as each of these phrases in the sentence must be.

We must ask ourselves, what does the author really mean by “having seen them”? Abel knew that God accepted his sacrifice and rejected Cain’s, but then he died at the hands of his brother. Enoch could see that he was being taken up to heaven without dying. Noah, came out of the Ark alive when others were dead, could see the result of God’s promise. However, (11:8) Abraham could not see God’s promise fulfilled as

he went not knowing where he was going. Again, (11:9) Abraham living as an alien in the land he was to receive could not see this as an answer to a promise. Sarah, (11:11) could believe God could do the impossible and enable her to conceive, but at the time she had no proof.

As you look at this list, it is clear that these people did not see conclusive evidence when the struggle arose. They could see it not because it had already come to pass, but their faith was so strong that when God spoke, their faith could see it as already accomplished.

“AND HAVING WELCOMED THEM FROM A DISTANCE”

The word translated “and” is (καὶ) and ties together two or more ideas which are equally pertinent and significant to the issue at hand. Like the other verbs in this sentence, the form is aorist participle which continues the strong emphasis. The word translated “having welcomed” is (ἀσπάζομαι) which means to be happy about; to anticipate with pleasure. This is much easier to understand than “having welcomed.”

The word translated “from a distance” is (πρόρρωθεν) which means from a point in time considerably prior to another point in time. We need to stop and ask, just what does he mean by this phrase? Abraham absolutely could not see the expansion of his family as described by “sand on the sea shore.” His faith; his expectation of God enabled him to see the small beginnings of God’s faithfulness to His word. Again, there is no mention of the idea that Noah had ever seen rain. His experience of God’s faithfulness enabled him to anticipate God’s keeping His promise though the supporting physical evidence would not be seen for several years.

“AND HAVING CONFESSED”

Once more, the word translated “and” ties another major idea into this summary statement. The word translated “having confessed” is (ὁμολογήσαντες) which is the word used when a suspect admits his crime. It is to publically acknowledge a fact. Once again, the form is necessarily aorist participle.

“THAT THEY WERE STRANGERS”

The use of the word translated “that” indicates that a statement of purpose is about to be presented. The word translated “stranger” is (ξένοι) which means foreigner; one who does not belong to the local socio-political group.

“AND EXILES ON THE EARTH.”

The author also used the word translated “sojourners” or exiles which is (παρεπίδημοι) and means transient; a person who temporarily lives in an area not his home; an alien. Though Abraham was located in a place God would one day give to his descendants, at this point he was a foreigner, an alien who had no rights and whose presence caused suspicion by the local population.

“For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own.”
Hebrews 11:14

“FOR THOSE WHO SAY SUCH THINGS”

The use of the word “for” indicates that an explanation is about to be given. The word translated “say” is (λέγοντες) which means to speak. The form, however, is present participle. Both of these forms indicate ongoing action and thus it would be translated “saying.” The word “things” does not appear in the Greek text. This phrase would literally be translated, “for the saying such.”

“MAKE IT CLEAR”

The word translated “make it clear” is (ἐμθανίζουσιν) which means to make something known; to disclose. The form of this word is present tense and would be translated “are disclosing.”

“THAT THEY ARE SEEKING”

The word translated “they are seeking” is (ἐπιζητοῦσιν) which means the desire to have something; to realize one’s deep longing. The form of this word is present tense and is well translated. It describes an ongoing search.

“A COUNTRY OF THEIR OWN”

This phrase literally translates from the Greek – “they are seeking homeland – or fatherland.” Observe that the author does not indicate what that might mean; at least he hasn’t yet. At best, this statement portrays Abraham and his family as seeking a place with which they can identify; a place where they belong. Up to this point, they have not found one.

“And indeed if they had been thinking of that country from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return.” Hebrews 11:15

Having made a rather broad statement, the author will now make a statement which is more specific. He will do this in good Jewish teaching style – he will first tell you what it is not and then he will tell you what it is.

“AND INDEED,”

Verse 15 is a complete sentence. The use of the word “and” ties this sentence to the previous one in verse 14. If you left out the word “indeed” the reader would have no difficulty whatsoever identifying the author’s intent. It accomplishes two things:

- A. It adds significant emphasis to the statement.
- B. It helps the reader prepare for the contrast the author is building.

“IF THEY HAD BEEN THINKING”

The use of the word translated “if” points out that this is a conditional (IF...THEN...) sentence which emphasizes a logical statement. Whenever we encounter a conditional sentence, it is important to identify the elements that are involved:

- A. CONDITION – IF they had been thinking of the country from which they came
- B. CONSEQUENCE – (THEN) they would have had opportunity to return.

The word translated “they had been thinking” is (ἐμνημόευσον) which means to carefully remember; to keep on thinking about something. The form of this word is imperfect tense which identifies action going on in past time. Thus, the word would be translated, “they were remembering.”

“OF THAT COUNTRY FROM WHICH THEY WENT OUT”

The Greek text literally reads, “from which they went out.” The words “that country” do not appear in the Greek text, but they certainly clarify what the author had in mind.

The word translated “they went out” is (ἐξέβησαν) which means to depart. The form of this word is aorist tense which indicates the strong emphasis the author was seeking to use. In this case, it would have been at least a remembering of Haran if not Ur, the land of his birth. The author’s words are a way of saying, this is not what they were thinking about in the midst of their struggle.

“THEY WOULD HAVE HAD OPPORTUNITY TO RETURN”

Interestingly, the word translated “opportunity” is (καίρος) which means time. There are two Greek words that are translated “time”

- A. Χρόνος – Which is time on the clock.
- B. καιρός – special time

This is the same word that the apostle Paul used in Ephesians 1:10, “in the fullness of time” dealing with the coming of Jesus.

The word translated “to return” is (ἀνακάμψαι) which means to bend around; to return. The form of this word is, again, aorist tense which identifies the strong emphasis the author was placing on this statement.

“But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Hebrews 11:16A

There are three complete sentences in verse 16.

The use of the word “but” indicates that we are in the midst of a contrast. Surprisingly, the author used a medium emphasis on the word “but” in the midst of an emphatic statement. This would indicate that the author was emphasizing the statement rather than the contrast.

The word translated “as it is” is (νῦν) which is usually translated “now,” which would fit the sentence quite well. The words “as it is” do no violence to the text, but the literal translation would be better.

“THEY DESIRE A BETTER COUNTRY”

The word translated “they desire” is (ὀρέγονται) which means to eagerly desire. The form of this word is present tense and should be translated, “they are desiring.” The word translated a better country is (κρείττονος) which literally means superior. This is a comparative statement. The word “country” is implied, but does not appear in the Greek text.

“THAT IS, A HEAVENLY ONE”

As indicated earlier, the author began with a broad, general statement and then proceeded to narrow down his point. These people lived in a traumatic physical situation. They focused their attention not on an earthly home in a different location. Their focus was a deep desire to live in heaven with a loving God where there were no frightening neighbors. That is what God has prepared for His struggling people.

Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; Hebrews 11:16B

“THEREFORE, GOD IS NOT ASHAMED”

The word “therefore” always indicates that we are approaching a conclusion. The word so translated is (διὸ) which is usually translated wherefore. The literal translation of this phrase is more emphatic. It reads, “Wherefore THE God Himself is not being ashamed to being called God of them.” The inclusion of the words “the” and “Himself” are a way to add stronger emphasis to this strong statement. Again, the word translated “not” is (οὐκ) which adds serious emphasis to this negative idea. The word translated “being ashamed” is (ἐπαισχύνεται) which means to be disgraced. In that culture a man’s reputation was established by the conduct of his children. We have seen a modern situation in our country where a man killed his daughter in an “honor killing.” In the father’s mind, he had been disgraced by the conduct of his child. The author of Hebrews was saying that the conduct of these people brought no disgrace upon their God because they emulated His nature and character.

“TO BE CALLED THEIR GOD”

Observe that this sentence is quite personal. It does not read, “not ashamed to be called God.” It literally reads, “Not ashamed to be being called the God of them.” As these recipients were well aware, the idols they observed around them were never involved in a personal relationship with any person.

for He has prepared a city for them.” Hebrews 11:16C

“FOR HE HAS PREPARED A CITY FOR THEM”

These four Greek words form a complete sentence. The use of the word (γάρ), which is translated “for,” indicates that an explanation is about to be given. The word translated “he has prepared” is (ἡτοίμασεν) and means to prepare; to cause to be ready. The form of this word is aorist tense and adds serious emphasis which is why the author used this form.

Observe that the author reminds the Jewish recipients that God prepared a “city” for them. In fact, the Old Testament promise of God to Abraham and his descendants was a “land” a country. Our author’s reference here is not the promise of the land that we refer to as “Israel.” It is the promise of eternity in His presence.

QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 11B

HEBREWS 11:17 – 40

1. There are four paragraphs in Hebrews 11:17-40. On the following table, write a brief summary of eight words or less for each paragraphs.

11:17-22	
11:23-29	
11:30, 31	
11:32-40	

2. Hebrews 11:17-22 contains four complete sentences.
- A. Hebrews 11:17-19 form a complete sentence.
1. The text indicates that the instruction to sacrifice Isaac was a test. What does this mean?
 2. There are two parts to verse 17. What does the second part add to the first?
 3. Though there are no connecting words, verse 18 is tied to verse 17. In what way is it tied?
 4. What is the test mentioned in verse 17?
 5. In Hebrews 11:19, what did he mean by “He considered...”?
 6. What did he try to say by writing, “received him back as a type”?
 7. What did you learn about faith from verses 17-19?
- B. Hebrews 11:20 is a complete sentence.
1. The story of this blessing is found in Genesis 27. What does it mean that, “By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau”?
 2. What does he mean, “Even regarding things to come”?
 3. What does this verse tell you about faith?
- C. Hebrews 11:21 is a complete sentence.
1. This story is found in Genesis 48:1-22. In what ways did Jacob (Israel) bless Jacob and his sons “by faith”?
 2. What did the author try to say by, “leaning on the top of his staff”?
 3. What does this verse teach us about Faith?
- D. Hebrews 11:22 is a complete sentence.
1. This story is found in Genesis 50:15-26. In what way is 11:22 an expression of faith?
 2. What difference does it make where Joseph was buried?
 3. What does this verse teach us about faith?
3. Hebrews 11:23-29 is a paragraph in which there are six complete sentences.
- A. Hebrews 11:23 is a complete sentence.
1. This story is found in Exodus 2:1-10. Read the story carefully.
 2. Now read 11:23 very carefully.
 - a. How logical was their decision?
 - b. What explanation did the parents give for their decision?
 3. What does it mean when he wrote, “They were not afraid of the king’s edict”?
 4. What does this story teach us about faith?
- B. Hebrews 11:24-24 form a complete sentence.
1. Why would the author skip the first 41 years of Moses’ life in this report?
 2. The Exodus text does not say that Moses “refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter,” but his actions bore this out. Read Exodus chapter 2. How does Moses express this refusal? Could Moses do this and still be righteous?
 3. The Exodus text does not spell out the event described in 11:25. Where could our author have gotten this idea?

The Superior Jesus

4. Hebrews 11:26, mentions “the reproach of Christ.” What did he mean by this?
5. Is there any point in the story where you see this choice in action?
6. What do the verses of this sentence teach us about faith?
- C. Hebrews 11:27A is a complete sentence and reads as follows: **“By faith he (Moses) left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king.”**
 1. Read the story of Moses’ departure from Egypt in Exodus 2:11-15?
 2. How can one understand this sentence on the basis of Exodus 2:11-15?
 3. What does this brief sentence teach us about the nature of faith?
- D. Hebrews 11:27B is a complete sentence and would read as follows: **“For he endured as seeing him who is unseen”?**
 1. In this context, what does it mean, “He endured”?
 2. What does the author mean by the phrase, “As seeing Him who is unseen”?
 3. What can this brief sentence help us discover about faith?
- E. Hebrews 11:28 is a complete sentence.
 1. This story is found in Exodus chapter 12.
 2. Read this story carefully. In what way do you see faith in this story?
 3. What does this report teach us about faith?
- F. Hebrews 11:29 is a complete sentence.
 1. This story is found in Exodus chapter 14.
 2. In what way is faith required to pass through the Red Sea on dry land?
 3. What would be the difference if the author had omitted the final phrase about the drowning of the Egyptian army?
 4. What does this experienced teach us about faith?
4. Hebrews 11:30-31 is a paragraph in which there are two complete sentences.
 - A. Hebrews 11:30 is a complete sentence.
 1. This story is found in Joshua chapter 6.
 2. Put yourself in the place of Joshua when God spoke to him in Joshua 6:1-5. What would faith be like at this time? If you were one of the soldiers?
 3. What does this story teach us about faith?
 - B. Hebrews 11:31 is a complete sentence.
 1. This story is recorded in Joshua chapter 2. Some have serious questions about the fact that Rahab is identified as “a harlot.” Can a harlot have faith? Can telling a lie be a part of expressed faith?
 2. Where do you see faith expressed in this story?
 3. What does this important story teach us about faith?
5. Hebrews 11:32 – 40 is a paragraph which contains six complete sentences.
 - A. 11:32A is a complete sentence that reads as follows: “And what more shall I say”?
 1. When you hear words like these, what do you anticipate will happen next?
 2. Why would the author do this?
 - B. Hebrews 11:32B is a complete sentence which would read as follows: **“For time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets.”**
 1. The story of Gideon is found in Judges 6.
 - a. In Judges 6:17, Gideon made a request of the angel. Was this an expression of faith?
 - b. Where do you see faith in this story?
 - c. What does this story teach us about faith?
 2. The story of Barak is found in Judges chapter four.

QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 11B

- a. Some scholars view this story as a picture of the absence of faith. Where do you see faith explained in this story?
- b. What did you learn about faith in this story?
3. The story of Samson is found in Judges 13-16.
 - a. In Judges 13, the author told of Samson's birth and divine calling. Samson did many things that were clearly disobedient. How can such a life be lived "by faith"?
 - b. Review the story of Samson. What did he do that was an act of faith?
 - c. What does this story teach us about faith?
4. The story of Jephthah was told in Judges 11:1 – 12:7.
 - a. In view of the Judges account, how would you evaluate the life and conduct of Jephthah?
 - b. In what way can one contend that Jephthah acted "by faith"?
 - c. Do you see any other qualities in Jephthah which enhanced his faith?
 - d. What does his story teach us about faith?
5. The story of David is told in I Samuel chapters 16 and 17.
 - a. How would you describe the conduct of David toward his father Jesse?
 - b. In what way did David conduct himself "by faith"?
 - c. What did David accomplish "by faith"?
 - d. What does this story teach us about faith?
6. The story of Samuel is told in I Samuel 7-10.
 - a. As you read the story of Samuel, what quality of character seems to stand out above others in his life?
 - b. Where do you see Samuel acting "by faith"?
 - c. What does this story teach us about faith?
7. Unlike the six previous illustrations, the author now turns to general illustrations to which he does not attach a name. An example of this is, "And the prophets." There are many examples, but for our observation we have chosen Isaiah.
 - a. If you look at Isaiah 13-23, you see Isaiah's denunciation of 12 lands. In chapters 24-27, Isaiah denounced Israel and Judah. How do you see "By faith" actions here?
 - b. What does this teach us about faith?
- C. Hebrews 11:33 is a part of the complete sentence 11:32B-34 and would read as follows: **"Who by faith conquered kingdoms, performed acts of righteousness, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions..."**
 1. "Who by faith conquered kingdoms..."
 - a. Judges chapter four tells the story of Deborah, the judge of Israel.
 1. Jabin king of Canaan was defeated in this passage. Though the word "faith" does not appear in this chapter, still its presence is observable.
 2. Observe who the people are who demonstrated faith.
 3. Identify the people and places who did not live "by faith".
 4. What does this story teach us about faith?
 2. "Performed acts of righteousness" The author did not identify whom he had in mind, but the story of Samuel in I Samuel 16:1-13 contains these qualities.
 - a. What was it that made Samuel's actions to be "by faith"?
 - b. What does this story teach us about the content of faith?
 3. "Obtained promises" II Kings chapters 19 and 20 tell the story of Hezekiah.
 - a. It appears that this is a situation involving promises fulfilled. Where do you see the presence of faith in this story?
 - b. What does this story teach us about the nature of faith?

The Superior Jesus

4. “Shut the mouths of lions.” The story of Daniel is the most obvious message dealing with shutting the mouths of lions to be found in the Bible.
 - a. What evidence can you site which indicates that this is “by faith”?
 - b. What does this story teach us about faith?
- D. Hebrews 11:34 is the conclusion of the complete sentence 11:32B – 34, and reads as follows:
“Quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, became mighty in war, put foreign enemies to flight.”
 1. The fact that the author did not put a name with these illustrations may mean that everyone would know what he was referring to or that there were more than one that the Jewish readers would know about.
 2. The story of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego is reported in Daniel 3:1-30.
 - a. How was their faith expressed?
 - b. What outcome did their faith anticipate from this confrontation?
 - c. What does this experience teach us about faith?
 3. **“Escaped the edge of the sword.”** There were a number of such experiences in the life of David. One of these is found in I Samuel chapter 23 where the author told the story of Saul searching for David while both of them were in the same cave.
 - a. What was Saul there to achieve?
 - b. What was David committed to doing in response to Saul?
 - c. What was the outcome?
 - d. What does this story teach us about the nature of faith?
 4. **“From weakness were made strong.”** The story of Elijah was presented in I Kings The 18, 19.
 - a. What was the numerical difference between Elijah and the prophets of Baal?
 - b. What was the agreed upon procedure?
 - c. What was the final result?
 - d. What happened immediately after this strong encounter?
 - e. Is it possible that we observe great faith when Elijah fled the scene?
 - f. What does this teach us about the life of faith?
 5. **“Became mighty in war”** The story of David and Goliath is reported in I Samuel chapter 17.
 - a. Saul was the most capable man in Israel, but he did nothing.
 - b. What did David say to Goliath?
 - c. What did David do to Goliath?
 - d. What did Israel then do to the Philistines?
 - e. What does this story tell us about faith?
 6. **“Put foreign enemies to flight”** – This story is told in Esther chapter nine.
 - a. Haman had set it up for all Jews to be killed.
 - b. Mordecai trusted God.
 - c. Read the story:
 1. What was it that set the stage for Haman to be executed?
 2. What set the stage for Mordecai to be elevated to second in command of the nation?
 3. What was it that set the stage for Israel to be spared?
 - d. What does this story teach us about faith?- E. Hebrews 11:35 is a complete sentence.
 1. “Women received back their dead by resurrection” –
 - a. We do not know whom the author had in mind when he made this identification.
 - b. It seems clear that the recipients knew exactly what he was talking about.
 - c. We know that the sisters of Lazarus received him back in resurrection.

QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 11B

- d. It is much less clear that this took place “by faith.”
- e. What would this tell us about faith?
- 2. “And others were tortured, not accepting their release” –
 - a. We know that many were tortured and martyred in this fashion.
 - b. Both Paul and John sustained such an experience.
 - c. Why would people torture Christians because of their faith?
 - d. Why would the believers refuse to accept release from torture? Does this make any sense at all?
 - e. What does this teach us about faith?
- 3. “In order that they might obtain a better resurrection” –
 - a. Again, this happened frequently.
 - b. What does this mean?
 - c. What does it teach us about faith?
- F. Hebrews 11:36 is a complete sentence.
 - 1. Read this verse again, very carefully. How would you describe the effect of these conditions? The atmosphere they create?
 - 2. What does this teach us about the nature of faith?
- G. Hebrews 11:37-38 form a complete sentence which would read as follows: “ **They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were put to death with the sword, they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated**”
 - 1. Hebrews 11:37 describes two kinds of persecutions – death and hardship.
 - a. DEATH – What does it tell you when people resort to such outlandish ways of killing believers?
 - b. HARDSHIP – What do you learn about their situation from this last expression of persecution?
 - 2. Hebrews 11:38 is the conclusion of the sentence – Hebrews 11:37, 38.
 - a. How would you explain the phrase, “Men of whom the world is not worthy”?
 - b. Explain what the author is attempting to convey by the statement about their wanderings?
 - 3. What does this teach us about the nature of faith?
- H. Hebrews 11:39, 40 form a single complete sentence.
 - 1. Hebrews 11:39 describes a situation which applies to every illustration in this chapter.
 - a. What is it?
 - b. What does it mean?
 - 2. Hebrews 11:40, the concluding segment of this sentence, attempts an explanation – why those persecuted believers were dealt with as described in 11:39.
 - a. What did he mean by the phrase, “God having provided some better thing for us”?
 - b. What did he mean by the use of the word “perfect”?
 - c. What did he mean by the phrase, “Apart from us they should not be made perfect”?
- I. CHAPTER SUMMARY – List the things you have learned about faith in this chapter.

STUDY OF CHAPTER 11B

MORE SPECIFIC FAITHFUL

HEBREWS 11:17-40

There are four paragraphs in Hebrews 17-40. On the following table you will find a brief summary of each of these paragraphs.

11:17-22	By Faith- Abraham, Isaac and Jacob
11:23-29	By faith – Moses and the Exodus
11:30-31	By faith – Jericho
11:32-40	By faith – Hall of fame

HEBREWS 11:17-22 - BY FAITH- ABRAHAM, ISAAC AND JACOB

**There are four complete sentences in this paragraph.*

“By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten son;” Hebrews 11:17

“BY FAITH ABRAHAM WHEN HE WAS TESTED”

In the Greek text, the word translated “by faith” is in the dative case. This would always be translated “in faith.” We need to establish what the difference would be:

- A. The word “by” suggests a means of accomplishment.
- B. The word “in” suggests an atmosphere; an arena in which this action takes place.

It appears that “in” is a more accurate translation. In the arena of complete confidence in God, several qualities are expressed which enable the positive result which the author records.

At this point, God had already changed the patriarch’s name from Abram (great father) to Abraham (father of a multitude.) In this process, God had assured Abraham that Isaac, the son born in his extreme old age, would be the key to his huge lineage. To test this situation, God told Abraham to sacrifice Isaac to God. In at least two ways, this did not make sense to Abraham:

- A. This is the son through whom God promised to bring about the huge lineage for Abraham. That promise by God could not be fulfilled if Abraham sacrificed Isaac as God commanded him to do.
- B. The worship of the idol Molech required that the worshipper sacrifice his first-born son to this idol. Such a sacrifice, however, was strictly forbidden for Abraham and his lineage.

The word translated “tested” is (πειραζόμενος) which means to test; to learn the nature or character of someone by submitting them to strong, difficult experiences in order to strengthen their faith and demonstrate the level of their commitment. God tests; Satan does not. On the other hand, temptation exposes the person to intense difficulty in order to destroy their faith. Satan tempts; God does not. It is no surprise that God will seek to strengthen our relationship with Him through allowing the temptation which Satan will mount against us. The same experience can often be both a test and a temptation.

“OFFERED UP ISAAC”

The word translated “offered” is (προσενήνοχεν). There is no doubt that the author meant to describe offering a sacrifice. The word he used, however means to present before the throne. It is the word used to describe offered prayer. The form of this word is perfect tense. This tense identifies completed action. The problem here is that Abraham did not actually sacrifice his son Isaac. So, why did he use the word that describes completed action? The text does not explain, but it appears that the author is presenting the idea that in the mind of Abraham, Isaac was already sacrificed.

“AND HE WHO HAD RECEIVED THE PROMISES”

The word translated “received” is (ἀναδεξάμενος) which means to be the recipient. The form of this word is aorist participle and would be emphatically translated “was receiving.” The word translated “promises” is (ἐπαγγελίας) which is well translated.

“WAS OFFERING UP HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON”

The word translated “was offering” is (προσέφερεν) which is the word we saw earlier. The form of this word is imperfect tense which identifies action going on in past time. One would literally translate it, “he was offering.” The words translated “his only begotten son” are literally translated “the only born.”

“it was he to whom it was said, “IN ISAAC YOUR DESCENDANTS SHALL BE CALLED.”” Hebrews 11:18

“IT WAS HE TO WHOM IT WAS SAID”

We are now dealing with repetition. The ideas are repeated in order to increase the emphasis the author wishes to increase. Again, the author is writing to Jewish believers for whom none of this would be new information. They knew each story in careful detail.

This portion is presented with serious emphasis. The Greek text would literally read, “To whom it was spoken.” The word translated “it was spoken” is (ἐλαλήθη). The meaning of which was carefully translated. The form of this word is aorist tense which adds very serious emphasis. This statement was extremely important. When two people sat down to prepare a covenant, the one making the covenant must speak the exact words of the covenant. Nothing was written down. Even today, two Jewish businessmen make an agreement, the words are agreed upon, but there is no paper trail. God promised Abraham that Isaac would be the one through whom His irrevocable covenant would be carried out. That covenant could not be broken.

“IN ISAAC YOUR DESCENDANTS SHALL BE CALLED.”

The wording of this covenant, as recorded in the Greek testament, are, “In Isaac will be called seed to you.” The word translated “will be called” is (κληθήσεται) which means to call; to name a person as in this instance. The word translated “descendants” is (σπέρμα) which means lineage; posterity. The author has identified the dilemma that Abraham faced:

- A. God said that Abraham’s lineage would come through Isaac.
- B. Now, God told Abraham to kill Isaac who was not married and had no son to carry on the family lineage.
- C. Frankly, it could not possibly make any sense at all to Abraham.

The author intentionally used this illustration to point out that in every impossible situation, God is able and willing to make a way for us to experience His omnipotence and changelessness.

“He considered that God is able to raise people even from the dead, from which he also received him back as a type.” Hebrews 11:19

“HE CONSIDERED THAT GOD IS ABLE”

The author will now let us glimpse at Abraham’s dealing with this dilemma. This is not flipping the coin to see what should be done.

The word translated “considered” is (λογισάμενος) which means to regard something as true; to have certainty about that which has not yet happened. The form of this word is, again, aorist participle, which indicates:

- A. AORIST TENSE – a unique means to add serious emphasis to the statement.
- B. PARTICIPLE – this identifies ongoing action.
- C. One should emphatically translate the phrase, “having regarded.”

STUDY OF CHAPTER 11B

The Greek text reads, “to raise power the God. In English, we would express this awkward order as “THE God power from the dead to raise.” To be honest, this is as ridiculous as Noah appeared when he built an ark and preached about a flood in a mountainous area.

On several occasions in this epistle, our English translations read “God,” while the Greek text reads “THE God.” This is an important distinction for the recipients in this area. It is a way to clearly state that there is no other God. The unbelievers in this area worshipped a long list of deities.

“TO RAISE PEOPLE EVEN FROM THE DEAD”

The Greek text cryptically reads, “From the dead the God power to raise.” The word translated “raise” is (ἐγείρειν) which means to cause someone to live again after having once died. This is a very precise position and would cause great distress among the majority Gnostics who lived in the area. This is because they did not believe that Jesus was deity and the thought of Him rising from the dead would seem preposterous to them.

Observe that the author wrote, “from the dead.” Our translators have added the word “men” or “people” but the Greek text contains nothing like this. This is an important distinction. If he had written that God was able to raise His Son from the dead, this would be power limited to Jesus alone. When the author writes, “The God has power to raise from the dead,” he has made a much broader statement. It is a claim that God can do this with anyone. He can!

“FROM WHICH HE ALSO RECEIVED HIM BACK”

The word translated “received” is (ἐκομίσατο). This is more than saying that he received his son back. The word means to cause someone to experience something on the basis of what that person has already done. Abraham did receive Isaac back, but the author is stressing that this is because of what Abraham had already done. Receiving Isaac was God’s Gift to Abraham because of his unflinching obedience growing out of his total trust in God’s greatness.

“AS A TYPE.”

The words translated “as a type” are (ἐν-παραβολῇ) which mean “in a type; a symbol.” It is an expression not to be understood literally. It is as though Isaac died and was resurrected. It is also a “type” of Jesus’ dying and being resurrected. This is what the author had in mind.

“By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau, even regarding things to come.” Hebrews 11:20

“BY FAITH ISAAC BLESSED JACOB AND ESAU”

Verse 20 is a complete sentence. As you can see, the author is generally moving from Abraham to Isaac; from one illustration to another in chronological order.

As in each illustration, the author identified that this is “in faith.” He is reporting on the actions of Isaacs. Though the English text omits it, the Greek text includes the word (καὶ) which in this instance would be translated “also.” It is a way to say what is being described in this sentence parallels what happened in the previous sentence. It is like saying, “In the same way.” Again, our English text reads, “Jacob and Esau.” The Greek text, however, reads, “THE Jacob and THE Esau.” The two additions of the word “the” accomplishes two things:

- A. They add serious emphasis to the statement.
- B. It is an expression of respect as well.

The word translated “blessed” is (εὐλόγησεν) which means to ask God to bestow divine favor upon someone. The form of this word is aorist tense which is intended to add serious emphasis to the statement.

“EVEN REGARDING THINGS TO COME.”

This phrase is a translation of a single word. The word is (μελλόντων) which means to deal with an event which is future to some other event.

As you reflect upon this statement, one must ask, Which personal qualities are required to take such a stand? It requires the courage to focus one’s attention upon God rather than upon conditions in which they

find themselves. It requires the courage to refuse to be bound by the dictates of the culture. It requires the courage to confront upcoming events that he couldn't identify at this point.

“By faith Jacob, as he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff.” Hebrews 11:21

“BY FAITH JACOB”

Verse 21 is a complete sentence. The word translated “by faith” is in the dative case which promotes personal advantage. As indicated earlier, “in faith” would be a preferable translation. Keep in mind that Jacob was a man of two reputations. He is most often remembered for cheating his brother out of the inheritance. He was also known for the quality of his dependence upon God. It is not surprising that the author chose Jacob as one of the illustrations of great faith.

“AS HE WAS DYING”

The word “as” does not appear in the Greek text. It is necessary, however, in the English translation to explain the Greek – “he was dying.” The form of this word is present participle – both forms together emphatically present ongoing action. It is a way to say that he was in the process of dying.

“BLESSED EACH OF THE SONS OF JOSEPH”

One might wonder why Jacob was pronouncing the paternal blessing on Joseph's sons. In that culture, as long as a man lived, he maintained control over each male person in his lineage. The grand-fatherly blessing was considered to be the fatherly blessing that each male member of the family received.

“AND WORSHIPPED”

The word translated “worshipped” is (προσκύνησεν) which means to express, by attitude and action, an allegiance and regard for deity. Like the word translated “blessed” the form of this word is aorist tense. The author added serious emphasis by the use of this form.

We must ask ourselves what there is about this blessing and worship that requires such faith. First, life had not always been easy for Isaac and his family. He lived in a culture that did not take favorably to his worship of Jehovah. (Idol worship always requires the worship of everyone in the area lest the idol become angry because not everyone worshipped.) Nevertheless, Isaac sought God's blessing upon his lineage and glorified God even in his struggles.

“LEANING ON THE TOP OF HIS STAFF.”

The word “leaning” does not appear in the Greek text. We must hasten to add, however, that it is clearly understood to be important to our understanding. The word translated “staff” is (ρᾶβδου) which means walking stick. In our situation we would use the word “cane.”

Again, we must ask what personal qualities of character are required to do as Isaac did: Worship, in such a situation, requires great humility. The fact that he needed the staff for support says something about his declining strength. This speaks well of the inner strength he possessed.

“By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the exodus of the sons of Israel, and gave orders concerning his bones.” Hebrews 11:22

“BY FAITH JOSEPH”

No biblical list of men of faith would be complete without the name of Joseph. There are many experiences in Joseph's life that would require great faith. This raises a question: Why did our author choose this expression of faith rather than any of the others? All of these difficult experiences required great faith on Joseph's part. The author, by his choice, is saying that this experience required a much greater expression of faith than any or all the others.

“WHEN HE WAS DYING”

The word translated “dying” is (τελευτῶν) which means the end of life. The form of this word is present participle. By this means, the author presented this as a process of dying rather than a sudden death. The word “when” does not appear in the Greek text.

“MADE MENTION OF THE EXODUS”

The word translated “made mention of” is (ἐμνημόευσεν) which means to remember and make mention of. The form of this word is aorist tense, adding serious emphasis. One might also translate this “remembering.”

The word translated “exodus” is (ἐξόδου) which means “the way out; their departure. The Genesis account of this experience (Genesis 50:23-26) is the closing account of the story of Joseph as well as the book of Genesis. It appears that this took place immediately prior to the death of Joseph. Joseph had been brilliant and powerful in Egypt, but it was now clear that the situation of the people of Israel was increasingly difficult.

Joseph, like every Jewish son, had been told that the place for the people of Israel was in Canaan, not in Egypt. He would have no idea how this would take place, but faith clung to the fact that Canaan would be their home, no matter what current situations may appear to be.

“OF THE SONS OF ISRAEL”

The phrase “the sons of Israel” was a way to refer to all Jewish people. The name Israel (Genesis 32:28) was the new name given to Jacob. To speak of the “sons of Israel” was to identify them with the lineage of Abraham; the people of divine promise.

“AND GAVE ORDERS”

The use of the word “and” here ties together two equally important ideas:

- A. Reminding them of the Exodus to return to Israel
- AND

- B. Gave orders concerning his bones.

The word translated “gave orders” is more than an instruction. It is to give an order based upon the speaker’s authority to issue such a command. The form of this word is aorist tense which adds very strong emphasis.

“CONCERNING HIS BONES.”

When the author wrote about Joseph, concerning his (Joseph’s) bones, he made a distinction between bones which are part of a living body and bones from which the flesh has already decomposed.

Think about what Joseph’s command meant to the members of his family. He knew, from personal experience, that it was a long way back to Canaan. It was making a monumental demand to insist that they carry his bones back to Israel. They had to “travel light” as much as possible and this would definitely make that difficult if not impossible.

What qualities does the text stress in order to carry out these experiences “in faith”?

HEBREWS 11:23-29 – BY FAITH – MOSES AND EXODUS

There are six complete sentences in this paragraph. Verse 23 is a complete sentence.

“By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king’s edict.” Hebrews 11:23

“BY FAITH MOSES”

Verse 23 is a complete sentence. Though the sentence begins “By faith Moses” it does not deal with the faith expressed by Moses. We should keep in mind that Moses was given this name by Pharaoh’s daughter, (Exodus 2:10) not by his father.

“WHEN HE WAS BORN”

The word “when” does not appear in the Greek text. It was added to the English text to bring accuracy to the form of this verb. The word translated “he was born” is (γεννηθείς) which means to give birth. The form of this word is aorist participle. The aorist tense adds emphasis while the participle describes ongoing action. It might better be translated, having been born.”

“WAS HIDDEN FOR THREE MONTHS”

Moses was hidden for three months. The word translated “he was hidden” is (ἐκρύβη) which means to cause something to be invisible. The form of this word is necessarily aorist tense like the previous verb.

We need to look at what it meant to hide a baby boy. First, this is contradictory to a decree issued by the dictator, Pharaoh. The punishment for violating any royal decree was death to all concerned. Such an infraction would bring down the anger of the Pharaoh on the whole tribe. The parents had to know that they were dealing with a fatal situation.

Next, this decree was so important that when a baby was born, an inspection took place, just to make sure that these Jews were not breaking the law. (The text does not say this, but it is doubtful if anyone could possibly believe otherwise.) Every adult would know full well that a baby’s crying does not begin and end on command. They had to know that their decision was destined to be discovered. Even if they succeeded in hiding their babe-in-arms, how would they hide their three year old boy who wanted to run and play. They had to know that this absurd idea could not possibly have a positive result. That is the picture that our author has painted.

“BY HIS PARENTS”

The word “parents” does not appear in the Greek text. The word in the Greek text is (πατέρων) which is plural and means “fatherS” In that culture, the father controlled the lives and direction of every member of the family. The fact that this word is plural certainly means that contrary to the culture, both parents were in agreement to take this life-threatening action in an effort to keep their son from being sacrificed to the Nile River.

“BECAUSE THEY SAW THAT HE WAS A BEAUTIFUL CHILD”

The word translated “because” is (διότι) which identifies a cause or reason. This word points to instrumentality. It was intended to explain why Moses’ parents took this seemingly impossible step.

This report describes the events of Exodus 2:2. Interestingly, in the Exodus account it states that “SHE saw that he was beautiful, SHE hid him three months.” In Near eastern families, even today, such a decision would be the father’s choice. The word translated “they saw” is (εἶδον) which properly means to see. The form of the word is third person plural and must be translated “THEY saw.” The tense is aorist and this places unusual emphasis on the statement. The word translated “beautiful” is a bit misleading. The word is (ἁσπεῖον) which really means “well-formed.” There are several words which are translated “child” in our English texts. This word, (παιδίον) identifies a small child, but stresses the fact that this is one’s immediate offspring with all the emotion that this embraces.

“AND THEY WERE NOT AFRAID OF THE KING’S EDICT”

The word translated “and” ties together two or more ideas of equal status. That is exactly what the author intended here. The word translated “not” is (οὐκ) which is a higher level negative emphasis. The form of the word translated “they feared” is aorist tense which also heightens the emphasis on the statement. The word translated “edict” is (διάταγμα) which means command or decree. The word translated “king” is (βασιλέως)

Which means the absolute ruler of an area. His position would seem to be more like a dictator which carries a more negative implication.

This is unusual. Pharaoh had absolute authority and the consequence of rejecting his demand was instantaneous death. Still these parents were determined to pursue their goal which had no real hope of

ultimate success. It is important to have faith, but it will never take place without the inner quality of courage. Faith, in a situation like this, will only become visible when this courage rests upon a determined perseverance. Courage becomes a foundation for an expression of fearlessness.

“By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter,” Hebrews 11:24

Hebrews 11:24-26A form a complete sentence.

“BY FAITH MOSES”

As the author chose the leaders of the Jewish people for illustrations of his message, it was absolutely essential that he include Moses. At this point, only Abraham held a place of greater honor than Moses possessed.

“WHEN HE HAD GROWN UP”

The words translated “he had grown up” would be literally translated “having become great.” The form of the word translated “having become” is aorist participle. This identification is extremely important. The author, as the recipients would surely know, is not dealing with Moses’ mature size, but with what had happened. His early life spent in his parent’s home was steeped in the knowledge and worship of Jehovah. His training during the rest of his youth was in total preparation to be the next Pharaoh of Egypt. He lived in the lap of luxury while his Jewish family lived in burdensome squalor. Moses was knowingly turning his back on the greatest possible life of luxury and power.

“REFUSED TO BE CALLED THE SON OF PHARAOH’S DAUGHTER.”

The word translated “refused” is (ἤρνησατο) which means to refuse to agree or consent to something. He lived in the palace: he trained to be the next Pharaoh because the current Pharaoh had no son at this time and because he had been accepted as the son of Pharaoh’s daughter. This put him in line to take the throne one day. Moses refused to live a lie. It was not that he just did not want to be called her son. He was making it clear that he was not a part of the royal family. This was a very serious move, one for which the current Pharaoh was so angry about this that he sought to kill Moses.

“choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin,” Hebrews 11:25

Hebrews 11:25 is part of the complete sentence – 11:24-26A.

“CHOOSING RATHER TO ENDURE ILL-TREATMENT”

The word translated “choosing” means to show concern for; to choose for the purpose of showing special concern for something. Like most of the other verbs in this paragraph, the form is aorist participle and would be translated “having chosen.” Interestingly, the word translated “rather” is (μᾶλλον) which identifies a contrast. The author, in verse 24, gave one negative statement. He used the word “rather” to indicate the coming of two very positive statements in the balance of this sentence. The word translated “endure ill-treatment with” is (συγκακουχεῖσθαι) which means to share the suffering; to suffer together. The form is present tense and would be translated “to be sharing ill-treatment.

“WITH THE PEOPLE OF GOD”

Once more, the Greek text is more emphatic than the English translations: The English text reads, “The people of God.” The Greek text, however, translates, “the people of THE God.” Our author has done this several times. It is a way to accomplish at least two things:

A. It adds serious emphasis to the sentence.

B. It stresses the fact that there is only one God and Jehovah is that one.

This was a very important message in this very pagan area. We must ask ourselves, what does it mean to be “the people of THE God”?

The Superior Jesus

- A. It is to stand for God alone in a culture that views life differently.
- B. It is to have an active lifestyle governed only by God's direction which the culture would reject.
- C. It is to share a lifestyle which God alone affirms – a life of holy commitment.

“THAN TO ENJOY”

The word translated “than” is (ἤ) which means than. It is a comparative form that ultimately identifies two or more things that are different from each other. In this instance, the comparative issues are:

- A. Share ill treatment with God's people
THAN or “OR.”

- B. Enjoy passing pleasures of sin

We must identify the fact that whether this is comparison or contrast, the final result is that the issues are the direct opposites of each other.

The word translated “enjoy” is (ἀπόλαυσιν) which means an enjoyment based upon the satisfaction of your desire. There is no consideration of the consequences of this pursuit.

“THE PASSING PLEASURES OF SIN”

The translation of this phrase is a bit awkward. It literally reads, “to have temporary enjoyment of sin.”

The word translated “passing” is (πρόσκαιρον) which is a compound word:

- A. (πρός) which means from
- B. (καίρος) which means specific time, not time on the clock.

The word translated “of sin” is (ἁμαρτίας) which means to act contrary to the law of God. There is some very important information provided by this contrast:

- A. To suffer ill-treatment with God's people is a positive situation, not a negative one
- B. Suffering this ill-treatment is presented as having ongoing ultimate good consequences, not negative ones.
- C. The experiences of sin are temporarily pleasant.
- D. The consequences of sinning are not taken into consideration when people are considering that direction.

“considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; Hebrews 11:26A

This is the closing portion of the complete sentence – Hebrews 11:24-26A

“CONSIDERING THE REPROACH OF CHRIST”

The word “consider” appears here and in 11:19, but there are two different words:

- A. 11:19- (λογισόμενος) which means to hold a view; to have an opinion.
- B. 11:26 – (ἡγησόμενος) which also means to have an opinion, but stresses the evaluation process used in the formation of that opinion. This is a much stronger word.

The author is drawing a comparison/contrast between two positions:

- A. On one side, he carefully scrutinizes the public reproach of Christ
VERSUS

- B. The greater riches of the Egyptian treasury which could one day all be his.

The word translated “reproach” is (ὀνειδισμόν) which means to insult; to speak disparagingly of an individual in a manner which is not justified. This is one of the ways these believers were being publically persecuted. Once again, the author did not write, “the reproach of Christ.” He wrote of “the reproach of THE Christ” which is much more emphatic.

“GREATER RICHES THAN THE TREASURES OF EGYPT”

This conclusion to his search does not make sense in terms of logic. No one could logically say that they would rather be insulted than to be the richest man in the world. That is what the author is saying that Moses concluded.

The author was aware that this made no logical sense at all. He therefore followed with an explanation.

for he was looking to the reward.” Hebrews 11:26B

Hebrews 11:26B is a complete sentence.

“FOR HE WAS LOOKING”

The use of the word translated “for” (γάρ) indicates that an explanation is forthcoming. The word translated “he was looking” is (ἀπέβλεπεν) which means to focus upon; to fix your attention on a particular issue. The form of this word is imperfect tense – action going on in past time. This is the reason for the translation, “he was looking.

“TO THE REWARD.”

The word translated “reward” is (μισθοποδοσίαν) which means the ultimate return on an investment of effort or money. Frankly, the insults did not logically appear better than the Egyptian treasury, but that is not what Moses was evaluating. He was comparing the ultimate repay of pursuing the wealth and luxury of Egypt, as opposed to being obedient to the call of God to endure current disfavor, but to experience the ultimate favor and blessing for obedience to God.

Again, we must ask ourselves what qualities of character are required to act by faith in this manner.

“By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; Hebrews 11:27A

“BY FAITH HE LEFT EGYPT”

The word translated “he left” is (κατέλιπεν) which means more than simply leaving a place. It includes leaving a place, but includes great finality and emphasis about leaving it for good. The form of this word is aorist tense which adds even more emphasis. This statement makes it clear that Moses left Egypt with the strong conviction that he would never return.

“NOT FEARING THE WRATH OF THE KING”

The word translated “not” is (μὴ) which is a low level negative emphasis. The word translated “fearing” is (φοβηθεῖς) which means to be extremely afraid. This word is the root of our word “phobia”. The form of the word is aorist participle which adds serious emphasis and presents action that is continually ongoing. The word translated “wrath” is (θυμὸν) which means intense anger.

This presents a serious problem. If you look at the Exodus account (Ex. 2:11-16) there are some obvious facts:

1. Pharaoh was very angry with Moses and tried to kill him, even though Moses was situated as next in line for the throne.
2. Moses fled from the presence of Pharaoh and settled in the land of Midian which was at least 200 miles away from Goshen.

The issue is simple:

1. Pharaoh tried to kill Moses.
2. Moses fled about 200 miles away.
3. Hebrews 11:27 says Moses was not afraid.

On the face of this, it does not seem to make sense to say he was not afraid. First, there is no problem with the text and the careful translation of the text does not give us additional information.

We firmly believe that the Scriptures, in the original language, are infallible. Because of this I must take the position that the text is true. Can a person flee without being afraid? Yes they can. Several times

in World War II the retreat which an army made was an expression of their strength and courage and ended up in strategic victory.

for he endured, as seeing Him who is unseen.” Hebrews 11:27B

“FOR HE ENDURED”

The use of the word translated “for” indicates that an explanation is about to be given. Indeed, it appears that this is an attempt to explain the situation with which we were just dealing.

The word translated “he endured” is (ἐκάρτερησεν) which means to persevere; to persist in an undertaking. The author was saying that Moses’ flight was not an act of fear, but one of perseverance. The form of the word translated “persevered” is aorist tense which adds even greater emphasis to the statement.

“AS SEEING HIM WHO IS UNSEEN”

The Greek text literally reads, “as seeing unseen.” We need to look carefully at this statement. The word translated “seeing” is (ὁρῶν) which means to see with the eyes. The form of this word is present participle. Both of these forms identify ongoing action and provide increased emphasis. The word translated “unseen” is (ἀόρατον) which is the same root word as translated “seen” but with the letter (α) added to the beginning of the word. This is a way they expressed that it is not what the previous word was.

The translation, “seeing Him who is unseen” is more an interpretation than a translation. The word “him” does not appear in the Greek text. It is possible that our author was thinking about God in this statement. That, however, presents another problem because God is a spirit and has no visible form. Though it cannot be substantiated, it seems similarly that the author has used the word translated “see” to describe the idea of coming to an understanding. We cannot be certain. Whichever the case may be, the author has made it clear that the motivation was not a fear of Pharaoh, but a reverence for God which caused Moses to act.

As the text says, “he endured.” It takes a deep level of this perseverance to take action like this. Courage is an integral part of action taken to establish the right even when risks are high. There is a certain determination involved when one turns their back on luxury and power in order to do the right. Moses did that.

“By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood, so that he who destroyed the firstborn would not touch them.” Hebrews 11:28

“BY FAITH HE KEPT THE PASSOVER”

Verse 28 is a complete sentence. Observe that in this sentence the author identified two things that Moses did “by faith.” First, he kept the Passover. The word translated “he kept” is (πεποίνηκεν) which means to perform; to carry out. The form is perfect tense which identifies action totally completed. The word translated “Passover” is (πάσχα) which means Passover feast or festival. The author does not make it clear if he is dealing with the spattering of blood on the lintels and door posts, or the later celebration which initiated the annual remembrance of this miraculous event, even today. Though the text is not clear on this point, it seems that the author is referring to the tenth plague and accompanying events.

“AND THE SPRINKLING OF BLOOD”

The phrase “the sprinkling of blood” is a reference to the sacrificing of a lamb in preparation for the 10th. Plague, and smearing the lamb’s blood on the door-posts and lintels of most Jewish homes in Egypt so that the first-born son in that home would not die as the angel of death passed through the city. This is the second thing that Moses did “by faith” in this verse.

“SO THAT HE WHO DESTROYED THE FIRSTBORN”

The use of the word (ἵνα) which means “so that,” indicates that a statement of purpose is about to be provided. The rest of this phrase, translated “he who destroyed the first-borns” in the Greek text it translates, “the destroying the first-borns.” The word translated “destroying” is (ὀλοθρεύων) which means to cause

complete destruction. The form of this word is present participle. Both of these forms identify ongoing action and thus add strong emphasis to the statement.

“MIGHT NOT TOUCH THEM.”

The word translated “might touch” is (θίγη) which means to touch something/someone. The form of this word is aorist subjunctive. Like much of this chapter, the aorist tense was used to add strong emphasis to the idea. The subjunctive is the mood of possibility. This is the reason for the use of the word “might.” The word translated “not” is “mae” (μή) which is a medium level negative indicator. This gives us an insight into Moses’ and the people’s concern. If the author wanted to speak of this situation as absolutely certain, he could have used the perfect tense, but he chose the subjunctive to emphasize the element of uncertainty.

As you reflect on this verse, it is necessary to keep in mind that Moses was thinking and deciding not just for himself, but for all Israel as well. It would take great courage for Moses to initiate this for just his own family. To set this in motion for all Israel would take a far greater quality of courage on Moses’ part. To lead all Israel in this delicate experience required great leadership ability. Having made the decision to follow God’s instructions, it required tremendous inner strength and patience to await the time of fulfillment. It may have been only hours, but it had to seem like years.

“By faith they passed through the Red Sea as though they were passing through dry land; and the Egyptians, when they attempted it, were drowned.” Hebrews 11:29

“BY FAITH THEY PASSED THROUGH THE RED SEA”

The word translated “passed through” is (διέβησαν) which means to move from one side of a valley or waterway to another side. The form of this word is aorist tense and conjured up images which added unusual emphasis to what Moses said and did. Keep in mind, that the Red Sea was a constantly moving body of water which when God opened it, the waters piled up threateningly on that side. Add to this the fact that Israel, more than any nation bordering the Mediterranean Sea, was frightened of any body of water. Exodus 14 tells the story of Moses telling Israel, “Do not fear; stand still and see the salvation of the Lord.” Most of the people had to think that Moses was beside himself to say such a thing. To see Moses stretch out his rod over the sea to divide it would have been comical had it not been for the terror that gripped their lives as they watched. Faith enabled Moses to, against all human reason, expect God to do the impossible and urge a mistrusting nation to join him in that expectation.

“AS THOUGH THEY WERE PASSING THROUGH DRY LAND”

The literal translation of the Greek phrase is “as through very dry ground.” The use of the word “as” tells us that the author is making a comparison. The elements of this comparison are these:

A. The bottom of the red Sea as they walked on it.

AS

B. The dry, parched ground they had been walking on to get to this spot.

It was not the same, but it was like it.

Put yourself in the place of Moses and the people of Israel.

1. The Egyptian army was closing in on them.
2. They see the Red Sea begin to open up and stand in a high heap.
3. They can now walk through that passage as if it were as dry as the desert through which they had come.

“AND THE EGYPTIANS”

The word “and” always ties two or more equally important ideas together. It does that in this instance. The two areas are:

A. Israel went through the Red Sea.

AND

B. The Egyptian army tried to do the same thing.

“WHEN THEY ATTEMPTED IT”

The Greek text literally translates, “Which the Egyptians attempted.” The form of the word translated “attempted” is, again, aorist participle and would be very emphatically translated “were attempting.”

The author is drawing a contrast by first showing the Egyptian actions were exactly the same as those of the Jews.

“WERE DROWNED”

The word translated “drowned” is (κατασπόθησαν) and means to be swallowed up. Once more, the author used the aorist tense to place special emphasis on the statement.

Earlier it was indicated that this was a contrast. It was accomplished by pointing out that the actions of both Israel and Egypt were the same, but the final result was totally the opposite – Israel survived; the Egyptians drowned. The text in Exodus does not deal with the issue, but when this started, Pharaoh was leading his forces. It does not say whether he drowned with his army. We cannot say for sure. We do know that a new Pharaoh was appointed. We also know that Egypt never again rose to the pinnacle of power that they enjoyed during the 400 years during which the Israelites were their slaves. Our feeling, though it can't be confirmed, is that Pharaoh died with his troops.

What does it take to tell Israel to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord when you can already see the dust from your pursuing enemy on the horizon? It takes unusual faith to be sure, but that faith rests upon unusual courage.

HEBREWS 11:30, 31 – BY FAITH JERICHO

*There are two complete sentences in this paragraph. Verse 30 is a complete sentence.

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

The city of Jericho was located on a well-travelled road. The walls surrounding this ancient city were virtually impenetrable. We know, for instance, that Rahab's home was in the city wall. This gives us an idea of just how thick the walls were. Today the foundations of these walls are still in place and it is huge. As one of the oldest inhabited cities in the world, it had a phenomenal reputation. Though the city was located on a wide plain in the Jordan valley. The outer and inner way of the great city rose to phenomenal heights. Indeed, it was necessary for Rehab to lower the Israelite spies by a very long rope.

“BY FAITH THE WALLS OF JERICHO FELL DOWN”

This is one more situation that took place “by faith.” It should be noted that the word translated “walls” is (τείχη) which identifies a particularly strong wall. The word translated “OF Jericho” is in the Genitive case which includes the word “of” and is the case which identifies possessiveness. The word translated “fell down” is (ἐπείσαν) which means to fall flat from a standing position. It describes a cataclysmic event. The form of this word is aorist tense which we see repeatedly in this chapter.

“AFTER THEY HAD BEEN CIRCLED FOR SEVEN DAYS”

The word translated “after they had been encircled” is (κυκλωθέντα) which means to go around. The form of this word is, again, aorist participle and would be emphatically translated “having been encircled”. The word translated “for” is (ἐπὶ) which is almost always translated “on” or “upon.” The words translated “seven days” are well translated. The way this is written makes it impossible to determine whether the encircling took place all day long for each of seven days or if it was one circle of the wall each day for seven days. Though we cannot be dogmatic, it would seem to be one circle each day.

“By faith Rahab the harlot did not perish along with those who were disobedient, after she had welcomed the spies in peace.” Hebrews 11:31

Verse 31 is a complete sentence.

“BY FAITH RAHAB THE HARLOT”

We mentioned earlier that these illustrations of faithful expression were basically reported in chronological order. This seems to be an exception. The walls of Jericho falling, (Hebrews 11:31), is reported in Joshua 6:20. The mention of Rahab, (Hebrews 11:31), is first mentioned in Joshua 2:1, but the crucial part of her story is found in Joshua 6:22. In this respect, the stories do appear in chronological order.

Questions arise concerning a prostitute living by faith. First, Rahab is referred to as a prostitute in Hebrews 11:31 and James 2:25 and there are no problems recorded with the writings of these texts. Second, she is mentioned in Joshua 2:1 and 6:22-25 as a Harlot. Jewish writers, however, refer to her as an “inn-keeper.” We have no way to certify this situation beyond this information. We can be certain that the Bible takes a clear stand that sexual promiscuity is evil. It is also clear that God does not hear the prayers of an evil person.

What we do know is that the author accurately identified her position as being one of confidence in God which expressed itself in courageous actions that placed her life in jeopardy by city officials.

“DID NOT PERISH ALONG WITH”

This statement is most emphatic for two reasons:

- A. The word translated “not” is (οὐ) which expresses strong emphasis.
- B. The form of the word translated “she perished” is aorist tense which is used to add strong emphasis.

The word translated “perish” is (συναπώλετο) which is a compound word:

- A. (σύν) means with
- B. (ἀπολετο) means to be destroyed.
- C. Together these words describe being destroyed together.

“THOSE WHO WERE DISOBEDIENT”

The word translated “disobedient” is (ἀπειθήσασιν) which means to disobey; to refuse to comply. The form of the word is aorist participle like much of the rest of this chapter. These forms do two things:

- A. Aorist tense adds serious emphasis.
- B. Participial form describes ongoing action.
- C. The word would be translated disobeying which identifies a lifestyle.

We need to identify the people who were designated as “those who were disobedient.” The author does not explain this, but the rest of the sentence seems to point to the pagan residents of the city of Jericho, who did not believe in God.

“AFTER SHE HAD WELCOMED THE SPIES IN PEACE”

The word translated “after she had welcomed” is (δεξομένη) which means to accept the presence of a person with friendliness. The form of this word is, again, aorist participle and would be emphatically translated “having welcomed.”

The word translated “spies” is (κατασκοπούς) which means to observe secretly. The word translated “peace” is (εἰρήνης) which describes a set of favorable circumstances.

This is the end of the second section of the chapter in which the author carefully described eleven more situations in which ancient people expressed the depth of their faith by their courageous actions which in each instance defied logical thought and action.

Hebrews 11:32-40 – BY FAITH – HALL OF FAME

* There are six complete sentences in this paragraph.

In these verses, the author will identify six men by name and host of others by position or experience. You will observe that when he gives the name of the person, he does not identify their act of faith. Again, where he lists the position or tragic experience, he does not provide the name. We must keep in mind that the author is writing to Jewish people and one would assume that they would know the details of these well documented experiences which the author has not identified.

“And what more shall I say? Hebrews 11:32A

The use of the word “and” ties this sentence to the previous one. The translation, “what more” is first of all a good translation and secondly it identifies a coming question. The word translated “shall I say” is (λέγω) which means to speak. The form of this word, however, is present subjunctive.

- A. PRESENT TENSE – describes ongoing action.
- B. SUBJUNCTIVE MOOD – is the mood of possibilities. It describes what “might be.”
- C. One could translate the word, “MIGHT be saying.”
- D. Observe that this is posed as a question.

For time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets,” Hebrews 11:32B

The use of the word translated “for” indicates that an explanation is forthcoming. In this case, his explanation has to do with his question, “What more shall I say?” In this portion of verse 32, he will identify six men and the prophets. As indicated earlier, the author does not identify what these people did by faith. In some cases, there are several possibilities and the recipients would know them all.

We do not know what specific incidents the author had in mind, but we will list at least one incident for each one listed.

- A. GIDEON – in Judges, chapter six, Gideon destroyed his father’s altar to Baal and the Asherah. For this he would have been killed if discovered.
- B. BARAK – In judges 4, 5 the Canaanites were severely oppressing Israel and the outlook looked very poor, Still, at Deborah’s instruction, he led the army of Israel and routed Sisera and the Canaanites. Barak’s trust in God had its limitations – he would only go to battle if Deborah would go with him.
- C. SAMSON – In Judges 13, there are several good and some very unfortunate reports. In Judges 16, there is a mighty picture. He was called to the place where their god Dagon was worshipped in order to make fun of him. Samson called upon God to enable him to destroy the building and the leadership of his captors. The Philistines never survived this devastation.
- D. JEPHTHAH – In Judges 11, (if Judges 11 is in chronological order, then this is a break in the chronological order of the reports in Hebrews 11) Jephthah led the battle against the Ammonites. All seemed helpless. (11:30) He made a vow to the Lord. It reads, ***“Jephthah made a vow to the LORD and said, “If You will indeed give the sons of Ammon into my hand,” Judges 11:30 “then it shall be that whatever comes out of the doors of my house to meet me when I return in peace from the sons of Ammon, it shall be the LORD’S, and I will offer it up as a burnt offering.”” Judges 11:31***

Observe that he said “whatever”, not “whoever.” We do not know what Jephthah had in mind, but we know he was not thinking about sacrificing a person much less his daughter. In that culture, no member of the family would come out to greet someone approaching their home.

Jephthah expected God to keep His vow and God did deliver the Ammonites into his hands. When Jephthah returned home in victory, he was shocked and stunned when his daughter disregarded the custom and came out to welcome her father. Nevertheless, Jephthah kept his vow and his daughter understood his faithful response.

What does it take to keep an unsuspecting vow when it turns out to be far more costly than anticipated? It took the courage of conviction to fulfill this devastating promise. It took more fortitude than any reasonable man would possess.

“OF DAVID”

There are many experiences in the life of David that would qualify for our attention at this point. In I Samuel 17, the author tells the story of David and Goliath. This giant Philistine was making a mockery of

both God and Israel. David was shocked that King Saul and his entire army were frightened and did nothing to challenge the humiliation set forth by Goliath. Saul was larger than most Israelites, but he was frightened and did nothing. David was a small boy, not a grown man. David had no armor and could not use Saul's weapons, but still he confronted the mocking giant of the Philistines. Goliath made fun of David and tried to kill him. David faced more than death. If he failed, he would die, but the army of Israel would become slaves of the Philistines. David fought Goliath as though it was an even match and finally slew him.

What does it take to face the impossible odds and still overcome the forces of evil? David had unrelenting trust in God and expressed this faith by his courage to stand against impossible odds and persevered against the enemies of God.

“AND SAMUEL”

We tend to think of Samuel as the little boy who mistook the voice of God for that of Eli. That was his boyhood, but you see that same vigor and eagerness to obey when he was a man. As a Judge in Israel, you see the same thing. In I Samuel 13, you see these words:

“therefore I said, ‘Now the Philistines will come down against me at Gilgal, and I have not asked the favor of the LORD.’ So I forced myself and offered the burnt offering.” Samuel said to Saul, “You have acted foolishly; you have not kept the commandment of the LORD your God, which He commanded you, for now the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. “But now your kingdom shall not endure. The LORD has sought out for Himself a man after His own heart, and the LORD has appointed him as ruler over His people, because you have not kept what the LORD commanded you.”” 1 Samuel 13:12–14

Samuel was certainly called of God to be a Judge in Israel. At the same time, Saul had little patience when the details of God's command got into his way.

Saul knew that Samuel had instructed him to wait. Saul evaluated the situation and decided that despite the divine instruction, he felt that the danger of the situation demanded that he act, even contrary to the divine instruction. Samuel knew that Saul had complete power and would not hesitate to use it if he was opposed in any way. Nevertheless, Samuel confronted Saul at the risk of his life.

There is no doubt that Samuel acted in faith. That faith was demonstrated by the courage and tenacity he expressed as he confronted Saul who could have had him killed.

“AND THE PROPHETS”

We must keep in mind that verses 32-34 form a single complete sentence. The author does not give us the name of any prophet whom he had in mind as he wrote these words. This is not surprising since the Jewish recipients knew their Scriptures very well.

“who by faith conquered kingdoms, performed acts of righteousness, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions,” Hebrews 11:33

“WHO BY FAITH CONQUERED KINGDOMS”

In this verse, the author mentions things that happened with the prophets. Up to this point, the author used the word, (πίστει) which our versions translate “by faith.” The form of this word is dative case and would be translated “in faith.”

At this point, however, the author changes his wording to (διὰ-πίστεως) which should be translated “through faith.” The use of this genitive case should indicate that faith was the means by which the prophets accomplished these things.

The word translated “conquered” is (κατηγωνίσαντο) which means victory as the result of a strenuous struggle. The form is aorist tense which once again adds serious emphasis to the statement. We cannot be certain which prophet the author has in mind as he made this statement.

“PERFORMED ACTS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS”

The word translated “performed” is (ἐργάσαντο) which means to work. The form of this word is, again, aorist tense and adds more emphasis to the statement. The word translated “righteousness” is (δικαιοσύνην) which means the act of doing what God requires. Frankly, this could be said about every prophet of God.

“OBTAINED PROMISES”

The word translated “obtained” is (ἐπέτυχον) which means to acquire what is sought after. Once more, the form is aorist tense which increases the already high emphasis. The word translated “promises” is (ἐπαγγελιῶν) which is well translated. Like the previous report, (worked righteousness) this report (obtained promises) could be said of every prophet so identified in Scripture.

“SHUT THE MOUTHS OF LIONS”

The word translated “shut” is (ἐφρξον) which literally means to shut the mouth. Yet again, the form of this word is aorist tense. Fortunately, there are at least two prophets of whom this could be said – Samson and especially Daniel. This prophet’s story is found in Daniel chapter six. The law these enemies prepared was:

“‘All the commissioners of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, the high officials and the governors have consulted together that the king should establish a statute and enforce an injunction that anyone who makes a petition to any god or man besides you, O king, for thirty days, shall be cast into the lions’ den.’ Daniel 6:7 ‘Now, O king, establish the injunction and sign the document so that it may not be changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which may not be revoked.’” Daniel 6:8

The purpose was to find a way to get rid of Daniel when they could find no failure of which to accuse him. It took great courage for Daniel to pray as he had before the law was drafted, rather than hiding and trying to cover up what he was doing. This was also a phenomenal expression of his integrity. He was not going to hide; not going to pretend compliance when he was deeply committed to the worship and service of God and not to the worship of the king.

“quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight.” Hebrews 11:34

“QUENCHED THE POWER OF FIRE”

The word translated “quenched” is (ἐσβεσαν) which means to put out a fire. Once more, the form of this word is aorist tense which adds serious emphasis to a very emphatic statement. The word translated “power” is (δύναμιν) which means the ability to exert force. The word translated fire is (πυρός) which means fire: flames. Fire involved a much greater source of fear and danger for them than it does for most of us. Unfortunately for our understanding we can’t be sure of whom it was that the author had in mind. We do know that this was a very dangerous situation and the unknown prophet was unwilling to be intimidated by it.

“ESCAPED THE EDGE OF THE SWORD”

The word translated “escaped” is (ἐφυγον) which means to flee. The form is once again aorist tense which is very emphatic. The word translated “edge” is (στόματα) which is the word used to identify the mouth, but was also used to describe the sharp edges of a weapon. This is the reason that the word for sword is singular but the word for edges is plural.

As you consider this situation, the names of Elijah and Jeremiah come to mind, but this was a strong possibility for anyone whom God gave a message for a king.

“FROM WEAKNESS WERE MADE STRONG”

The Greek text literally translates, “they were enabled from weakness.” Once more, the word translated “they were empowered” is in the aorist tense bringing a strong emphasis. The word translated “weakness” is (ἀσθενείας) which means limited; to be incapacitated. If you look through the Scriptures, in almost every instance the followers of God acted out of a weakness to defeat and subdue the strong. This situation describes the condition for most every servant of God which is exactly the message the author was trying to convey.

“BECAME MIGHTY IN WAR”

Observe that the text does not read, “They were mighty.” It reads “they became mighty,” which insists that they had not been mighty beforehand. There are two ways to write “they became mighty.” He could have used the present tense. Again, he could do as he did here, use the word we translate “become” and present it in the aorist tense for a much stronger emphasis.

Again, the focus is not on the specific prophet for whom this was true, but on the fact that this is the way God acts. God takes outnumbered forces with inadequate training and weapons and uses them to route those whom people would expect to win handily.

“PUT FOREIGN ARMIES TO FLIGHT”

This phrase literally reads, “other enemy armies (people living in temporary shelters) caused to flee.” The word translated “caused to flee” is in the emphatic aorist tense. Deborah comes to mind as I read this phrase. Her relationship with God was such that (Judges 4) Barak would not lead the army of Israel unless she went with them.

“Women received back their dead by resurrection; Hebrews 11:35A

“WOMEN RECEIVED BACK THEIR DEAD BY RESURRECTION”

This statement is a complete sentence. There are two of these in this verse. This sentence literally reads, “Women received the dead of them from resurrection.” The word translated “received” is (ἔλαβον) which means to accept; to receive from someone else. The form is, again, the aorist tense.

Observe that it says, “Women received...” If the husband was alive, it would state that he received. It seems quite certain that it was the husband whom she received back by resurrection. To mention this at this point is to also emphasize the power of God to do that which for all of us is impossible. As people about to endure ultimate sacrifice, they need to confront it by standing firm with the God of the impossible. This thought changes the logic of the decision process.

and others were tortured, not accepting their release, so that they might obtain a better resurrection;” Hebrews 11:35B

“AND OTHERS WERE TORTURED”

The word translated “and” is (δὲ) which is almost always translated “but.” In a case such as this, it can be translated “and” with the understanding that the idea being added to the previous one represents a form of contrast.

The word translated “others” seeks to identify someone who is different from those previously identified. The word translated “tortured” is (ἐτορμάνισθησαν) which means to punish by physical torture usually infers that the punishment was inflicted or permitted by high governmental officials. It would otherwise incur the death penalty as well.

“NOT ACCEPTING THEIR RELEASE”

The word translated “not” is (οὐ) which is a medium emphasis level negative indicator. The word translated “accepting” is (προσέξάμενοι) which means the willingness to accept a message about yourself. The form is aorist participle which continues the aorist emphasis and indicates that this is an ongoing lifestyle,

not a single decision. The word translated “release” is (ἀπολύτρωσιν) which means to be set free like the freeing of a slave; to liberate.

This is surprising because the torture described here almost always ended in death. Most people would anticipate that a person would rush to receive such an offer. These believers refused it. That is the point of this inclusion here.

“SO THAT THEY MIGHT OBTAIN A BETTER RESURRECTION.”

The word translated “so that” is (ἵνα) which indicates that a statement of purpose is about to be given. The word translated “they might obtain” is (τύχωσιν) which means to have; to experience. The form of this word is aorist subjunctive. The aorist emphasis is present. The subjunctive is the mood of possibility. This is the reason for the use of the word “might.” The word translated “better” is (κρείττονος) which is a comparative and would be translated “better” or “superior.” It identifies a situation in which a person has something, but there is the possibility of receiving something far better. The word translated “resurrection” is the same word we saw earlier in this chapter. It means to come back to life after experiencing physical death; to be resurrected. To come back to life is a phenomenal gift. To then spend eternity in the presence of God is a far better gift. That is what the author is stressing in this statement.

***“and others experienced mockings and scourgings, yes, also chains and imprisonment.”
Hebrews 11:36***

“AND OTHERS EXPERIENCED MOCKINGS AND SCOURGINGS”

Once again, the word translated “and” is really the word (δὲ) which is almost always translated “but.” However, it can be translated “and” while introducing equal, but different entities. The word translated “experienced” is (ἐλάβον) which means to receive. Yet again, the form of the word is aorist tense. The literal balance of this phrase makes little sense in English, but is a very emphatic statement in Greek. A literal translation would be, “Received OF mockingS and OF scourgingS. (note plurals) This had to be an intentional choice. If the author had used the accusative case, it would have read, “received mockings and scourgings.” Instead, he used the genitive case which would express the possessive and would need to be translated “OF mockings and OF scourgings. The word translated “mockings” is (ἐμπαιγμῶν) and means to make fun of someone by pretending that they are not what they are, even though at the same time their life is in danger for their stand. The word translated “scourgings” is (μαστιγῶν) which means to severely beat a person with a rod or whip. Observe that both the words “mockingS” and “scourgingS” are in the plural. It is something that happens with regularity. The recipients of the epistle would be well aware of the things that happened to Paul and others who preached the gospel in their part of the world. Though it is not translated into the English text, the Greek text includes the word (πεῖραν) which literally means to attempt to do something, but fail to achieve the goal. The abuse these believers received was intended to destroy their faith and silence their witness. It completely failed!

“YES, ALSO CHAINS AND IMPRISONMENT.”

The literal Greek text translates a bit differently. It reads, “And in addition, OF chains and OF prison.” Yet again, the word translated here as “and” is (δὲ) and is translated “and” for the same reason we saw earlier. The word translated “chains” is literally “OF chains” and the word translated “prison” is literally “OF prison” (singular.) For some reason he used the genitive case earlier. This was not theory. This was the personal experience of these earlier followers of God and the author wants to stress that fact.

In this sentence there is a Greek word which is not translated into the English at all. The Greek text includes the word (πεῖραν) which means to attempt to do something, but fail to achieve. The abuse these believers received was intended to destroy their faith and silence their witness. It totally failed!

“They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were put to death with the sword; they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated” Hebrews 11:37

“THEY WERE STONED”

There were many believers who were stoned because of their faith. Perhaps because of the huge availability of large stones on the ground in that part of the world, it was frequently the means of judgment and punishment that was used. His enemies often wanted to stone Jesus. When Stephen was presenting the gospel, he was confronted by religious leaders. As he defended his faith, these leaders of the Jews stoned him to death with the agreement of one Saul of Tarsus. Paul was stoned and left for dead. James, the leader of the church and half-brother of Jesus was stoned to death after being thrown down from the temple platform failed to cause his death. It is doubtful if the author had one person's stoning in mind. There were many and the Jews were well aware of this situation.

“THEY WERE SAWN IN TWO”

It is hard to imagine such a gruesome way to die. There may have been several, but we are aware of one possibility. The Bible does not include the death of Isaiah. Tradition, however, tells us that Isaiah was placed in a hollow log which was then sawn in half. It is difficult to comprehend such bestiality.

“THEY WERE TEMPTED”

We know that many Christians in the first century were tempted to abandon their faith. Some of the apostles were tempted – “Drop a pinch of incense into the holy flame on the altar before the image of Caesar and you will not be put to death. A pastor friend of mine in Donetsk, Ukraine was confronted, “Give up your faith and your pulpit or you will never see your five sons again.” He replied, “I can't stop you from taking my sons, but I can't abandon my faith. He never lost his five sons. Now, in the second decade of the twentieth century, hundreds of Christians in Africa and the Near East are being similarly confronted. They are being beheaded because they will not recant their faith in Christ.

“THEY WERE PUT TO DEATH WITH A SWORD”

After Pentecost in Jerusalem, many, many Christians were put to death by the sword. It got so bad that the Christians had to flee to Galatia and other places to avoid being slain. Our modern situation is not different. There are more Christian martyrs in our time than in any other time, including the first century.

“THEY WENT ABOUT IN SHEEPSKINS,”

In the heat of the Near Eastern sun, no one would prefer to wear a sheep skin garment in preference to one made of cloth. The sheepskin was cheaper and would last longer, but only the poorest of the poor would wear them. It would be obvious by this clothing that they had nothing else and could afford nothing. In some situations, it became the mark which identified the Christians.

“IN GOATSKINS,”

In that time and place, it was humiliating to be seen dressed in sheepskin. Now, goatskin was more expensive to secure, but none but those in abject poverty were forced to display their depth of poverty by wearing even the goatskin garment.

We must keep in mind that the enemies of the church would neither buy nor sell to a Christian. Poverty was the best possible outcome for a Christian caught in this dilemma.

“BEING DESTITUTE”

The word translated “being destitute” is (ὀστρουμένοι) which means to be lacking in everything that is essential. The form of this word is present participle. Both of these forms describe ongoing action and as such add serious emphasis. If you read the English text, it does not seem all that emphatic. The fact that the author used these two forms immediately indicates that this is about as emphatic as you can make it.

“AFFLICTED”

The word translated “afflicted” is (θλιβόμενοι) which does not mean physical illness, but to suffer hardship and trouble. The conditions mentioned in this sentence would of necessity all be in the same emphatic

form – present participle. This form emphasizes that these conditions represent a way of life for these believers and there was nothing on the horizon to indicate that this situation would change anytime soon.

“ILL-TREATED.”

The word translated “ill-treated” is [κακουχούμενοι) which means to cause someone to suffer ill-treatment; abuse. Once again, the form is the emphatic present participle. It says that the ill treatment of these believers was a way of life every day, not just one unfortunate act.

“(men of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in deserts and mountains and caves and holes in the ground.” Hebrews 11:38

+ Verse 38 is a complete sentence.

“MEN OF WHOM THE WORLD WAS NOT WORTHY”

In the verse quoted above, this phrase is in parentheses. The Greek text, however, does not list any problem or difference of presentation whatsoever and does not include parentheses.

The Greek text of this phrase reads, “Of whom the world was not worthy.” The word “men” was a translator’s addition to help clarify what was meant. Is the idea of “men” assumed in the text? Yes it is.

The word translated “worthy” is (ἄιος) which means having a high degree of merit. This was a way to say that the way of life and conduct of the enemies of the church did not even deserve to have the Christians of this caliber living among them. The emphasis in this phrase, is posted in the form of the word translated “not.” This word (οὐκ) measures emphasis. The word (οὐκ) is next to the most emphatic word to be translated “not.”

“WANDERING IN DESERTS AND MOUNTAINS”

In this phrase, the author lists four different conditions that they faced. The word translated “wandering” is (πλανώμενοι) which means to be without direction, destination or purpose. That is a tragic scene. The first condition the author mentions is “wandering in deserts.” Granted, much of this part of the world is desert. The people, however, attempted to live close to a water source which would not be desert. The desert was a difficult place to live and the inhabitants could only eke out a poor livelihood.

The author also mentioned (wandering) in mountains.” There were many cities built on mountain tops, but people would avoid making their home on a mountain unless they were shepherds. It would be dangerous to build a solitary house on a mountain top, making it very easy to seen by everyone.

“AND CAVES AND HOLES IN THE GROUND.”

The logic of the sentence would present this phrase as – “(wandering) in caves.” There are hundreds of caves in the mountains of Israel. You may remember the story of Saul’s encounter with David and his 400 men in a cave. Caves were looked upon as the hideout of thieves and refugees. You may also remember Jesus’ instructions to people in time of great crisis – “Flee to the mountains.” The treatment of Christians by their enemies was such that they were forced to flee to the mountain caves or be killed at home.

The word translated “holes” is (ὀπῶς) which means a large hole. The text gives us no further information about what this may mean. Israel is a land where water is at a premium. Indeed, there is a pipeline running from the Sea of Galilee (in the North) to the southern-most boundaries of the country.

It seldom rains in Israel, but when it does, the water is collected in cisterns. Under the entire temple mount and nearly every home there is a cistern carved out of the rock where they store run-off rain water from every rain. When Jesus was arrested, He was placed in the cistern of the High Priest’s home. It appears that this is what the author had in mind. It gives an idea of just how tentative life was for these Christians.

“And all these, having gained approval through their faith, did not receive what was promised,” Hebrews 11:39

“AND ALL THESE”

This is a correct translation of the three words in the Greek text. The word translated “these” is a reference to all the people he mentioned in chapter 11. You may remember that we mentioned a similar statement in 11:13. This is a second summary statement that the author used to point out that every person referred to in 11:4-16 and 11:17-40 had several things in common:

- A. They were all people of faith.
- B. They stood by this faith during inexplicable hardship.
- C. They did not receive their reward when the trials ended.

“HAVING GAINED APPROVAL”

The Greek word that is translated in this phrase is (μαρτυρηθέντες) which means to speak well of a person on the basis of personal experience with them; to approve. The form of this word is aorist participle:

- A. Aorist tense adds serious emphasis to the statement.
- B. The participle describes ongoing action.
- C. This is the reason behind the translation, “having been approved.”

“THROUGH THEIR FAITH”

The word translated “through” is (διὰ) which is used to indicate the means of accomplishment. In this sentence, the author was saying that faith was the basis for which these people gained approval. In Greek, this is a very strong statement.

“DID NOT RECEIVE WHAT WAS PROMISED.”

The word translated “not” is (οὐκ) which is the second strongest negative expression. The word translated “they received” is (ἐκομίσαντο) which means to cause someone to experience something on the basis of what that person has already done. In this situation, the presence of the word “not” causes the word to be used to mean just the opposite.

The Greek text is more direct and would be translated “the promise.” The word translated “promise” is (ἐπαγγελίαν) which means the content of what has been promised. Observe that this word is in the singular. This is the covenant you see all through the Scriptures – “I will be your God and you shall be My people.”

“because God had provided something better for us, so that apart from us they would not be made perfect.” Hebrews 11:40

“BECAUSE GOD HAD PROVIDED SOMETHING BETTER FOR US”

The translation at this point is a bit awkward. A literal translation would be, “Of the God about us better some having seen before.” One must ask, what was the author really saying? Obviously, the word “because” is not in the Greek text.

The word translated “provided” is (προβλεψαμένοι) which literally means to see before. The intent is to describe the choosing in advance that God made on our behalf. People tend to see God’s patience when judgment is needed as a negative factor. The author was saying that in advance, God chose something that is far better for us.

“SO THAT APART FROM US THEY WOULD NOT BE MADE PERFECT.”

The final phrase in this chapter would read, “that not without us, they might be made complete.” The use of the word “that” indicates a statement of purpose is in process. The word translated “not” is (μὴ) which is a medium emphasis, negative word. The two words translated “apart from us” are (χωρίς) which means “without;” (ἡμῶν) which means “us.”

The Superior Jesus

The word translated “they might be perfect” is (τελειωθῶσιν) which does not mean “perfect,” but filled to the top; complete. The form of this word is aorist subjunctive:

- A. Aorist tense adds serious emphasis to the statement.
- B. Subjunctive mood is the mood of possibility.
- C. The subjunctive accounts for the use of the word “should be;” “might be.”

QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 12

HEBREWS 12:1 - 29

1. In Hebrews chapter 12, there are five paragraphs. On the following table, write a brief summary of eight words or less for each paragraph.

12:1-3	
12:4-11	
12:12-17	
12:18-24	
12:25-29	

2. In Hebrews 12:1-3, there are two complete sentences.
- A. Hebrews 12:1-2 form a complete sentence.
1. Hebrews 12 begins with the word “therefore.” This word indicates that a conclusion is about to be given.
 - a. How would you summarize the material the author wrote prior to chapter 12?
 - b. To whom does the author refer when he wrote “cloud of witnesses”?
 - c. How would you describe the author’s intent when he wrote, “Let us lay aside every encumbrance”?
 - d. How would you explain the exhortation, “Let us lay aside... the sin which so easily entangles us”?
 - e. What did he refer to when he wrote, “Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us”?
 - f. In Hebrews 12:2, what did he mean, “Fix your eyes on Jesus”?
 - g. What is added to the exhortation when the author referred to Jesus as “the author and perfecter of faith”?
 - h. To what “joy” does the author refer?
 - i. Again, what is gained by the addition of the words, “Endured the cross, despising the shame and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God”?
- B. Hebrews 12:3 is a complete sentence. The use of the word “for” indicates that an explanation is being presented. How would you describe what the author seeks to explain?
1. Reread Hebrews 11:1 – 12:3 to find the author’s design.
 2. What did you find in terms of a logical progression?
3. In Hebrews 12:4-11, there are eleven complete sentences.
- A. Hebrews 12:4 is a complete sentence.
1. The recipients have experienced life-threatening persecution both in Jerusalem and now in Galatia. What would be the point of including this sentence?
 2. What would be lost if it were not included?
 3. If you were one of the recipients, how would you feel when reading these words?
- B. Hebrews 12:5A which reads, **“And you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons.”**
1. In this sentence, the author used the word “forgotten.” Do you think the author meant that they had forgotten?
 2. What does the author mean by the use of the word “exhortation”?
 3. Why would the author bring the idea of their being “sons” into this instruction?
- C. Hebrews 12:5B which reads, **“My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor faint when you are reprovved by Him.”**

The Superior Jesus

1. This sentence contains a quotation from Proverbs 3:11. What is the point of using a quotation from Proverbs?
2. What has this quotation added to the author's instructions?
3. Why would the author be talking with them about discipline?
- D. Hebrews 12:6 is a complete sentence.
 1. In this verse, the author quoted from Proverbs 3:12 which reflects the teaching of Psalm 119:75. Why would this be so important?
 2. What has the author accomplished by including this quotation and reference?
- E. Hebrews 12:7A which reads, **"It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons."**
 1. What does he mean by the word "discipline"?
 2. What does the author mean by the word "endure"?
 3. How does discipline produce endurance?
- F. Hebrews 12:7B which reads, "For what son is there whom his father does not discipline?"
 1. What is the point of the author's repeated reference to father and son?
 2. What does this have to do with the problems the author has identified?
 3. What does the idea of "sons" have to do with what the author is instructing?
 4. What is the relationship between 12:7A and 12:7B?
- G. Hebrews 12:8 is a complete sentence which appears in the form of a conditional sentence.
 1. What is the condition?
 2. What is the consequence?
 3. What is gained by the addition of the words "and not sons" after the word "illegitimate"?
- H. Hebrews 12:9A which reads, **"Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them."**
 1. What would be the author's purpose for including this very accurate statement?
 2. What impact could this have on their understanding?
- I. Hebrews 12:9B which reads, **"Shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits and live?"**
 1. In these two sentences in verse nine, the author is drawing a comparison. How does he compare the word "discipline" in verse 9A with "subject" in verse 9B?
 2. To what does he compare "respected" in 9A with in 9B?
- J. Hebrews 12:10 is a complete sentence. In this verse, the author drew a contrast between the earthly father's discipline and that of God.
 1. How would you explain this contrast?
 2. What point was the author trying to make?
 3. What does this tell you about the recipients?
- K. Hebrews 12:11 is a complete sentence.
 1. On the basis of the content of verse 11, what kind of response was the author seeking?
 2. What would success look like for the author?
4. In Hebrews 12:12-17, there are three completed sentences.
 - A. Hebrews 12:12, 13 form a complete sentence.
 1. In these two verses, the author is painting a picture for his readers.
 - a. What picture is he painting?
 - b. What could he hope to achieve by the use of this image?
 2. What would success look like?
 - B. Hebrews 12:14-16 form a complete sentence.
 1. In this sentence the author presented five different instructions:
 - a. Please list the five instructions.

QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 12

- b. Study this list carefully. What problems is the author seeking to address by these instructions?
 2. The story of Esau is found in Genesis 25:19-34.
 - a. What issue was the author attempting to highlight by this reference?
 - b. Why would he choose this illustration to present to these people?
 - C. Hebrews 12:17 is a complete sentence. This sentence is an attempt to explain what the author highlighted in the previous sentence.
 1. What explanation did he offer?
 2. What difference would it make?
 3. What would success look like in this instance?
5. In Hebrews 12:18-24, there are four complete sentences.
- A. Hebrews 12:18-20A which reads, ***“For you have not come to a mountain that can be touched and to a blazing fire, and to darkness and gloom and whirlwind, and to the blast of a trumpet and the sound of words which sound was such that those who heard begged that no further word be spoken to them. For they could not bear the command.*”**
 1. In this sentence, the author paints yet another picture. To what historical situation is he referring in this image?
 2. What kind of an image does he create?
 3. Why would he present this?
 - B. Hebrews 12:20B is a complete sentence which reads, ***“IF EVEN A BEAST TOUCHES THE MOUNTAIN, IT WILL BE STONED.”***
 1. This sentence deals with the content of Exodus chapter 19.
 2. This sentence deals exclusively with what happens if an animal touches the mountain. Exodus 19 deals with what happens to both humans and animals.
 - a. Why would the author mention only the animals?
 - b. How would you feel if you were one of these recipients reading this sentence?
 - C. Hebrews 12:21 is a complete sentence. This verse summarizes the statement of Moses in Deuteronomy 9:19. It describes the frightening reaction of Moses both to the events and the message which God presented on this occasion. If you read Hebrews 12:18-24 carefully, you will see a very strong contrast. Verse 21 is the conclusion to the first half of this contrast.
 1. What conclusion does the author present?
 2. It tells them what they have not come to. What is that?
 - D. Hebrews 12:22-24 form a complete sentence. Verses 22-24 are the second half of this very strong contrast.
 1. In this sentence the author listed 9 specific things to which these suffering believers have come. Make a list of them.
 2. Contrast this list of 9 things to which they have come with the list of three things to which they have not come-as mentioned in 12:18-21.
 3. In verse 22, the author identified Jerusalem in more than one way. How would you differentiate between these ways?
 4. In verse 22, having identified Jerusalem as “Mount Zion” and “the city of the living God,” he then referred to “the heavenly Jerusalem.”
 - a. What is this?
 - b. How would you differentiate between the two descriptions?
 - C. What does this verse add to what the author is trying to say to the recipients?
 5. In verse 23, the author includes four of the nine things to which these suffering believers have come.
 - a. What does he mean by “church of the first-born”?

The Superior Jesus

- b. He mentioned that they have come to God, but this happens late in the list of nine rather than first. Why would that be?
- c. What does it mean to come “to the spirits of righteous men made perfect”?
- 6. Verse 24 is a complete sentence.
 - a. This verse speaks of a “new covenant.” Why would a new covenant be needed when the covenant with Abraham is an eternal one and the conditions are not changed?
 - b. This verse mentions Jesus as “mediator” of a new covenant:
 - 1. What does this mean?
 - 2. What does it involve?
 - c. The author mentioned “the sprinkling of blood.” Why would he mention this to these people?
- d. The author closes the sentence with mention of Abel. What does this have to do with the new covenant?
- 6. In Hebrews 12:25-29 there are six complete sentences.
 - A. Hebrews 12:25A is a complete sentence which is an exhortation and reads, **“See that you do not refuse Him who is speaking.”**
 - 1. What is the exhortation?
 - 2. What does it mean?
 - 3. Why was this exhortation necessary?
 - B. Hebrews 12:25B – 26A form a complete sentence which reads, **“For if those did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less shall we escape who turn away from Him who warns from heaven, and His voice shook the earth, but now He has promised saying,”**
 - 1. This sentence contains an explanation for the exhortation from the previous sentence.
 - 2. In this sentence, the author wrote, “for if THESE did not escape.” To whom does he refer by the word “THESE”?
 - 3. Again, the author wrote of “him who warned them on earth.” To whom does the author refer?
 - 4. Once more, the author also wrote of “him who warns from heaven.” To whom does this refer?
 - 5. Why would the author make these vague references when the use of names or positions would be much clearer?
 - C. Hebrews 12:26B is a complete sentence which reads, **“Yet once more, I will shake not only the earth but also the heaven.”** In these verses, the author used two time designations in this contrast – “THEN” and “NOW.” To what was the author referring by the use of the word “then”? What is the significance of the fact that His voice shook the earth and the heavens?
 - D. Hebrews 12:27 is a complete sentence which seeks to present an explanation.
 - 1. What is the author explaining?
 - 2. How did he explain it?
 - E. Hebrews 12:28 is a complete sentence.
 - 1. The word “therefore” initiates a conclusion:
 - a. What is being concluded?
 - b. What conclusion did he present?
 - F. Hebrews 12:29 is a complete sentence which is an additional explanation.
 - 1. What is he explaining?
 - 2. He speaks descriptively of God as “consuming fire.”
 - a. What does this mean?
 - b. Why would the author refer to God as “consuming fire” when the recipients have suffered every persecution except martyrdom?
 - c. If you were one of the recipients, how would you react to this statement?

STUDY OF CHAPTER 12

WHAT FAITH LOOKS LIKE

HEBREWS 12:1 – 28

In Hebrews chapter 12 there are five paragraphs. On the following table you will find a brief summary of each paragraph.

12:1-3	Commands to Faith Inspired Obedience
12:4-11	The Basis of a Disciplined Life
12:12-17	Christian Action Against Opposing Evil
12:18-24	Contrast with Israel at Sinai
12:25-29	Warning Against Inaction

This chapter begins the conclusion of the epistle. In fact, it contains at least 20 commands based upon the experiences of the earlier part of the epistle.

HEBREWS 12:1-3 – COMMANDS TO FAITH INSPIRED OBEDIENCE

“Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,” Hebrews 12:1

“THEREFORE, SINCE WE HAVE SO GREAT A CLOUD OF WITNESSES SURROUNDING US”

The word translated “therefore” is (τοιγαροῦν) which is a compound word consisting of three words: (τοῖ), (γάρ) and (οὖν). This compound word could be translated “therefore indeed.” This word is found only twice in the New Testament – (here and in I Thessalonians 4:8). It is the strongest connective in the New Testament.

The word “therefore” signals the presentation of a conclusion. This would be a summary of everything in 1:1 – 11:40. It could be summarized as:

- A. 1:1-4:16 – Jesus is a superior person
- B. 5:1 – 11:40 – Jesus is a superior High Priest.

THEREFORE

- C. 12:1 – 13:25 - on this basis, this is what you need to do.

Hebrews 12:1, 2 are a conditional statement. The parts of this statement are as follows:

- A. THE CONDITION – “Since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us
- B. CONSEQUENCE – (then) let us also lay aside every encumbrance...

The author has presented a parallel between the people listed in chapter 11, who faced serious persecution with these suffering Christians who faced the same serious persecution. The consequences that he identified were the means necessary to successfully overcome their own persecution.

The “Great cloud of witnesses” he referred to are the people identified in chapter 11. The image used here is that of the Olympic games. Just as the people in the arena cheered on the athletes, so the successful martyrs of days gone by serve as a cheering section for these suffering believers.

“LET US LAY ASIDE EVERY ENCUMBRANCE AND THE SIN WHICH SO EASILY ENTANGLES US”

The word translated “let us lay aside” is (ἀποθέμενοι) which means to cease doing what you are accustomed to be doing. The form of this word is aorist participle.

- A. The aorist tense adds serious emphasis to the statement.
- B. The participle identifies ongoing action.

The author identifies two things which get into the way of our successful overcoming of persecution. They are not synonyms:

- A. **ENCUMBRANCES** – The word so translated means “weights.” This is a reference to our actions and choices that may not be overt sin, but they do hinder us from accompanying God’s will for our lives.
- B. **SIN WHICH ENTANGLES** – He pictures this sin in our lives like trying to run a race in a toga-like garment. In their Olympic games, the contestants ran in the nude. Everyone who read this verse would know exactly what he was trying to say.

“AND LET US RUN WITH ENDURANCE”

The word translated “let us run” is (τρέχωμεν) which means to run in contrast to walking. It has more to do with the speed than it does with the means of moving. The form of this word is present subjunctive:

- A. Present tense – describes ongoing action
- B. Subjunctive – The mood of possibility

The word would be translated “We might be running” or “Let us be running.”

The author qualified this running with the words (δὲ – ὑπομονῆς) which means through bearing up under difficult circumstances. The emphasis is on the strength to continue rather than the quiet demeanor we associate with patience. The word translated “patience” is a compound word:

- A. (ὑπο) means under.
- B. (μένω) which means to abide

Every Trojan soldier took an oath that he would stand under authority and never flee the battle.

“THE RACE THAT IS SET BEFORE US”

The word translated “race” is (ἀγῶνα) which means a race or contest that involves an intense struggle. The word translated “set before” is (προκείμενον) which means to exist in an evident manner; to exist openly. The form of this word is once more present participle. Both of these forms describe ongoing action and this adds serious emphasis. The author wrote the phrase as strongly as he possibly could. He wrote, “the lying before us contest.” Once more the author was dealing quite openly with their struggles of persecution in order to challenge them to serious, positive action.

“fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Hebrews 12:2

“FIXING OUR EYES ON JESUS”

The Greek text appears a bit differently. It would read, “keep thinking about Jesus.” The word translated “fixing” is (ἀφορῶντες) which really means to keep thinking about something without being distracted. The recipients of this letter could not literally fix their eyes on Jesus. The form of this word is present participle which stresses the ongoing nature of this instruction. The one the author wants them to focus their attention on is Jesus – their Savior.

“THE AUTHOR AND PERFECTER OF FAITH”

The author identifies Jesus in two specific ways:

- A. **HE IS THE INITIATOR OF THEIR FAITH** – The word translated “author” is (ἀρληγὸν) which means the one who causes something to begin. Jesus is the originator of our faith in the same way that YHWH is the originator of all creation.
- B. **HE IS THE PERFECTER OF THEIR FAITH** – The word translated “perfecter” is (τελειωτῆν) which means one who makes possible the successful completion of something. It is one thing to bring faith into existence where there had been no faith. It is quite another to bring that faith to the successful completion of all that God wants it to be. Jesus did both.

In our text, it reads, “perfecter of faith.” The Greek text is more direct and literally translates, “of **THE** faith.” The idea of “faith” may have many different expressions. The addition of the word “THE” zero’s the conversation in upon this faith about which there is no other.

“WHO FOR THE JOY SET BEFORE HIM”

The balance of verse 2 is focused upon a picture of what the author identified about Jesus in the opening portion of this sentence, verse 2. The author mentions “the Joy that is set before Him – Jesus, but he does not clarify exactly what that is. The author speaks of “the joy that was set before him.” The word translated “set before” is (προκειμένης) which means gladness; a physical expression of happiness – “to shout for joy.” The form of this word is, again, present participle which emphasizes ongoing action. The word translated “joy” is (χαρᾶς) which signifies a delight that signals great benefit. We will discuss the meaning very shortly. The author followed this announcement with a number of features of this expression of joy.

“ENDURED THE CROSS”

The word translated “endured” is (ὕπεμεινεν) which means to continue to bear up despite tremendous difficulty. The form of this word is aorist tense. Which indicates that this is an idea which is highly emphasized by the author.

The people who wanted Jesus to be crucified lied and perverted truth in order to get him executed. Pilate refused to do his duty by allowing this totally innocent man to be beaten and executed. The cross was the most horrendous punishment one could receive. It was reserved for the most guilty.

“DESPISED THE SHAME”

The word translated “despised” is (καταφρονήσας) which means to have contempt; scorn; to look down upon. The form of this word is aorist participle which we have seen repeatedly in this section of the book. The word translated “shame” is (αἰσχύνης) which is a painful feeling due to the awareness of having experienced something disgraceful. It is even worse when the person was considered guilty and deserving this horrible punishment when they were completely innocent. Crucifixion was the worst punishment the Roman authorities would administer. The shame involved was as atrocious as the dying was horrendous and prolonged.

“AND HAS SAT DOWN”

The word translated “and” ties together two or more equally important concepts. The author’s use of it here adapts this idea for an additional form of emphasis on the statement. In the previous phrases, he reported terrible things. He then adds the word “and” while proceeding to add a wonderful experience. It is like saying, that which follows is as wonderful as the previously experiences were tragic.

Every reader would know that the author was using the image of a throne room to make a point. No one, when allowed into a throne room, would be seated. You always stand in the presence of the king to show your respect. The king’s closest advisors and trusted associates were given the honor of sitting on the king’s right hand and on his left. The author was saying that Jesus was given that honor when he ascended into heaven.

“AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE THRONE OF GOD”

The author, having described one level of honor – seated in the king’s presence – now presents an additional level of honor which is much more outstanding.

There is a great deal of difference, in that part of the world, between left and right hand. The left hand is only used for personal hygiene. The right hand is always used in dealing with others. After teaching in seminary in Indonesia, at the airport I was asked for my passport. Without thinking, I handed the passport to the agent with my left hand. He ignored me. I held it there for some time – no response. Finally people standing nearby hollered, “use your other hand.” He took the passport immediately. The person sitting at the right hand of a king would never be refused of any request. His advice would be carefully initiated. That is what the author is trying to say about Jesus.

This part of the epistle, weighs heavily upon logical progression. This is particularly obvious in 11:1 – 12:3.

1. Throughout chapter 11, the author identifies a host of Old Testament characters who stood firm in their faith through impossible situations. In spite of the pain and persecution, they were faithful to God and experienced the impossible in the midst of pain.
2. In 12:3, the author instructed them to carefully consider the life of Jesus. Though He was sinless, He suffered the ultimate suffering – death - and the ultimate humiliation – crucifixion.
3. From here through the end of chapter 13, the author will give them a long list of commands intended to both instruct them how to be faithful in the midst of deadly persecution, but also to enable them to cease being weary of their suffering in dire circumstances.

“For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.” Hebrews 12:3

+ Verse three is a complete sentence.

“FOR CONSIDER HIM”

The use of the word translated “for” indicates that an explanation is in process. The author is adding an explanation concerning Jesus’ tragic execution and beautiful relationship with God the Father. The word translated “consider” is (ἀναλογίσασθε) which means to think carefully and thoroughly. The form of this word is aorist imperative:

- A. Aorist tense – it is for emphasis.
- B. Imperative – this is a command.

This form presents the idea as a very strong command. Instead of commanding “consider Him,” the author literally wrote, “Consider the such a kind...” The command is to consider Jesus. The author is not commanding them to gain historical information. He has something very specific in mind.

“WHO HAS ENDURED SUCH HOSTILITY”

The word translated “has endured” is the same word we encountered in verse two. The form, however, is perfect participle:

- A. Perfect tense – identifies completed action.
- B. Participle – ongoing action.

The result is that it must be translated “Having endured.” The word translated “hostility” is (ἀντιλογίαν) which means rebellion against authority; defiance.

“BY SINNERS AGAINST HIMSELF”

The word translated “against” is (ἐἰς) which might better be translated “concerning.” In the Greek text, it literally reads “by THE sinners.” This is a picture of the totally guilty making serious accusations against one who was totally sinless. It highlights just how outrageous the charges were.

“SO THAT YOU WILL NOT GROW WEARY”

The word translated “so that” indicates that a statement of purpose is being presented. The word translated “weary” is (κόμητε) which means to lose motivation; to be discouraged. The form of this word is aorist subjunctive:

- A. Aorist tense- this adds strong emphasis to a statement.
- B. Subjunctive mood – this is the mood of possibility./

This is the reason for inserting the word “might” into the meaning of the word. The word translated “not” is (μὴ) which provides medium emphasis for this word.

“AND LOSE HEART.”

The Greek text is a bit more complex – “the souls of you being discouraged.” The word translated “lose heart” or “discouraged,” is (ἐκλυόμενοι) and means to lose heart or become discouraged. The form of this word is present participle. Both of these forms identify ongoing action and so add serious emphasis.

The author found it necessary to include these ideas because the recipients were becoming discouraged. They had become Christians in Jerusalem and the coming deadly persecution drove them out of Jerusalem and into Galatia. Now the persecution is mounting again and they are tired of struggling with it.

HEBREWS 12:4-11 – THE BASIS OF A DISCIPLINED LIFE

+ There are 10 complete sentences in this paragraph and verse 4 is a complete sentence.

“You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your striving against sin;”
Hebrews 12:4

“YOU HAVE NOT YET RESISTED TO THE POINT OF SHEDDING BLOOD”

The Greek text would translate this phrase, “not yet to the extent of blood you are resisting.” The word translated “resisting” is (ἀντικατέστητε) which means to resist by actively opposing pressure or power. The form of this word is aorist tense which shows that this is an issue the author wishes to strongly emphasize. The author’s point in this phrase could be viewed harshly as his way of saying you haven’t been put to death yet. The author is pointing out that the recipients are expressing great trauma about their persecution. In just the previous paragraph and chapter, he pointed out numbers of people who paid with their lives for their stand for Christ. This is a way of saying, it is bad, but it isn’t as bad as you think. The author used the differences in situation as a way to point out that their trauma is overemphasized.

“IN YOUR STRIVING AGAINST SIN”

The word translated “in your striving against” is (ἀντιγωνιζόμενοι) which means to engage in an intense struggle against something. The form of this word is, again, present participle. As indicated previously, this adds serious emphasis that he is talking about a lifestyle.

Observe that the author has once again used one of his favorite tools of emphasis. Instead of writing about resisting sin, he wrote, “resisting to THE sin.”

“and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, Hebrews 12:5A

+ There are two complete sentences in verse 5.

“AND YOU HAVE FORGOTTEN THE EXHORTATION”

In verses 4 and 5, the author is presenting a list of four issues where these believers have faltered in their struggle against evil. In English grammar, it is not always best to begin a sentence with the word “and.” This is not an issue in the Greek language. The word “and” ties the problems identified in verses three and four with that listed in verse five.

The word translated “forgotten” is (ἐκλέησεθε) which means to completely forget something important. The form of this word is perfect tense which identifies completed action.

The word translated “exhortation” is (παρακλήσεως) which emphasizes more an encouragement than an instruction.

“WHICH IS ADDRESSED TO YOU AS SONS”

The word translated “addressed” is (διαλέγεται) which means a formal speech or address. The form of this word is present tense which describes ongoing action – a lifestyle. The word translated “sons” is (υἱός) which describes a person of any age who has this familial relationship with one who is “father.” The relationship is spelled out in this manner:

A. FATHER

1. He is required to provide for his son.
2. He is required to protect his son.

3. He is required to establish a way of life and values to guide the son throughout his life.

B. SON

1. He is required to completely obey every instruction of his father.
2. He is required to emulate the father's values and lifestyle in every respect.
3. His father's concerns are his concerns.

It is in view of this lifestyle understanding that the author wrote these verses.

“MY SON, DO NOT REGARD LIGHTLY THE DISCIPLINE OF THE LORD, NOR FAINT WHEN YOU ARE REPROVED BY HIM;” Hebrews 12:5B

“MY SON,”

This begins the second complete sentence in this verse. In the Greek text, it would read, “Son of me.” As indicated in the previous part of verse five, this is a very special, personal relationship. It describes a unique relationship that would be binding, in the same way, upon no one else.

“DO NOT REGARD LIGHTLY”

The word translated “regard lightly” is (ὀλιγώρει) which means to regard someone or something as of little value. It is to despise. The form of this word is present imperative which describes a command which you continue to follow. The word translated “not” is (μὴ) which is a medium negative emphasis.

“THE DISCIPLINE OF THE LORD.”

The word “the” appears twice in this phrase. Neither of these, however, appear in the Greek text. The word translated “discipline” is (παιδείας) which is an interesting choice. There are five different Greek words that are all translated “instruct.” This word, however, identifies a specific kind of instruction. It is what happens when a father instructs his young son. The word translated “of the Lord” is the genitive form of the word translated “Lord” which is (κυρίου).

“NOR FAINT”

The word translated “nor” is an interesting, emphatic choice. It is a compound word used to add serious emphasis: It is (μὴδὲ):

- A. (μὴ) means “not” with medium emphasis.
- B. (δὲ) means but.

Together, these words were used to place strong emphasis on a contrast – “this, but not that.”

The word translated “faint” is (ἐκλύον) which means to lose your motivation to accomplish an important goal; to be discouraged; to give up. The form of this word is present imperative. It is a lifestyle of doing what this command is about. The author found it necessary to give this instruction because this is exactly what was happening among these beleaguered Christians who were now beaten down with persecution for the second time.

“WHEN YOU ARE REPROVED BY HIM.”

The Greek text is a bit more direct. It would be literally translated, “being rebuked by Him.” First of all, this is a quotation from Psalm 3:11. The quotation from the Old Testament would have an impact on the Jews especially since this is a Psalm which David wrote when he was also undergoing severe persecution from his son – Absalom. The word translated “reproved” is (ἐλογχόμενος) which means to say that someone has done something wrong implying that there is proof of the allegation. The form of this word is present participle which emphasizes that this is an ongoing problem. If you read the Psalm again, you will note that this reproving is something that God is doing because of their misconduct under fire.

“FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES, AND HE SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES.”” Hebrews 12:6

“FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES”

Verse 6 is a complete sentence. Again, the use of the word “for” indicates that an explanation is being presented. In this case, David was explaining why God does this reproof. The author quotes David and is suggesting that That is exactly what God is doing.

The word translated “loves” is (ἀγαπᾷ) which means to love with no limitation or restriction. The form of this word is present tense and would be translated “He is loving.”

The word translated “disciplines” is (παιδεύει) which means to punish, not from anger, but to improve the person’s behavior. There are other words that are translated “punish” in the New Testament. The author has carefully chosen this word which describes the punishment one would give a little child in order to mold his character. It is all about why God would allow these situations to occur in our lives. The form of this word is also present tense and would be translated “being reproofed”, a process, not a single act.

“AND HE SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES.”

The word translated “and” is (δὲ) which is almost always translated “but”. There are some cases where it is appropriate to translate it “and.” This would be determined by the context as it is in this case.

The word translated “scourged” is (μαστιγοῖ) which means to punish severely. The form of this word, once more, is present tense and would describe a process, not a single action.

David’s use of the word “son” is carefully chosen. Every Jew would know that a father had a responsibility to each of his sons:

- A. He must provide for his needs.
- B. He must protect his son.
- C. He must train his son to follow the lifestyle example of the father.

That is what David meant and that is the reason the author quoted him here.

Again, every Jew would completely understand what David meant when he wrote “he receives.” When a baby was born, it would be cleaned up and placed on the father’s lap. Father would look over the baby with great care. If he was satisfied, he would touch the baby and give it a name. This, by the way, is still practiced by the Arab community in Bethlehem. Those who follow Jesus are God’s sons and he receives each one of us.

“It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; Hebrews 12:7A

“IT IS FOR DISCIPLINE”

This portion of verse seven is a complete sentence. The word translated “discipline” is (παιδείαν) which means child-instruction. This is the same root word we encountered in verse six. The word translated “it is for” is (εἰς) which can be translated “concerning” or “with respect to...”

“THAT YOU ENDURE”

The word translated “endure” is (ὑπομένετε) which means to bear up despite difficulty and suffering. The form of this word is present tense and would be translated “keep on bearing up...”

“GOD DEALS WITH YOU AS WITH SONS”

The author wrote “THE God” instead of “God” as translated. This accomplishes two things:

- A. It adds serious emphasis to the statement.
- B. He used this means to say that Jehovah is God and there is no other.

The word translated “deals” is (προσφέρειται) which means to behave in a particular way with respect to someone. The form of this word is present tense and would be translated “is dealing.” The use of the word translated “as” indicates that a comparison is in progress. The issues being compared are as follows:

- A. The cultural father/son relationship has specific responsibilities and privileges.
- B. In the same way, God deals with us as a father deals with his son and this involves both privileges and responsibilities.

This is the second reference to the father/son relationship in three verses.

for what son is there whom his father does not discipline?” Hebrews 12:7B

“FOR WHAT SON IS THERE”

This is the second complete sentence in verse seven. Again, the use of the word translated “for” indicates that an explanation is in progress. The author poses this as a question for purposes of emphasis. The anticipated answer to this question is “there is none.” The words, “Is there” are understood, but do not appear in the text.

“WHOM HIS FATHER DOES NOT DISCIPLINE”

Once more, the author draws a comparison between the cultural family – father/son – and the divine family – Father/son. He was saying, in the same way a human father trains his son, God also trains his children. The word translated “disciplines” is (παιδεύει) which describes the training of a little child. The form of this word is present tense and would be translated “is training.” You may remember that this is exactly the same word and form we encountered in verse six. It is like saying, this is what Father is supposed to do. Remember, these believers are being persecuted for the second time and they are about to give up.

“But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.” Hebrews 12:8

“BUT IF YOU ARE WITHOUT DISCIPLINE”

Verse eight is a complete sentence. The word translated “but” is (δὲ) which indicates a medium emphasis. The use of the word “if” indicates that this is a conditional (IF...THEN...) sentence. The elements of this sentence are as follows:

- A. (CONDITION) IF you are without discipline.
- B. (CONSEQUENCE) THEN you are an illegitimate child.

The word translated “discipline” again, is (παιδείας) which identifies young child training as we saw both in verse six and again in seven. Frankly, the author is using an unthinkable possibility here.

“OF WHICH ALL HAVE BECOME PARTAKERS”

This is a parenthetic phrase. The word translated “have become” is (γεγόνασιν) which means to experience; to become. The form of this word is perfect tense which identifies completed action. The word translated “partakers” is (μέτοχοι) which means an associate; partners; one who shares. The author was saying that this is an experience that every recipient has memorably experienced.

“THEN YOU ARE ILLEGITIMATE CHILDREN”

This is the consequence portion of the conditional sentence. The word translated “then” is (ἄρα) which presents an inference concerning the preceding information. The use of this word adds further emphasis to the total statement. By choosing to use a separate word to express “you are,” (ἐστε), he has seriously increased the emphasis. The word translated “illegitimate” is (νόθοι) which means one born out of wedlock; one who is illegal. In that culture, one must keep in mind that this is a situation of shame. The word “children” is understood in this sentence, but does not appear in the Greek text.

“AND NOT SONS.”

In this brief phrase, the author has used two different means to seriously increase the already strong emphasis.

- A. As previously indicated, there are several words translated “not” and each has an increasing level of emphasis. The word (οὐχ), used here, is the most emphatic negative emphasis.
- B. The author could have written “and not sons.” Instead, he wrote, “YOU ARE not sons.” It would be most difficult to make this statement more emphatic.

“Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; Hebrews 12:9A

There are two complete sentences in verse nine.

“FURTHERMORE WE HAD EARTHLY FATHERS TO DISCIPLINE US”

The word translated “furthermore” is (εἰτα) which indicates that an additional piece of information is being added to the message. Though the English text does not report it, the Greek text adds the word (μὲν) which means “indeed,” to the word translated “furthermore” to double the emphasis. The text would then be translated “furthermore indeed.” The word translated “we had” is (εἶχομεν) which means to possess. The form of this word is the imperfect tense which is action going on in the past.

The words translated “earthly fathers” are much more emphatic in the Greek text. It would literally be translated, “of the flesh of us fathers.” The words “of the flesh of us” are strictly to add emphasis to a very strong statement. The word translated “to discipline” is (παιδεύτας) which means one who punishes a child for constructive purposes.

“AND WE RESPECTED THEM”

The word translated “we respected them” is (ἐνετρεπόμεθα) which means to show respect on the basis of the status of the one issuing the instruction. This is a compound word which is formed as follows:

A. (ἐν) means in.

B. (τρέπω) means to turn.

The combined word means to bow before; to hold in high esteem. The form, again, is necessarily imperfect tense as previously used in this sentence.

shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live?” Hebrews 12:9B

“SHALL WE NOT MUCH RATHER BE SUBJECT”

This sentence is in the form of a question for the purpose of adding substantial emphasis. When a question is introduced into a discourse, it is important to ascertain what the anticipated response to the question might be. In this instance, one would anticipate a strong affirmative answer. The use of the words translated “much more” indicates that a contrast is in progress.

The word translated “we shall be subject” is (ὕποταγησόμεθα) which means to submit to the orders of another person. The form of this word is future tense which accounts for the use of the word “shall.”

“TO THE FATHER OF SPIRITS”

It is interesting that the author used the words “to the Father of spirits,” rather than the word “God” which is what he had in mind. Again, our translation reads, “of spirits,” but the author wrote of THE spirits.” This, of course, adds even more emphasis.

“AND LIVE?”

The closing phrase of this question reads, “and live.” The Greek text is much more emphatic and reads, “And we will live.” Observe that he said “WE will live,” not “you will live.” The point of this is that the author places himself in this dilemma along with each of them.

As you review these two sentences in verse nine, it is obvious that there is a long list of things the author did to seriously emphasize his message that they should view the difficulties they were experiencing. They viewed their opposition as abuse. The author was trying to help them see this persecution as God’s way to mold and shape their spiritual strength.

“For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness.” Hebrews 12:10

Hebrews 12:10 is a complete sentence. There is a contrast spelled out in this verse. The elements of this contrast are as follows:

A. They (fathers) disciplined us for a short time as seemed good to them.

BUT

B. He (God) disciplines us for our good.

“FOR THEY DISCIPLINED US FOR A SHORT TIME”

The use of the word translated “for” indicates that an explanation is being given. Though the English text does not include it, the Greek text includes the word translated “indeed.” This is intended to heighten the author’s emphasis. Once more, the word (ἐπαίδευον) appears which means to punish for the purpose of improving one’s behavior. The form of this word is imperfect tense and would be translated “they were disciplining.” The words translated “for a short time” are (πρὸς- ὀλίγας – ἡμέρας) which literally translates “to a few days.” Observe also that in this verse the author repeats the contrast as he explains what it means.

“AS SEEMED BEST TO THEM”

The words translated in this way literally mean, “by the thinking of them.” The author was trying to say that our physical father’s disciplinary actions were dictated by what they believed was in the best interest of all concerned. It may or may not have been correct, but that was certainly what happened.

“BUT HE DISCIPLINES US FOR OUR GOOD”

The word translated “but” is (δὲ) which is a lower level indicator of contrast. The Greek text of this phrase would translate, “but on the advantage.” This is more an interpretation than a translation. The author is trying to point out the superiority of God’s discipline over one’s paternal discipline.

“SO THAT WE MAY SHARE HIS HOLINESS.”

The word translated “that” is (εἰς) which seeks to identify purpose. The word translated “share” is (μεταλαβῆν) which means to receive one’s share. The form is aorist infinitive. This form would be emphatically translated “to share” or “to receive.” The word translated “holiness” is (ἁγιότητος) which means the quality of holiness as an expression of the divine. The author is really defining holiness in a different way. It is an intimate participation in the divine holiness in a growing way. For some believers, holiness is an expression of a number of very beautiful qualities. The author is attempting to describe it as living God’s lifestyle after him. It is His holiness, not mine.

“All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.” Hebrews 12:11

“ALL DISCIPLINE FOR THE MOMENT”

Verse 11 is a complete sentence. The Greek text begins this sentence with the word (δὲ) which is a lower emphasis level which identifies a contrast. The contrasted elements are as follows:

A. Verse 10 – Describes sharing God’s holiness.

BUT

B. Verse 11 all discipline is not joyful

Once more, the word translated “discipline” is (παίδεία) which identifies child training. The author added the word translated “indeed” for purposes of emphasis. The word translated “for the moment” literally translates “To the being present.” The form of the word translated “being present” is present participle, both of which forms describe ongoing action.

“SEEMS NOT TO BE JOYFUL”

The word translated “seems” is (δοκεῖ) which means to regard something as presumably true, but without certainty. The form of this word is present tense and would be literally translated “it is seeming.” The word translated “not” is (οὐ) which is a mid-level negative emphasis. The word translated “joyful” is (χαρᾶς) which means that which causes joy.

“BUT SORROWFUL”

The author used the word (ἀλλὰ) which is the strongest possible emphasis identifying contrast. This is the author’s major point. The word translated “sorrowful” is (λύπης) which means mental pain; distress.

“YET TO THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN TRAINED BY IT”

There is a second contrast in this sentence. It is initiated by the word translated “but” which is (δὲ) and identifies a very mild form of emphasis. The contrasted elements are:

A. Discipline produces pain for now.

BUT

B. Afterwards, it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness.,

The Greek text reads, “to the ones through it having been trained.” The word translated “having been trained” is (γεγυμνασμένοις) which means to experience vigorous training. The form of this word is perfect participle and would be translated “having been trained.” We need to be reminded that the author throughout this teaching has referred to this picture of child molding as an experience of training and not punishment.

“AFTERWARDS IT YIELDS THE PEACEFUL FRUIT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.”

The word translated “afterwards” is (ὕστερον) which means later; subsequently. The word translated “peaceable” is (εἰρηνικόν) which means freedom from inner turmoil or worry. The word translated “fruit” is (καρπὸν) which was used in two different ways as it is in English:

A. It was used to describe the fruit grown on trees.

B. It was also used to describe the result of a type of activity as it is in this instance.

The fruit, or result, of which he wrote is the fruit of righteousness. The word translated “righteousness” is (δικαιοσύνης) which means the act of doing what God requires.

HEBREWS 12:12-17 – CHRISTIAN ACTION AGAINST OPPOSING EVIL

+ Verses 12 and 13 form a complete sentence.

“Therefore, strengthen the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble,” Hebrews 12:12

There are several different Greek words that are translated “therefore.” They differ on the level of emphasis each one provides. The word translated “therefore” here is (διὸ) which is a median level emphasis and indicates that a conclusion is about to be presented.

Observe that in verses 12-15, the author issued seven specific commands on the basis of what he had taught in 12:1-11. Observe, also, that the content of these commands are all symbolic, but none the less intentional and required.

“STRENGTHEN THE HANDS THAT ARE WEAK”

The word translated “strengthen” applies to both of the commands in this verse. This word is (ἀνορθώσατε) which literally means to suffer paralysis. The form of this word is perfect participle and would be translated “having suffered weakness.” This idiom really means to provide encouragement by a strong resolve.

“AND THE KNEES THAT ARE FEEBLE”

The word translated “strengthen” applies to both of the commands in this verse. The word translated “feeble” is (παρὰλελυμένα) which literally means to suffer paralysis in the lower limbs. The author’s intent is a figurative statement which describes a psychological condition. He is commanding these people to minister to each other in this need for encouragement.

“and make straight paths for your feet, so that the limb which is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be healed.” Hebrews 12:13

“AND MAKE STRAIGHT PATHS FOR YOUR FEET”

The use of the word “and” ties this portion of the sentence to the previous portion. Observe that the author continues with the symbolic commands. The word translated “make” is (ποιεῖτε) which means to make; to do. The form of this word is present imperative and would be translated “be making.” The instruction

“make straight paths” was an idiom which would be translated “be making straight wheel tracks.” It is a way of saying that they must live in conformance with a predetermined model of behavior.

“SO THAT THE LIMB WHICH IS LAME”

The word translated “so that” indicates that a statement of purpose is being presented. The word translated “lame” is (χωλόν) which means the imperfect function of the lower limb

“MAY NOT BE PUT OUT OF JOINT”

The word translated “not” is (μῆ) which is a moderate emphasis negative. The word translated “might be put out of joint” is (ἐκταραπῆ) which means to sprain or wrench. The form of this word is aorist subjunctive. This is the reason for the emphatic use of the word “may.”

“BUT RATHER BE HEALED.”

The word translated “but” is (δὲ) which is a medium emphasis contrast indicator. The word translated “rather” is (μᾶλλον) which means “on the contrary; rather. The word translated “be healed” is (ἰαθῇ) which means to cause someone to become well. The form of this word is, again, aorist subjunctive which accounts for the use of the word “might” in “he might be healed.”

“Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord.”
Hebrews 12:14

“PURSUE PEACE WITH ALL MEN”

The word translated “pursue” is (διώκετε) which means to pursue with intense effort and definite purpose. The form of this word is present imperative and the command would be translated, “be pursuing as a life-style.” The word translated “peace” is (εἰρήνην) which means more than the absence of war. It describes the personal relationship which the absence of conflict provides. Remember, the recipients of this epistle were Jews for whom the word “shalom” expresses good health, prosperity and everything which the absence of war provides. The word men does not appear in the Greek text. He instructed them to pursue peace with everyone, not just believers.

“AND THE SANCTIFICATION WITHOUT WHICH”

The Greek word order is exactly the same and this adds significant emphasis. The word translated “and” ties together two or more equally important ideas. They are to pursue peace and in exactly the same way pursue sanctification. The word translated “sanctification” is (ἀγιασμόν) which means to dedicate; to consecrate to the service of God. This always includes two expressions:

- A. It involves growing in purity.
- B. It is to set oneself apart for the service of God.

The Christian life must always express itself in these pursuits or it is not real.

The words rightly translated “without which” identify a conditional element which will immediately follow.

“NO ONE WILL SEE THE LORD”

The word translated “no one” is (οὐδεὶς) which is a compound word:

- A. (οὐ) means no; not
- B. (εἷς) means one

This is a very emphatic way to say “not even one.” The word translated “will see:” is (ὀψεται) which means to see with the eye. The form of this word is future tense. The words translated “the Lord” are (τῶν) which means “the;” (κύριον) which means master. There are a number of ways in which the author could have written this. For instance:

- A. “No one will see God.”
- B. No one will go to heaven”

STUDY OF CHAPTER 12

Think about what he wrote. In our time so often the presentation of the Gospel message is if you ask God to forgive you, you are going to heaven. The author would agree with that much, but would add that it also includes daily pursuing a life of holiness; a way of increasingly following the example of Jesus is equally required.

“See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled;” Hebrews 12:15

Verse 15 is a part of the sentence which encompasses verses 14-16.

“SEE TO IT THAT NO ONE”

The word translated “see to it” is (ἐπισκοποῦντες) which means to give careful consideration to something with the implication of guarding against a problem. The form of this word is present participle. Both of these forms describe ongoing action and it would be translated “never stop seeing to it.” The words that are translated “that no one” are: (μὴ) which means not; (τις) which means “some or someone. This would not work very well in English, but it does for the Greek.

“COMES SHORT OF THE GRACE OF GOD”

The word translated “comes short” is (ὕστερῶν) which means to fail to achieve a stipulated goal. The form of this word is, again, present participle and adds serious emphasis to the statement. The phrase translated “of the grace of God” was carefully written. The Greek text literally translates, “from the grace...” The author could have written (τῆς – χάριτος) which means “of the grace” and the recipients would have completely understood. Instead, he added the word (ἀπὸ) which means “from.” This addition accomplishes at least two things:

- A. It adds serious emphasis which the author really wanted in order to convey how absolutely important this command is.
- B. It is a gentle way to let the recipients know that their practice of their Christian faith fails to reach the level of growth which he desperately wanted to see in their Christian lives.

The last two words of this phrase are “of God.” The Greek text, however, is more forceful. It reads, “of THE God.” Once more, the author achieves two important goals with the addition of the word “the.”

- A. It is a far more emphatic statement.
- B. It strongly insists that Jehovah is the only God when writing to people in a culture that worships a host of different deities.

“THAT NO ROOT OF BITTERNESS”

The word “that” is not present in the Greek text. The words translated “no root of bitterness” is a bit stronger in the Greek text which reads, “not some root of bitterness.” This is the second time in this verse that the author used the words translated “not some.” This is, once again, a way to increase the emphasis on the statement. The word translated “root” is (ρίζα) which constitutes a basic source or reason for an event. The word translated “bitterness” is (πικρίας) which means a state of intense resentment or hate. Unfortunately, it is widely thought that this is not a problem so long as you do not act on that resentment.

“SPRINGING UP CAUSES TROUBLE”

The word translated “springing up” is a visual picture of the growth of a seed. The author used it as a comparison. It is like saying, Just as a seed grows up quickly into a stalk of grain, so bitterness grows up and spreads. The form of this word is present participle and places great emphasis on continuing action. The word translated “causes trouble” is (ἐνοχλῆ) which means to cause hardship by causing continual suffering. The form of this word is present subjunctive and would be translated “may be causing.”

“AND BY IT MANY BE DEFILED.”

The Greek text is more precise. It reads, “and through it many MIGHT be defiled. The word translated “be defiled” is (μολوثῶσιν) which means to cause someone to be morally tainted. The form of this word is

aorist subjunctive. The only purpose for the aorist tense is to increase emphasis. The subjunctive mood is the mood of possibility and would be emphatically translated “might become morally tainted.”

“that there be no immoral or godless person like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a single meal.” Hebrews 12:16

“THAT THERE BE NO IMMORAL”

The Greek text reads a bit more directly. It reads “not some immoral...” The word translated “immoral” is (πόρνος) which means one who engages in sexual immorality and is not limited to the act of adultery.

“OR GODLESS PERSON LIKE ESAU”

The word translated “godless” is (βέβηλος) which means being profane or worldly. The use of the word translated “as” draws a comparison. The author used the reputation of Esau as an illustration of one who was both immoral and ungodly.

“WHO SOLD HIS OWN BIRTHRIGHT FOR A SINGLE MEAL”

This portion of the sentence is written with extreme emphasis. It is like saying, I can’t believe that he would do that. The word translated “sold” is (ἀπέδεδετο) which means to dispose of property for money. The form of this word is aorist tense which adds serious emphasis. Instead of writing “his own birthright,” the author wrote the highly emphatic words, “the first child rights of himself”. The author presented this as unbelievable. The word translated “meal” is (βρώσεως) which does not describe a banquet, but identifies the commonest of food provision. There are several words which describe the most elaborate of feasts. The word the author chose identified the meal which kept the poor from starving. The author presented this as unbelievable. He has used this report as an example of just how incredulous it was for these people to do these things, just as it was for Esau to do what he did.

“For you know that even afterwards, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought for it with tears.” Hebrews 12:17

“FOR YOU KNOW THAT EVEN AFTERWARDS”

Verse 17 is a complete and highly emphatic sentence. The use of the word “for” indicates that an explanation is in progress. The word translated “we know” is (ἴστε) which is a form of the word (οἶδα) which means to know absolutely. The form of this word is second person plural perfect tense. Second person plural would be “YOU know.” The perfect tense identifies completed action. It would then be translated “YOU knew.”

The insertion of the word translated “even” adds even greater emphasis. The word translated “afterwards” is (μετέπειτα) which carefully identifies a point following after another point.

“WHEN HE DESIRED TO INHERIT A BLESSING”

The word translated “desired” is (θέλω) which means to wish; to desire. The form of this word is present participle. Both of these forms identify ongoing action and thus add emphasis. The word translated “to inherit” is (κληρονομήσαι) which means to receive a gift, usually from a deceased father. Such an inheritance would be known in detail by the whole family before the father died. The form of this word, again, is the aorist tense which adds emphasis.

The words translated “a blessing” are (τὴν — εὐλογίαν) which means “THE seeking divine favor.” This story is told in Genesis 27. That text does not say that Esau prayed and asked God for a blessing. The bestowal of a paternal blessing, however, was viewed as a divine action. Esau begged Isaac for a blessing, but it was considered a plea involving God. The Jewish people to whom the author was writing would know and carefully understand every detail of this story.

“HE WAS REJECTED”

This is a one-word sentence within a sentence. We can't do this in English, but they could and did in the Greek text. This word is (ἀπεδοκιμάσθη) which is a compound word:

- A. (ἀπό) means from; away
- B. (δοκιμάζω) which means to approve.

It is to refuse approval in the strongest terms possible. The form of this word is aorist tense adding very serious emphasis.

“FOR HE FOUND NO PLACE FOR REPENTANCE”

Once more, the word “for” indicates that an explanation is in progress. Though this chapter consists mostly of exhortations, still this is the fourth explanation in these 17 verses.

The word translated “he found” is (εὑρεν) which means to attain or to discover. The form of this word is aorist tense which continues the emphasis which permeates the chapter. The word translated “no” is (οὐχ) which is the most emphatic negative indicator. The word translated “place” is (τόπον) which means possibility or opportunity. The word translated “repentance” is (μετανοοίας) which means to change the way one lives. This is much more than simply saying “I am sorry.”

“THOUGH HE SOUGHT FOR IT WITH TEARS”

The word translated “though” is (κάπερ) which is a compound word.

- A. (καί) means and or even
- B. (περ) means abundance

It would be translated even though or even indeed. In either situation, it is intended to add significant emphasis to the statement. The word translated “he sought” is (ἐκζητήσας) which means to spend great effort and care to discover something. The form of this word is aorist participle and would be emphatically translated “having really searched.” The word translated “tears” is (δακρύων) which means tears from the eyes.

There is nothing essential in the fact that one weeps as they search. Indeed, some people can weep at the drop of a hat. The author could say the same thing without mentioning tears. The addition of the tears is a way to indicate the depth of the struggle involved in this search.

HEBREWS 12:18-24 – CONTRAST WITH ISRAEL AT SINAI

In verses 18-24, the author spells out a huge contrast. We will identify the parts of this huge contrast and then discuss each segment.

- A. Verses 18-21, the negative part of the contrast
 - (-) You have not come to a mountain that can be touched.
 - (-) And to a blazing fire
 - (-) And to darkness
 - (-) And to gloom
 - (-) And to whirlwind
 - (-) Verse 19 – and to the blast of a trumpet
 - (-) and to the sound of words.
- B. Verses 22 – 24 (BUT)
 - (+) V. 22 - You have come to Mount Zion
 - (+) And the city of the living God
 - (+) The heavenly Jerusalem
 - (+) And to myriads of angels
 - (+) V. 23 - To the general assembly
 - (+) To the church of the first-born
 - (+) You have come to God
 - (+) to the spirit of righteous men made perfect

(+) V. 24 and to Jesus

(+) and to the sprinkled blood.

Hebrews 12:18-20A form a single complete sentence.

“For you have not come to a mountain that can be touched and to a blazing fire, and to darkness and gloom and whirlwind,” Hebrews 12:18

“FOR WE HAVE NOT COME TO A MOUNTAIN”

The word “for” indicates that an explanation is about to be given. The word translated “not” is (οὐ) which is a median level emphasis negative indicator. The word translated “you have come” is (προσεληλύθατε) which means to move toward a reference point. The form of this word is perfect tense which indicates completed action. The words “to a mountain” are understood, but they do not appear in the Greek text.

“THAT CAN BE TOUCHED AND TO A BURNING FIRE”

The word translated “that can be touched” is (ψηλαφωμένω) which means to move your hand over a surface. The form of this word is present participle. Both of these forms describe ongoing action and would be translated “being touched.”

The word translated “burning” is (κεκαυμένω) which means to be on fire. The form of this word is perfect participle.

A. Perfect tense identifies completed action.

B. Participle identifies ongoing action.

When these two forms are used together they describe action going on in the past and would be translated “having been burned.” The word translated “in fire” is (πυρ) which means flames. The addition of the word “in” comes from the fact that the word is in the dative case.

“AND TO DARKNESS”

The use of the word “and” ties two or more equally important concepts together as it does in this contrast. The word translated “to darkness” is (γνόφω) which means the total absence of light. The word translated “TO darkness” comes from the fact that the word (γνόφω) is in the dative case.

“AND GLOOM”

The word translated “gloom” is (ζόφω) which means the sense of forboding that accompanies such a time of total darkness. The word (ζόφω) is also in the dative case and would be literally translated “to gloom.”

“AND WHIRLWIND”

The word translated “whirlwind” is (θύελλα) which means a violent wind squall. The form of this word is also dative case and would be literally translated “to storm.”

“and to the blast of a trumpet and the sound of words which sound was such that those who heard begged that no further word be spoken to them.” Hebrews 12:19

“AND TO THE BLAST OF A TRUMPET”

The word translated “blast” is (ἦχῳ) which means any type of sound or tone. This word is modified by the word (σόλπιγγος) which means “trumpet” and identifies the kind of sound referred to in the previous word.

“AND THE SOUND OF WORDS”

Here, the author used a different word to identify sound. The word (φονῇ) identifies the sound of the human voice. The word translated “of words” is (ῥημάτων) which means “of words” and identifies the kind of human voice sound to which he was referring.

“WHICH SOUND WAS SUCH”

The word translated “which” appears in the text, but this word for sound is understood, but does not appear. The words “was such” are understood, but do not appear in the text.

“THAT THOSE WHO HEARD”

The word translated “those who heard” is (ἀκούσαντες) which means to hear. The form of the word is aorist participle and would be emphatically translated “the ones hearing.”

“BEGGED THAT NO FURTHER WORD BE SPOKEN TO THEM”

The word translated “begged” is (παρητήσαντο) which means to request with urgency. The aorist tense of this word would emphatically be translated “they begged. The word “no” is (μὴ) which is a median negative indicator. The balance of this phrase emphatically reads, “to be set to them word.”

“For they could not bear the command, Hebrews 12:20A

The word translated “for” announces a coming explanation. The word translated “not” which is next to the strongest negative indicator, indicates that this is one reminder that is a very emphatic statement. The word translated “bear” is (ἐφρον) which means to be able to receive or comprehend. The form of this word is imperfect tense and would be translated, “They were being unable to comprehend. Or respond to.” The word translated “the command” is (διαστελλόμενον) which means to order or command. The form of this word is present participle and would be translated “be being commanded.

“IF EVEN A BEAST TOUCHES THE MOUNTAIN, IT WILL BE STONED.”” Hebrews 12:20B**“IF EVEN A BEAST TOUCHES THE MOUNTAIN”**

The word translated “even if” is (καὶ) which is a compound word:

A. (καὶ) is also translated “even.”

B. (εἰ) means “if.”

Had the command been given, “If an animal touches the mountain,” this strong conditional statement would have been easily understood. The addition of the word “Even” heightens the emphasis of the word substantially.

The word translated “beast” is (θηρίον) which means wild animal. In Mark 1:13, Jesus spent 40 days in the wilderness with the “wild beasts.” (same word.) The word translated “touches” is (θίγει) which means to come in contact with. The form of this word is aorist subjunctive and would be translated “might touch.” It has been a while since the author used this form. The word translated “Mountain” is (τοῦ-οὐρους) which means a relatively high elevation. This word is translated “mountain” throughout the New Testament. The word for “hill” is (βουνός).

“IT WILL BE STONED”

The word translated “it will be stoned” is (λιθοβοληθήσεται) which means to kill by throwing stones. The form of this word is future tense. Being stoned to death in Israel was the punishment for religious blasphemy. That is how this was reported from the Exodus account.

“And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, “I AM FULL OF FEAR and trembling.”” Hebrews 12:21**“AND SO TERRIBLE WAS THE SIGHT”**

In this verse, the author referred to the words of Moses in Deuteronomy 9:19 where he talked about the after-effects of the golden calf episode. We seldom begin a sentence with the word “and,” but our author was not reluctant to do so. It was intended to show that what follows is an integral part of the former information, though they are separate sentences.

The word translated “terrible” is (φοβερόν) which means something that causes fear. The word translated “was” is accurate, but was not essential. It adds emphasis. The word translated “sight” is (φανταζόμενον) which means to become visible. The form of this word is present participle which highlights ongoing action and would be translated “the startling appearance.”

“THAT MOSES SAID”

The use of the word “that” is required in translation, but it is simply understood in the Greek text. The words (Μουσῆς – εἶπεν) literally reads, “Moses he said. The word translated “he said” is aorist tense and is most emphatic.

“I AM FULL OF FEAR AND TREMBLING.”

The author could have used a more passive way to write “I am fearful.” He chose the most emphatic means available.

The word translated “full of fear” is (ἐκφοβός) which means to be terrified. To say I am terrified did not fully express his real feeling. He added “and trembling.” The word translated “trembling” is (ἐντρομος) which means to shake uncontrollably. If you look carefully at verse 21, you see two different words which are both derivatives of the word (φόβος) - (φοβερόν) means extremely afraid and (ἐκφοβός) meaning extremely afraid. The author was groping for words to express his intent.

“But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels,” Hebrews 12:22

The word translated “but” is (ἀλλὰ) which is the most emphatic word to indicate that a contrast is in progress. The contrasted elements are as follows:

A. Verse 21 – the most frightening image he could present.

BUT – (ἀλλὰ)

B. Verse 22 the most calming images possible.

“YOU HAVE COME TO MOUNT ZION”

The word translated “you have come to” is (προσεληλύθατε) which means to move toward someone or something. The form of this word is perfect tense describing accomplished action. The word translated “mount” is (ὄρει) which in contrast to (βουνός), which means hill, identifies a relatively high location. The reference to Mount Zion is usually a reference to the temple area which these recipients would know very well. This would be a very comforting thought for the recipients. There was a special relationship between the Jews and the city of Jerusalem where they once lived. It was a bit like their tie to the temple itself where God placed His name.

“AND TO THE CITY OF THE LIVING GOD”

Once more, the word “and” was used to tie together two or more basic ideas as equals. The addition of the word “living” is both emphatic and encouraging. Observe that up to this point, the author has not mentioned the name of the city. The fact, however, that he referred to the city as the city of the living God would have a very calming and strengthening effect upon these suffering Christian Jews. When things are at their most difficult, it is encouraging to be reminded that God is very much alive and involved in our lives.

“THE HEAVENLY JERUSALEM”

The next piece of encouragement comes as a bit of a surprise. He had just mentioned the city of the living God. They might anticipate the name Jerusalem to be used soon. He changed his message abruptly with no explanation and refers to Jerusalem, but it is the heavenly one. It literally reads Jerusalem on heaven.” The word translated “heavenly” is (ἐπουρανίω) which is a compound word:

A. (ἐπὶ) which means on or upon.

B. (ουρανός) which means heaven.

This would be completely understood by these Christian Jews. They looked forward to a heavenly Jerusalem more wonderful than the beautiful Jerusalem in which they once lived. This also would be a great source of encouragement.

“AND TO MYRIADS OF ANGELS.”

The word translated “myriad” is (μυριάδων) which stands for a very large, indefinite number. It would be appropriate to translate the word “countless angels. This also would be a source of great encouragement to them because all their lives they had thought of angels as divine servants who ministered to the needs of His people.

“to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect,” Hebrews 12:23

“TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND CHURCH OF THE FIRSTBORN”

The Greek text reads a bit differently. It literally reads, “And church of the first born.” The word translated “assembly” is (ἐκκλησία) which is a compound word:

- A. (ἐκ) means from; out of
- B. (καλέσιν) means to call

It was repeatedly used to identify the church as the assembly of those called out of a life of sin to serve their God. The word translated “of the first-born” is (πρωτοτόκων) which means first-born child. In the Jewish culture, being the first born son involved a number of rights and responsibilities. This could be a way to refer to the church that belongs to Christ.

“WHO ARE ENROLLED IN HEAVEN”

The word translated “enrolled” is (ἀπογεγραμμένων) which means to register as in a census. The form of this word is perfect participle and would be translated “having been registered. In the Greek text, the word translated “heaven” is really “heavens” – plural. The author has described a relationship which Jewish people of that era would completely understand. On the Day of Atonement, when their sacrifice was complete, their names would be recorded in the book of life. It meant that they would be going to heaven if they died. This awareness would be a source of encouragement to beleaguered, persecuted Christian Jews.

“AND TO GOD”

The word “to” appears in the phrase because the word translated “God” is in the dative case which is translated “to” or “for.” The author has said here, “you have come to God.” This is very affirming to say the least.

“THE JUDGE OF ALL”

The word translated “judge” is (κριτή) which means the one who pronounces judgement. Notice that the author modified this by including the words “of all.” This would have deep meaning for a Jewish audience. They believed that God would judge every human being. This was helpful when they were suffering at the hands of their Gentile enemies. They also believed that God judges our conduct now and will ultimately judge our lives after our passing.

“AND TO THE SPIRITS OF THE RIGHTEOUS MEN MADE PERFECT.”

A little overview may be helpful at this point. Observe that the previous phrase deals with their coming to God the judge of all. Verse 24 begins with the coming to Jesus. In between these two monumental statements is this statement about the spirits of the righteous. It appears that this statement is a bit of a parenthesis given between two monumental situations.

Once more, the word “and” ties two or more equal issues together. This, however, is a bit surprising. The word translated “spirits” is (πνεύματι) which identifies that part of our lives which is sensitive and responsive to God. The word translated “righteous” is (δικαίων) which means to be in accord with what God requires of our lives. The word “men” does not appear in the Greek text, but its presence is understood. The word translated “made perfect” is (τετελειωμένων) which means to be made complete, not flawless. The form of this word is perfect participle and would be translated “having been made complete.”

“and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel.” Hebrews 12:24

“AND TO JESUS”

Once more the author reverts to the use of the word “and” to introduce the next phrase. With the exception of the last phrase, these references have intentionally been reported in ascending order and here he has continued with that ascending order.

The word “to” is not a separate word in the Greek text. It grows out of the use of the dative case. Observe also that in a letter sent to the church in a Gnostic culture, the author referred to “Jesus” – (savior) rather than to “Christ” – (Messiah.)

Actually, in this lengthy process, the author is seeking to emphasize that in the times of great pain and struggle we must always turn to Jesus.

“THE MEDIATOR OF A NEW COVENANT”

This phrase seeks to highlight the portion of Jesus’ life and ministry that leads to the cross and our salvation.

The word translated “mediator” is (μεσίτης) which means the one who initiates an agreement; one who brings the covenanting parties together. Jesus is not only the one who paid the price, but was also the one who brought us together with the Father in this merciful covenant.

The word translated “covenant” is (διαθήκης) which means an agreement which identifies both the responsibilities and benefits which the two parties will honor. He speaks of this covenant as “new” which carries the idea of being both recent and superior to a previous one. From “Abraham until the Lord returns, the covenant will be exactly the same as it was with Abraham – “I will be your God and you will be My people.” The question naturally arises, if the conditions are the same, then why is a new covenant needed?” It is necessary because God kept His part of the agreement, but mankind violated the covenant. Thus, the covenant was broken and a new agreement was made necessary. The thing that makes this covenant “new” and superior is that the sacrifice in the first covenant was the sacrifice of an animal. In the new covenant, the sacrifice is the sinless Son of God - the sinless suffering for the sins of all of us. This sacrifice is made once, not every year.

“AND TO THE SPRINKLED BLOOD”

The Greek text literally translates this phrase, “And to blood of sprinkling.” Again, every Jewish recipient would fully understand what the author was trying to say. When the lamb’s blood was sprinkled upon the altar, their sins were forgiven. This was a very important image for them.

“WHICH SPEAKS BETTER THAN THE BLOOD OF ABEL.”

First, the words “blood of” do not appear in the Greek text. It literally reads, “speaking better from the Abel.” Most biblical scholars agree that the author was speaking of the blood of Abel. The story of Cain and Abel is presented in Genesis chapter four. In 4:10, God said to Cain, “The voice of your brother’s blood is crying to me from the ground.” The blood of Abel cried out to God against the sin of Cain. The blood of Jesus is yet greater than the blood of Abel in redeeming us from every form of sin.

HEBREWS 12:25-29 – WARNING AGAINST INACTION

“See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. Hebrews 12:25A

Hebrews 12:25A is a complete sentence.

“SEE TO IT”

The Greek text literally reads, “see.” The form of this word is present imperative. The command would literally read, “Be seeing.”

“THAT YOU DO NOT REFUSE”

The word “that” is not found in the Greek text at this point, but it is understood. The word translated “not” is (μή) which is a median emphasis negative indicator. The word translated “you refuse” is (παραιτήσῃσθε) which means to refuse to listen. The form of this word is aorist subjunctive. The aorist tense places serious emphasis on the statement. The subjunctive is the mood of possibility and it should emphatically be translated “might refuse to hear.”

“HIM WHO IS SPEAKING”

The use of the word “Him” is an interpretation, not a translation and is not in the Greek text. The text literally reads, “the one speaking.” The word translated “speaking” is (λαλουῦντα) which means to speak. The form of this word is present participle. Both of these forms identify ongoing action and thus add serious emphasis. The emphasis here is on Jesus who speaks from heaven on behalf of the Father.

For if those did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape who turn away from Him who warns from heaven.” Hebrews 12:25B

Observe that Hebrews 12:25B-26A form a single complete sentence.

“FOR IF THESE DID NOT ESCAPE”

The use of the word “for” indicates that an explanation is forthcoming. The use of the word “if” here indicates that this explanation is in the form of a strong conditional statement. The elements of the conditional statement are as follows:

- A. (the condition) if those did not escape
- B. The consequence – (then) this will happen

The word translated “not” is (οὐκ) which is next to the most emphatic negative expression. This is strong emphasis. The word translated “escape” is (ἐξέφυγον) which means to be safe from danger by escaping; by fleeing. The form of this word is aorist tense and therefore is very emphatic. The use of the word “THESE” is a reference to the people to whom the prophets spoke and who disobeyed.

“WHEN THEY REFUSED HIM”

The word translated “they refused” is (παραιτησόμενοι) which means to refuse to listen. This is the second time this word has appeared in verse 25. The form of this word is aorist participle and would be emphatically translated “having refused to hear.”

“WHO WARNED THEM ON EARTH,”

The word translated “warned” is (κηρύττοντα) which means to make known a message from God. The form of this word is present participle which adds strategic emphasis to the statement. The words “on earth” form the beginning of a very special contrast. It is a contrast, but one half sets the stage for the other half to substantially supersede it. The “one who warned them on earth” is a reference to the prophets whom God sent to warn His people.

“MUCH LESS WILL WE ESCAPE”

Instead of the words, “much less” the Greek text reads, “much more.” The intent in both cases is exactly the same. The author was attempting to indicate that one of these scenarios is far greater than the other.

“WHO TURN AWAY FROM HIM WHO WARNS FROM HEAVEN”

The word translated “turn away” is (ἀποστρέφόμενοι) which means to abandon a former relationship; to fall away. The form of this word is present participle – both of these forms identify ongoing action; lifestyle. It therefore adds serious emphasis.

If you look carefully at the Greek text, you will notice two words that are not part of the translation:

- A. (ὅτι) which means “the,” and is in the nominative case.
- B. (τὸν) which means “the,” and is in the accusative

This is a favorite tool of this author and is intended to add significant emphasis. It would read “much more, we are abandoning THE one from THE heavens who warns.”

The word translated “from heaven” is really to be translated “from THE heavens” – (plural). This accomplishes at least two things:

- A. It is a reference to Jesus, whom the Gnostics reject.
- B. It also points to Jesus’ divine actions since the ascension. This would also be an important bone of contention with the Gnostics.

The deliberate logic of this verse is obvious. IF we reject Jesus’ instructions on earth there will be consequences. The consequences will be far greater however, if we reject Jesus’ instructions from the heavens.

“And His voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised, saying, Hebrews 12:26A

“AND HIS VOICE SHOOK THE EARTH THEN”

The word “and” does not appear in the Greek text. Its addition is the translator’s way to suggest that this statement is tied carefully to the previous one. This sentence is a strong contrast. The contrasted elements are as follows:

- A. His voice shook the earth THEN
BUT
- B. NOW he has promised...

The word translated “voice” is (φωνῇ) which identifies the human voice. The word translated “shook” is (ἐσάλευσεν) which means to cause something to shake violently. The form of this word is aorist tense. This tense is only used to add strong emphasis to a statement.

The words translated “the earth” are (τῇν – γῆν) and they are well translated. Their understanding of “the earth” and ours are quite different. They thought of the earth as the surface; the place where people lived. Modern technology and advances have given us a completely different perspective of the monstrous round sphere on which we live. The author completed the phrase with a time designation – then. This will stress the contrast between this phrase and the next which will be identified as “Now.”

In the story of the Exodus, God spoke to Israel from Sinai and His voice shook the earth. The author did not need to spell this out for these Jewish believers. They knew exactly that to which he was referring

“BUT NOW HE HAS PROMISED SAYING”

The word translated “but” is (δὲ) which is a mild emphasis indicator. The word translated “now” is (νῦν) which means now. Whenever we see the words translated together “but now” we can be assured that a strong contrast is in order. Actually, there are two contrasts in this verse:

- A. THEN versus NOW
- B. SHOOK versus PROMISED

This doubling adds significant emphasis.

The word translated “He has promised” is (ἐπήγγελοι) which means to announce with certainty what one will do. This word is the root of our English word “evangel.” The form of this word is perfect tense and would be translated “He has promised” – completed action.

The verse closes with the word translated “saying” which is (λέγων) which means to speak. It is intended to focus attention on what is being spoken. The form of the word is present participle which emphasizes ongoing action.

“YET ONCE MORE I WILL SHAKE NOT ONLY THE EARTH, BUT ALSO THE HEAVEN.” Hebrews 12:26B

“YET ONCE MORE”

The last portion of verse 26 is a complete sentence. It also includes a very emphatic contrast which will be spelled out momentarily. In the Greek text, this phrase would be translated “in addition, once...”

“I WILL SHAKE NOT ONLY THE EARTH”

The contrasted elements of this sentence are as follows:

A. I will shake not only the earth

BUT ALSO

B. The heavens

The word translated “I will shake” is (σεισω) which means to cause something to move back and forth violently. The form of this word is future tense and “I will shake” is a good translation. The words translated “not only” arte (οὐ - μόνον) which means “not alone.” It is a way to emphasize the accuracy of the word choices. Once again, the words translated “the earth” are properly translated. . If you look at Exodus 19, you will see an example of what the author was talking about:

“Now Mount Sinai was all in smoke because the LORD descended upon it in fire; and its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked violently.” Exodus 19:18

“BUT ALSO THE HEAVEN”

As mentioned before, there are several words that are translated “but.” These words differ in their levels of emphasis. The word (ἀλλὰ) , as used here, is the most emphatic. The author wanted even greater emphasis and thus he added the Greek word (καὶ) which means “also” in this instance. The author’s level of emphasis is just about as high as it is possible to make

The last part of this contrast is translated “the heaven.” In many places, they have felt the violent rumble of an earth quake. It is not certain that they also experienced the violent shaking of the heaven. It appears that the author was describing a situation the violence of which was beyond imagination.

“And this expression, “Yet once more,” denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, so that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.” Hebrews 12:27

“AND THIS EXPRESSION, YET ONCE MORE”

The words translated “and this expression” are (τὸ – δὲ) which mean, But the.” The additional words are interpretive attempts to clarify a very difficult word order, but they do not appear in the text. The words translated “yet once more” are exactly as they were presented in the previous verse – 26.

“DENOTES THE REMOVING”

The word translated “denotes” is (δηλοῖ) which means to make clear. The form of this word is present tense and would be translated “Is making clear.” The word translated “removing” is (μετάθεσιν) which means to change the location of something.

“OF THOSE THINGS WHICH CAN BE SHAKEN”

The Greek text of this phrase would literally read, “The of the being shaken.” The use of the two words translated “the of the” is a way to add serious emphasis. The word translated “being shaken” is (σαλευομένων) which means “to cause something to move back and forth violently,” as we saw in verse 26. The form of this word is, again, present participle and would be translated “being shaken.”

“AS OF CREATED THINGS,”

The use of the word translated “as” (ὥς) indicates that a comparison is being made. The word translated “of created” is (πεποιημένων) which means to produce something new. The form of this word is perfect participle and would be translated “having been created.” The compared elements here are as follows: Things can be shaken just as created things can be moved – like an earthquake.

“SO THAT THAT THOSE THINGS WHICH CANNOT BE SHAKEN MAY REMAIN”

The word translated “so that” is (ἵνα) which indicates that a statement of purpose is being provided. The words translated “the things which cannot be shaken” were literally translated “the not being shaken.” The

form of this word is present participle. The word so translated is (σαλευόμενα) which means that which moves back and forth violently. The word translated 'not' is (μὴ) and is a medium level negative indicator. The word translated "may remain" is (μείνη) which means to continue to exist. The form is aorist subjunctive which accounts for the use of the word "may."

"Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe;" Hebrews 12:28

"THEREFORE, SINCE WE RECEIVE A KINGDOM"

The word translated "therefore" is (διὸ) which is a compound word:

- A. (διὰ) means through
- B. (ὅ) means which

As a compound word it was usually translated "wherefore" which is a lower emphasis indicator of conclusion. It separates the cause – (verses 25-27) from the solutions (verses 28, 29). The word "since" does not appear in the Greek text. The word translated "we received" is (παρολαμβάνοντες) which means to have as a guest. The form of this word is present participle and would be translated "having received."

"WHICH CANNOT BE SHAKEN"

The words translated "kingdom which cannot be shaken" is (βασιλείαν – ἀσάλευτον) which mean "kingdom unshakable." The word translated "unshakable" is a compound word.

- A. (ἀ) means not
- B. (σαλεύω) means shaken

This maneuver adds emphasis to the statement.

"LET US SHOW GRATITUDE"

The word translated "let us show" is (ἔχωμεν) which means to have or possess. The form of the word is present subjunctive which would be translated "let us be having." The subjunctive mood is expressed by the insertion of the words "let us" or "we may." The word translated "gratitude" is (χαρίν) which means to give thanks.

"BY WHICH WE MAY OFFER TO GOD"

The word translated "by" is (δι), which is not inappropriate, but the word "through" is a more common translation and is more descriptive.

The word translated "we may offer" us (λατρεύωμεν) which means to perform a religious rite as part of worship. The form of this word is present subjunctive and thus would be translated "we may be serving." The words translated "to God" are (τῷ-θεῷ) which means "to THE God." This is an important distinction because it makes three claims:

- A. It identifies Jehovah as God.]
- B. The insertion of the word "THE" indicates that Jehovah alone is God.
- C. He is our God – personal.

"AN ACCEPTABLE SERVICE"

The word translated "acceptable" is (εὐαρέστως) which means pleasing.

"WITH REVERENCE AND AWE."

The word translated "reverence" is (εὐλαβείας) which means devout, circumspect. This is a compound word:

- A. (εὖ) means good; well
- B. (λαμβάνω) means to have.

The word translated "awe" is (δέους) which means to worship; a profound respect. It is important to identify the relationship these words share with each other.

- A. The word translated "awe" identifies the attitude we have toward God.

STUDY OF CHAPTER 12

B. Reverence describes the way this attitude of awe expresses itself in our relationships with God and each other.

If you review verse 28, you will see a cause and effect relationship within one sentence. The cause is the fact that God has provided us with a kingdom which will not be destroyed. The effect is that our response is worshipful service to God in an attitude which so carefully follows God's instructions and which expresses itself fully in our love for each other which is the measure of our love for God.

“for our God is a consuming fire.” Hebrews 12:29

The word translated “for” is (γάρ) and indicates that an explanation is coming. The recipients would have easily understood if the author had left it at this point. Instead, the author added the word (καὶ) which is usually translated “and”, but in a situation like this it was used to add strong emphasis. It would be translated “indeed.” Instead of “our God” as English translations report, the author wrote the more emphatic “THE God of us.” Once more, the use of the word “THE” with God stresses the fact that Jehovah is the only God. The word translated “consuming” is (καταναλίσκον) which means to destroy completely. The form of this word is present participle and strongly emphasizes ongoing action. Some would translate it, “never stop consuming kind of fire.”

QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 13

HEBREWS 13:1 – 25

1. There are seven paragraphs in Hebrews chapter 13. On the following table, write a brief summary of eight words or less for each paragraph.

13:1-6	
13:7-16	
13:17	
13:18-19	
13:20-21	
13:22-23	
13:24-25	

2. In Hebrews 13:1-6 there are six complete sentences.
- A. Hebrews 13:1 is a complete sentence.
 - 1. This sentence is a command. Why would Paul issue this as a command rather than as an encouragement?
 - 2. The word translated “brotherly love” is conditional rather than without condition. Why would Paul choose to use the weaker word for love?
 - B. Hebrews 13:2 is a complete sentence
 - 1. What does the author mean by this instruction?
 - 2. This sentence is also in the form of a command. Why do you think the author had to do this?
 - C. Hebrews 13:3 is a complete sentence.
 - 1. There are two commands in this sentence.
 - a. What are the commands?
 - b. What does it mean, “Remember the prisoners as though in prison with them”?
 - c. What does it mean, “Those who are ill-treated”?
 - 2. How would you explain the explanation the author presented in this verse?
 - D. Hebrews 13:4 is a complete sentence.
 - 1. Verse four seems almost out of place in this paragraph.
 - a. What does marriage have to do with the persecution with which the author is dealing?
 - b. What does the “marriage bed” have to do with these instructions concerning persecution?
 - 2. The word translated “for” introduces an explanation. What does this explanation have to do with the two instructions just presented?
 - E. Hebrews 13:5 is a complete sentence.
 - 1. It could seem strange for the author to interject a preoccupation with money and things into his discourse on persecution.
 - a. In what way would it be appropriate for him to say this?
 - b. What is the author really trying to say and suggest in this verse?
 - F. Hebrews 13:6 is a complete sentence.
 - 1. Verse six is a quotation from Psalm 118:6.
 - a. Why would the author include this quotation?
 - b. Why would the author include this quotation here?
 - 2. What does this accomplish?
3. In Hebrews 13:7-16 there are nine complete sentences.
- A. Hebrews 13:7 is a complete sentence.
 - 1. There is a double command in this verse.

The Superior Jesus

- a. What are the commands?
- b. What do they mean?
2. What was he seeking to accomplish by these commands? Why?
- B. Hebrews 13:8 is a complete sentence.
 1. This verse appears on many plaques today.
 2. What does he mean by “the same”?
 3. How else could you express the idea presented in “Yesterday AND today AND forever”?
 4. Why would he choose this particular way to express the idea?
- C. Hebrews 13:9 is a complete sentence.
 1. This verse begins with a command:
 - a. What is the command?
 - b. What does it mean?
 2. What explanation does he give for this command?
 3. What does the author mean by, “Strengthened by grace, not by foods”?
- D. Hebrews 13:10 is a complete sentence.
 1. To what altar does he refer in this verse?
 2. What is he dealing with when he wrote, “From which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat”?
- E. Hebrews 13:11 is a complete sentence.
 1. The author is detailing the Jewish sacrificial system for people who knew it about as well as he did. Why would he do this?
 2. This verse is an explanation. What was he explaining?
 3. Why would this be important for these people to remember?
- F. Hebrews 13:12 is a complete sentence.
 1. This verse is a lower emphasis level conclusion.
 - a. What previous information does he conclude?
 - b. What conclusion does he present?
 - c. What is accomplished by the inclusion of the word “also”?
 2. Why is the location of Jesus’ crucifixion important?
- G. Hebrews 13:13, 14 form a complete sentence.
 1. In verse 13, the word translated “hence” literally translates “for this reason,” and indicates an explanation is in process:
 - a. What is he explaining?
 - b. How did he explain it?
 - c. What does he mean, “go out to Him outside the camp”?
 - d. How can we “bear His reproach”?
 - e. How can this be of help?
 2. In verse 14, what does he mean by, “here we do not have a lasting city”?
 3. Again, what does he mean by “But we are seeking the city which is to come”?
- H. Hebrews 13:15 is a complete sentence.
 1. The word translated “then” is most always translated “therefore,” and initiates a conclusion.
 - a. What previous information is he concluding?
 - b. What conclusion does he present?
 2. How would you explain “a sacrifice of praise”?
 3. The phrase “fruit of lips” is a common, picturesque, Jewish phrase.
 - a. What does it mean?
 - b. Why would he say this so casually rather than as a command?
 4. Why would he write, “Give thanks to His name” rather than “Give thanks to Him”?

QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 13

- I. Hebrews 13:16 is a complete sentence.
 1. This verse contains two commands and an explanation.
 - a. What are the two commands?
 - b. What is the explanation?
 - c. In what way are “doing good” and “sharing” sacrifices?
 - d. Why would these be so pleasing to God?
 2. Notice that in good Jewish style, the author presented the (+) positive and then presented the (-) negative. Why would he approach it this way?
4. In Hebrews 13:17, this paragraph contains a single complete sentence.
 - A. The author used the words “obey” and “submit”:
 1. What does he mean by “obey”?
 2. What does he mean by “submit”?
 3. What is the difference between the two?
 - B. These commands are without exception. What if the leader gives wrong instructions as some did?
 - C. Why would the author give such unequivocal instructions?
 1. What does he mean by, “For they keep watch over your souls”?
 2. There is a comparison in this verse. What two things are being compared?
 3. There is also a contrast in this verse. What are the elements of this contrast?
 4. The author wrote, “For this was unprofitable for you.” What did he mean?
5. In Hebrews 13:18-19 there are two complete sentences.
 - A. Verse 18 is a command. Think carefully about this command:
 1. Why would he have to use a command?
 2. What does it tell you when he issues this command?
 3. What does this command tell you about his relationship with the recipients?
 4. The use of the word translated “for” indicates that an explanation is coming.
 - a. What is he explaining?
 - b. What explanation did he provide?
 5. What does it mean, “That we have a good conscience”?
 6. What does he mean by the word “honorably”?
 - B. Please reread verses 18 and 19. What does this tell us about the way the author disciplines faltering Christians?
 1. What did the author mean when he wrote, “So that I may be restored to you the sooner”?
 2. What do you learn from the fact that he wrote, “restored TO YOU”?
 3. What would he be restored from?
6. In Hebrews 13:20-21 there is a complete sentence.
 - A. This sentence is a benediction.
 1. Out of all the things that God is, why would the author choose to refer to Him as “the God of peace”?
 2. Having referred to Deity as the “God of peace,” what is he saying about God when mentions the resurrection of Jesus?
 3. Observe how he describes Jesus. What is he trying to say about the Lord?
 - B. Read verses 20 and 21 again.
 1. Whom is he saying “equips us for every good work”?
 2. The author used the words, “Equip you in every good thing to do His will. What is he saying about the motivation to do God’s will?
 3. The author wrote, “Working in us that which is pleasing in His sight.”
 - a. What is the difference between “to do His will” and “That which is pleasing in His sight”?

The Superior Jesus

- b. What was he trying to say when he wrote, “To whom be glory for ever and ever”?
4. The author concluded the benediction with the word “Amen.” Does this indicate that this is a prayer?
7. In Hebrews 13:22-23 there are two complete sentences.
 - A. Hebrews 13:22 is a complete sentence.
 1. The use of the word “but” indicates that we are in the midst of a contrast. What are the two contrasted elements?
 2. What do you view as the benefit of inserting the word “brethren” (which he only called them three times- 3:1; 10:19 and 13:22) at this point in the epistle?
 3. How would you describe the author’s feelings when he wrote, “I urge you brethren...”?
 4. What did he mean when he wrote, “Bear with this word of exhortation”?
 5. Why would he have to stress, “For I have written to you briefly”?
 - B. Hebrews 13:23 is a complete sentence.
 1. What does this verse tell us about Timothy?
 2. The author does not explain timothy’s situation. Can we assume that the recipients would know all about Timothy?
 3. Why would the author tie his visit with the recipients to Timothy’s release from whatever was holding him?
8. In Hebrews 13:24-25 there are three complete sentences.
 - A. Hebrews 13:24 contains two complete sentences. The first reads, **“Greet all of your leaders and all of the saints.” Hebrews 13:24A**
 1. This sentence is the extended greeting which was universally used in the first century when one did write a letter. We tend to have difficulty with the word “saints.” What does this word mean?
 2. Observe that he greets the “saints” and “leaders” separately. Why would he do this?
 3. The words, “those from Italy greet you” are the second complete sentence in this verse. What can we infer from this phrase?
 - B. Hebrews 13:24B reads as follows: “Those from Italy greet you”
 1. Observe that he greets the “saints” and “leaders” separately. Why would he do this?
 2. The words, “those from Italy greet you” are the second complete sentence in this verse. What can we infer from this phrase?
 - C. Verse 25 is a complete sentence. We tend to treat the words, “grace be with you all,” as a general closing to a letter. We tend to think of it as we think of the word “sincerely.” What would this sentence mean to the recipients?

STUDY OF CHAPTER 13

SOCIAL AND SPIRITUAL INTERTWINED IN FAITH

HEBREWS 13:1 – 25

In Hebrews chapter 13, there are seven paragraphs. On the following table you will find a brief summary of each of these paragraphs.

13:1-6	Instructions in social responsibilities
13:7-16	Instructions in spiritual responsibilities
13:17	Instructions in responsibilities to leaders
13:18-19	Prayer request for prison release
13:20-21	Benediction
13:22-23	Plan to visit
13:24-25	Parting greeting

HEBREWS 13:1-6 – INSTRUCTIONS IN SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

“Let love of the brethren continue.” Hebrews 13:1

Hebrews 13:1 is a complete sentence. The Greek text of this sentence would read, “the brotherly love, let it continue.”

The word translated “brotherly love” is (φιλαδελφία) which identifies an affection for a fellow believer. As indicated earlier, the New Testament has three words which measure the expression of love:

- A. (ἔρως) which identifies physical love.
- B. (φιλαδελφία) which is love, with definite limitations – I love you IF...
- C. (ἀγάπη) love with no restrictions – I love you just because you are...

This being the case, one might wonder why the author did not use the word (ἀγάπη). We know that when life is threatened, it is natural for a person’s focus to turn to self-preservation. That is where these people were. As tensions increase, so does our personal focus. At this point, even the expressions of brotherly-love were in jeopardy. The author was seeking an improvement in the love relationship within the body of Christ.

The word translated “let continue” is (μενέτω) which means to continue to exist. The form of this word is present imperative. This is a strong command and would be translated “let it be being continued.”

“Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it.” Hebrews 13:2

“DO NOT NEGLECT TO SHOW HOSPITALITY TO STRANGERS”

The word translated “not” is (μὴ) which is a median emphasis negative indicator. The word translated “neglect” is (ἐπιλανθάνεσθε) which means to forget; neglect; overlook. The form of this word is present imperative. This command would be translated “do not be neglecting.” In that era and locale, if a stranger was travelling and stopped at your house or tent, you were expected to provide food, lodging and protection for three days. The story of Lot is a good illustration of this. When Christians travelled, they were loathed to stay in a caravanserai because of the lurid things that happened in such places. Again, in times of persecution, people tend to focus on themselves and their own safety. In such situations the travelling believer would be left with no place to stay.

The word translated “hospitality to strangers” is (φιλοξενίας) which is a compound word:

- A. (φίλος) means friend - loved, but with limits.
- B. (ξένος) which means foreigner

Such a person is a foreigner and a believer, but they are also one who shares our limited love.

“FOR BY THIS, SOME HAVE ENTERTAINED ANGELS”

The use of the word (γάρ), which means “for,” indicates that the author is going to explain the instruction to show hospitality to strangers. The words (δία – ταύτης) means through this means. The word (τίνες) means “some”. The word translated “have entertained” is (ξενίσαντες) which means to show hospitality. The form of this word is aorist participle which would be emphatically translated “be entertaining.” The word translated “angels” is (ἀγγέλους) which means a supernatural being

“WITHOUT KNOWING IT”

The author added the word (ἔλεθον) which means to lack knowledge; to be unaware. The form of this word is aorist tense which is used solely to add strong emphasis.

“Remember the prisoners, as though in prison with them, and those who are ill-treated, since you yourselves also are in the body.” Hebrews 13:3

“REMEMBER THE PRISONERS”

The word translated “remember” is (μιμνήσκεσθε) which means to recall; to be aware of information and then respond appropriately. The word (δεσμίων) means to be under custody. The form of the word translated “remember” is present imperative. One would express this command as “be remembering.”

“AS THOUGH IN PRISON WITH THEM”

The word (ὥς) is a comparative which compares one experience with another. The word translated “as though in prison with them” is (συνδεδεμένοι) which is a compound word:

A. (σύν) means with.

B. (δέω) means to bind

The form of this word is perfect participle and would be translated “having been bound with.”

The author made an important point. It is one thing to know about prison. It is quite another to understand it as a prisoner does. I was never a prisoner. When I came to Colorado, I worked with a Christian ministry named “Kairos.” We spent about one weekend a month – Thursday through Sunday – in a state prison conducting a short course in Christianity. Having participated in about 40 of these weekend courses, my awareness of prison life grew immeasurably. The author of Hebrews was saying that they should remember the prisoners as though they were in prison with them.

First century prisons were not like ours. There were no kitchens. If a prisoner was going to eat, he had to have family and/or friends on the outside to bring him food. If, however, you brought food to a Christian prisoner, like Paul, the officials would consider that you are also a Christian and incarcerate you for the crime of being a Christian. The author was urging these believers to take the risk of bringing food to Christian prisoners even though it endangered their own lives.

“AND THOSE WHO ARE ILL-TREATED”

The word “and” does not appear in the Greek text. The word translated “ill-treated” is (κακουχομένων) which is a compound word:

A. (κάκος) means bad; evil

B. (σκέω) means to hold

The form of this word is present participle and would be translated “being treated badly.” The incarceration of a believer is one form of persecution. Abuse by another person on the outside of the prison is at least as serious a form of persecution as the incarceration.

“SINCE YOU YOURSELVES ALSO ARE IN THE BODY”

The words translated “since you yourselves also...” are a way of identifying each of us as part of the body. It is like saying, since I am a part of the body of Christ, what the enemy does in persecuting other believers, he is doing this to me as well. I am a part of all that they suffer.

“Marriage is to be held in honor among all, and the marriage bed is to be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge.” Hebrews 13:4

“MARRIAGE IS TO BE HELD IN HONOR AMONG ALL”

The word translated “marriage” is (γάμος) and in that culture and time identified a lifelong legal relationship between a man and a woman. The verb in this sentence is not written, but is clearly understood. The word translated “honor” is (τίμιος) which means a status of high honor and respect. The words translated “among all” are literally translated “in all.”

In an era of strong church persecution, there were some unusual views of marriage:

- A. In the pagan community, the view of marriage was steadily declining and people were beginning to pay no attention to marriage. It was treated as excess baggage.
- B. The Christian view was very different. They held marriage in the highest respect. Because of the intensity of the persecution, some believers felt it was better, at least temporarily, to refrain from marriage. The apostle Paul spoke to this effect in I Corinthians. ***“But I say to the unmarried and to widows that it is good for them if they remain even as I.” 1 Corinthians 7:8 But if they do not have self-control, let them marry; for it is better to marry than to burn with passion.” 1 Corinthians 7:9***

The reason for Paul’s position was that enemies of the church would take a believer’s wife and sexually humiliate her publically unless he renounced his faith. Paul and others felt it would be better not to have to face this horrible decision. The author of Hebrews points out unequivocally that marriage is an honorable relationship.

“AND THE MARRIAGE BED IS TO BE UNDEFILED”

The word “bed” does not appear in the Greek text. The word translated “marriage” is (κοίτη) which means sexual relations. The word translated “Undefiled” shows a grammatical action the author often used:

- A. The word translated “defiled” is (μιαίνω)
- B. The word translated “undefiled” is (ἀμιαίνω) which means pure; untainted and adds emphasis.

It is hard to describe just how terrible life was for Christians in the Galatian province. There were quite a few believers who were convinced that it was much safer to remain single or at least make sure they did not bring children into this tragic scenario.

Again, this solution helped with one problem, but would contribute to another. Though our culture has a mushrooming number of unmarried men, in that culture an unmarried man would be held in serious suspicion of sexual misconduct. For the most part, being a single man was unheard of.

“FOR FORNICATORS AND ADULTERERS”

The use of the word translated “for” indicates that an explanation is in process. He is going to explain why he included the previous phrase of this sentence – “Let marriage be held in honor and sexual relations be pure.

The word translated “fornicators” is (πόρνους) which means a sexually immoral person. This is a broad, general category. On the other hand, the word translated “adulterer” is (μοιχοὺς) which means one who commits adultery.

- A. FORNICATOR – This identifies illicit sexual intercourse.
- B. ADULTERERS - This identifies one who has unlawful intercourse with the spouse of another. This is a much narrower category.

One of the things that this sentence obviates is that there was so much immoral activity going on that they had to have several terms to describe the terrible evils being practiced. Did the author have to write about this because there were members of the Christian community caught up in this terrible evil?

“GOD WILL JUDGE”

The Greek text is a bit more dramatic. It reads “THE God will judge.” The addition of the word “THE” once more achieves two goals:

- A. It adds serious emphasis to the statement.
- B. It also insists that Jehovah is the only God.

The word translated “He will judge” is (κρινεῖ) which means to measure against the law and punish if necessary. The form of this word is future tense and is well translated. This awareness highlights a host of different awarenesses. For instance, the government may be the ultimate authority in a culture, and their position will change with the increased decline of the culture. However, God is the ultimate judge and His awareness is complete and his rule never changes. This has to affect our thinking about our actions. This becomes quite a warning as well as an assurance for the just.

“Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, “I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU,”” Hebrews 13:5

“MAKE SURE THAT YOUR CHARACTER”

The Greek text, at this point, is more succinct. It reads, “the manner of life, not loving silver.” The word translated “character” is (τρόπος) which means manner of life; the way you customarily live

“IS FREE FROM THE LOVE OF MONEY”

Once more the author indicates the negative by the addition of the letter (α) at the beginning of the word:

- A. (φιλόργος) is a compound word
 1. (φιλέω) means to love with limits.
 2. (όργύρεους) means silver.
 3. Together they identify the love of money.
- B. (αφιλόγυρους) means not love of silver.

For some people, money; things define who they are; why they exist. The author is saying that this is not appropriate. Again, could it be that the author had to mention this to these believers because such a mindset was defining the lives of some of them?

“BEING CONTENT WITH WHAT YOU HAVE”

The word translated “being content” is (άρκούμενοι) which means being sufficient. The form of this word is present participle and would be translated “being sufficient;” Being enough. The words translated “with what you have” are (τοῖς) which means “in the;” (παροῦσιν) which means “what you have.” He is not saying that money/things are evil. He is cautioning that the preoccupation with these is a devastating path to an evil lifestyle.

We must keep in mind that the persecutors did everything to put believers in a difficult position financially. They would not buy anything from a believer. Again, they would not sell anything, including food, to a believer. This gives us a glimpse into their situation. The only alternative to being preoccupied with things and money was to trust in the trustworthiness of God. This, of course, was most difficult. Their only hope of survival was to trust in God to provide.

“FOR HE HIMSELF HAS SAID”

The use of the word “for” indicates that an explanation of the previous statement in this verse is being presented. If the word (αὐτός) which means “Himself,” was omitted, the recipients would have clearly understood what the author wrote. This helps us to understand that the inclusion of this word was intended to increase the emphasis in the statement. Following the example of Jesus’ teaching, the New Testament authors learned to support their positions with two or more quotations from the Old Testament. Thus, if their counter-parts took issue with their position, the opposition would be arguing with the Scriptures which was frowned upon. The quotation from two or more Old Testament passages was required because truth is

STUDY OF CHAPTER 13

established at the word of two or three witnesses. That is exactly what we see here. The word translated “he has said,” is (εἶρηκεν) which is a way to place special emphasis on what was spoken. Keep in mind that these words are quoted from God’s promise to Joshua in 1:5. These Jewish recipients would really be familiar with these words from God.

“I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU”

The Greek text is much more emphatic than the English translation. The word translated “I will desert” is (ἀνῶ) which means to leave a person uncared for. The form of this word is aorist subjunctive. In this instance the purpose would be:

A. Aorist tense – This provides the emphasis the author desperately seeks.

B. Subjunctive mood – This highlights the fact that this action is a deliberate choice.

It is a way of emphatically saying, “I will choose to leave you without care. This is a frightening thought. The balance of this phrase I have never seen elsewhere in the New Testament. It looks like this, “I will” (οὐ) **NOT** [μὴ] **NOT** leave you without care.

“NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU”

Again, the author presented the idea of Joshua 1:5, but changed the wording dramatically to provide the kind of emphasis a literal translation could not possibly provide. Remember, these Jewish recipients would have memorized and repeated God’s words to Joshua over and over again across the years. The word translated “nor” is both extremely emphatic and interesting. “But I will **not** (οὐδ), (οὐ) **NOT**, (μὴ) **NOT forsake you.**” The word translated “forsake” is (ἐγκαταλίπω) which means to forsake; to cease to care for. The form of this word is aorist tense which adds significant emphasis to the statement. Clearly, the author was groping for a way to give the statement the emphasis he sought. The only other place I have found this form is in Galatians chapter three.

“so that we confidently say, “THE LORD IS MY HELPER, I WILL NOT BE AFRAID. WHAT WILL MAN DO TO ME?”” Hebrews 13:6

“SO THAT WE CONFIDENTLY SAY”

The word translated “so that” is (ὥστε) which indicates that a result is about to be reported. This is different from the word (ἵνα) which announces a statement of purpose. This raises the level of emphasis for the statement. “The word (θαρροῦντας) means to have confidence; courage. The form of this word is, again, present participle and would be awkwardly translated “be being confident; courageous.” The word translated “to say” is (λέγειν) the form of which is present infinitive and would be translated “to be saying.”

“THE LORD IS MY HELPER”

This quotation from Psalm 118:6 is a rather free translation. As the author has done so often in chapters 12 and 13, the verb is understood, but not written. When David wrote about Lord, he used the word for Jehovah. The author of Hebrews, however, used the word (κύριος) which is a reference to Jesus as Master/Owner. The word translated “helper” is (βοηθός) which means the one who provides assistance.

“I WILL NOT BE AFRAID”

The word translated “I will be afraid” is (φοβηθήσομαι) which means to be in a state of fear rather than fearing a specific thing or situation. The form of this word is future tense and is well translated. The word translated “not” is (οὐ) which is a higher level of negative emphasis than the word (μὴ) which we encountered in the previous sentence.

“WHAT WILL MAN DO TO ME?”

This quote is in the form of a question which is the form found in Psalm 118:6. The use of the word (τί) indicates that a question is in process. Depending on the context, the word “what” is a good translation. The word translated “He will do” is (ποιήσει) which means to do; to perform. The form of this word is future tense and must be translated “He will do.” The author used the word (ἄνθρωπος) which means

mankind, not a male individual. The word translated “to me” is (μοι) which is dative case and accounts for the use of the word “TO me.” Whenever we encounter a question in the text, it is important to present the anticipated answer to that question. According to the text, it appears that the author anticipates that the question would be answered “nothing.”

HEBREWS 13:7-16 - INSTRUCTION IN SPIRITUAL RESPONSIBILITIES

“Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith.” Hebrews 13:7

“REMEMBER THOSE WHO LED YOU”

The word translated “remember” is (μνημονεύετε) which means to recall from memory, but which does not suggest having forgotten. The form of this word is present imperative. One would translate this command “be remembering.” The word translated “led” is (ἡγουμένων) which means one who influenced another to follow a particular course of action. This is the task of Christian leaders. The author speaks of these leaders as “leaders of you.”

“WHO SPOKE THE WORD OF GOD TO YOU”

The word translated “who” is (οἵτινες) which means “who.” The word translated “spoke” is (ἐλάλησαν) which means to speak. The form of this word is aorist tense which adds serious emphasis to the statement. The words translated “the word” are (τῶν – λόγον) which is well translated. The words translated “of God” are (τοῦ-θεοῦ) which means “of THE God.” The author has used this tool on several occasions throughout this epistle. The word translated “to you” is (ὑμῶν) which is well translated. It is not that these Christian leaders were quoting Scripture to these Jewish converts. Indeed, they were discipling them; teaching them how to live an effective Christian life.

“AND CONSIDERING THE RESULT OF THEIR CONDUCT”

The word “and” does not appear in the Greek Text. The word translated “considering” is (ἀναθεωροῦντες) which means to reflect; to think back upon. The word translated “the result” is (ἔκβασιν) which means the outcome; the result. The words translated “of their behavior” are (τῆς – ἀναστροφῆς) which means the conduct; the behavior.

“IMITATE THEIR FAITH”

The word translated “imitate” is (μιμεῖσθε) which means to behave in the same manner as someone else. The form of this word is present imperative. It is a command to follow their example. The word translated “faith” is (πίστιν). This word means more than doctrinal certainty. It involves both belief and corroborating practice.

“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.” Hebrews 13:8

Observe that the author referred to “Jesus Christ” rather than “Christ Jesus.” This confirms that he intends this document to be for the believing Jews rather than the Gnostic leadership of the culture. Again, the author could have simply referred to “Jesus” and the recipients would have completely understood. The name “Jesus Christ” stands for Savior, Messiah.” These Jewish believers were being persecuted by other Jews because they claimed Jesus as their Messiah.

The word translated “the same” means identical. It is a way to express changelessness. Everything and everyone else are constantly subject to change. Jesus is not. The author was not satisfied. He wants another way to emphasize this changelessness. Observe that in this sentence the author lists three times – yesterday, today and forever. Observe also that he inserts the word “and” between each time designation. This adds serious emphasis. The word translated “yesterday” is (ἐχθές) which means not just the previous 24 hours, but an unlimited extension of time. He then mentioned that Jesus is the same “today.” The word translated “today” is (σήμερον). This is a way to emphasize not just the 24 hours we refer to as “today,” but an

indefinite duration of time as he did with the word “yesterday.” He concluded the picture by saying that Jesus Christ is changeless “unto the ages.” This is a New Testament way to describe eternity. It reaches to the point where time ceases to exist or control. In all time and beyond time, Jesus Christ is absolutely changeless. The whole point of changelessness is the fact that because this is true, we can absolutely depend upon the fact that what He was and did, He will never change in any way.

“Do not be carried away by varied and strange teachings; for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods, through which those who were so occupied were not benefited.” Hebrews 13:9

Verse nine is a complete sentence.

“DO NOT BE CARRIED AWAY BY VARIED AND STRANGE TEACHINGS”

The word translated “not” is (μῆ) which is a median negative indicator which he has used repeatedly in chapters 12 and 13. The word translated “be carried away” is (παράφερεσθε) which means to cause someone to depart from a previous belief. The form of this word is present imperative. This command would be translated “not be being carried away.” The word translated “various” is (ποικίλαις) which means a variety of kinds. The word translated “teachings” is too often thought of as doctrine when what is really involved is the teaching of discipleship. An illustration is in order. In the book of Acts, there was great controversy over whether or not Jews were the only ones to be saved. Indeed, the controversy was so intense that there was a meeting of the apostles and finally James had to make an announcement that this salvation was for the whosoever.

The author also wrote about “strange teachings.” The word translated “strange” is (ξέναις) which means unheard of. Again, the early church in Acts and the epistles had to deal with the teaching that the salvation of Jesus was available only to the Jews. There is no place in the Gospels where this is taught, but the Jewish believers began to teach it. They taught that if a Gentile wanted to become a Christian he had to become a Jew and be circumcised before the blood of Christ was available for his sins.

“FOR IT IS GOOD FOR THE HEART”

Once more, the use of the word “for” indicates that the author is providing an explanation. This explanation has to do with the early portion of verse 9: the reason they should not be carried away by strange teachings. The word translated “good” is (καλόν) which means to provide a special benefit. The words translated “the heart” are (τὴν – καρδίαν). This was used in two different ways in the New Testament:

- A. It identifies an organ in the human body.
- B. It was also used to identify that part of us which responds to God, as it is used here.

“TO BE STRENGTHENED BY GRACE”

The words translated “strengthened” is (βεβαιοῦσθαι) which means to cause someone to be established in their belief. The form of this word is present tense and would be translated “to be being strengthened.” The phrase “by grace” is (χάριτι). Grace is that quality of the divine nature that expresses itself in acts and attitudes of mercy. The inclusion of this word makes it abundantly clear that this strengthening is an act of God and not of our own.

“NOT BY FOODS”

The word translated “not” is (οὐ) which is the second most emphatic negative indicator. That makes this phrase more emphatic than the previous one. The word translated “foods” is (βρώμασιν) which identifies that which provides nourishment. This is a reference to the Old Testament sacrificial system. The Jewish opposition forces would be demanding that these Jewish believers observe the Old Testament instructions for the sacrifice for sin. The author is contending that these sacrifices accomplish nothing.

“THROUGH WHICH THOSE WHO WERE SO OCCUPIED”

The words translated “through which” refer to the food sacrifices mentioned previously in verse nine. The words translated “those who were so occupied” are (οἱ) which means “the;” (περιπατοῦντες) which means to live in a customary way; to behave as anticipated. The form of this word is present participle and would be translated, “living in the customary way.”

“WERE NOT BENEFITED”

The emphasis in both of the words in this brief phrase is quite high. The word translated “not” is (οὐκ) which is the second most emphatic negative indicator. The word translated “they were benefited” is (ὠφελήθησαν) which means to be helpful. The form of this word is aorist tense which adds serious emphasis.

“We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat.” Hebrews 13:10

“WE HAVE AN ALTAR”

The word translated “we have” is (ἔχομεν) which means to possess. The form of this word is present tense and would literally be translated “we are having.” The word translated “an altar” is (θυσιαστήριον) which means a place where gifts for deity may be placed.

“FROM WHICH THOSE WHO SERVE THE TABERNACLE”

The Greek words (ἐξ – οὗ) are well translated “from which.” The word translated “the ones” is (οἱ) which means “the ones.” The word translated “who serve” is (λατρεύοντες) which means to perform religious rites. The form of this word is, again, present participle and is properly translated. The word translated “tabernacle” is (σκηνῇ) which means tent, but the intention was the Old Testament tabernacle.

“HAVE NO RIGHT TO EAT”

The word translated “they have” is (ἔχουσιν) which means to have; to have control over. The form of this word is present tense and would be translated “they are having.” There is a word in the Greek language which means to have authority. This word is less emphatic than that which the author wrote. It makes it clear that he wanted to increase the emphasis on his statement. The word translated “to eat” is (φαγεῖν) which means to consume food. The form of this word is aorist infinitive which continues the strong emphasis.

This verse is a clear reference to the Jewish sacrificial system of the Old Testament. These Jewish believers would understand the author’s intent immediately. It is important to ascertain why he wrote this. The altar of which he wrote is not in the temple, but in the heart of the believer. The sacrifice to which he alluded was not a special animal, but the sacrifice of the life of the individual believer. The New Testament emphasizes that there is a definite commitment involved in our accepting the forgiveness of our sins and entering into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. The New Testament also stresses the fact that the entrance into the Holy of Holies was torn open once for all and we need no human priest to intercede on our behalf, but we come boldly into the immediate presence of God.

“For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy place by the high priest as an offering for sin, are burned outside the camp.” Hebrews 13:11

“FOR THE BODIES OF THOSE ANIMALS”

Verse 11 is a complete sentence. The use of the word translated “for” indicates that the author is presenting the reason the priests have no right to eat of the sacrificial animal. The literal translation of these words is, “For the bodies of these living ones.”

“WHOSE BLOOD IS BROUGHT”

The word translated “is brought” is (ἐισφέρεται) which means to be carried. The form of this word is present tense and would be translated “is being carried.”

“INTO THE HOLY PLACE”

Though it is translated “holies,” it is a reference to the place where the Ark of the Covenant is located – what we refer to as the Holy of Holies. This is understood to be the immediate presence of God.

“BY THE HIGH PRIEST”

This is a good translation. As mentioned previously, the recipients were Jewish Christians who were completely familiar with the Jewish sacrificial system. The author was using their complete familiarity with the details of the system as a foundation upon which to explain the teaching of their redemption in Christ.

“AS AN OFFERING FOR SIN”

This phrase is written a bit differently in the Greek text – “on behalf of sin.” The word translated “sin” is (ἁμαρτίας) which means that which is contrary to the will and law of God. The use of this phrase is a way to stress the fact that sin is of such a tragic nature that it can only be dealt with at such a great price. These Jewish people would have been reminded of this again and again since their childhood.

“ARE BURNED OUTSIDE THE CAMP”

The word translated “burned” is (κατακαίεται) which means to be reduced to ashes by burning. The form is present tense and would be translated “be being burned.” The words translated “outside the camp” are (ἔξω – τῆς – παρεμβολῆς) which are well translated.

“Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered outside the gate.” Hebrews 13:12

“THEREFORE, JESUS ALSO”

Verse 12 is a complete sentence. The word translated “therefore” is (διὰ), a low level conclusion indicator. It indicates that a conclusion of the previously stated information is about to be presented, but at a low emphasis level. This is a bit surprising since this is such an important teaching of the gospel. The inclusion of the word translated “also” indicates that the conclusion is being presented in the form of a comparison. The elements of this comparison are as follows:

- A. The sacrificial animal body was burned outside the campo
ALSO
- B. Jesus suffered outside the camp

“THAT HE MIGHT SANCTIFY THE PEOPLE”

The word translated “that” indicates that a statement of purpose is being presented. The word translated “sanctify” is (ἁγιάση) which means to cause a person to have the quality of holiness. There are always two elements involved in this holiness:

- A. To make pure.
- B. To set apart for God

That is the intent again here. The words “the people” are awkwardly written, as is much of chapters 12 and 13, still it serves to emphasize this part of his message.

“THROUGH HIS OWN BLOOD”

The use of the word translated “through” means “by means of.” The word “His” does not appear in the text, but the words (τοῦ) which means “of the;” (ἰδίου) which means “one’s own.” This word formation conveys the idea of “His own.” It was essential to mention the blood of Jesus. Every Jew was quite clear that without the shedding of blood there was no remission for sins. The emphasis was on the fact that the blood shed for sin was the blood of Jesus.

“SUFFERED OUTSIDE THE GATE”

The word translated “he suffered” is (ἔπαθεν) which means to endure pain. The form of this word is aorist tense which adds significant emphasis. The words translated “outside the gate” are well translated. This fact has nothing to do with the effectiveness of Jesus’ sacrifice. It completes the comparison. Just as the

sacrificial animal was burned outside the city wall; in the same way, the crucifixion took place outside the city wall of Jerusalem.

“So, let us go out to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach.” Hebrews 13:13

“SO, LET US GO OUT TO HIM”

Verse 13 is a complete sentence. The word translated “so” is a compound word (τοίνυν) which is better translated “for this reason.” The word translated “let us go out,” is (ἐξερχώμεθα) which means to depart; to go out. The form of this word is present subjunctive. The present tense identifies ongoing action. The subjunctive mood is the mood of possibility. It could be well translated “we might be going out.” This is more than being in the same place. It is to choose to share with Him.

“OUTSIDE THE CAMP”

These words are well translated. As previously indicated, this is a reference to the well known schedule of a sin-offering. These words point to what was so shameful it could not be countenanced within the city walls. When Jesus took our sins upon Himself, He separated himself from the population – outside the camp; on the cross. Just as Jesus took our shame upon Himself when He died for our sins, we are urged to stand with Him; to share the shame of human sin.

“BEARING HIS REPROACH”

The word translated “bearing” is (φέροντες) which means to experience; to bear up under. The form of this word is present participle. Both of these forms identify ongoing action and thus add emphasis. The word translated “reproach” is (ὀνειδισμόν) which means to speak disparagingly of someone. The words translated “of him,” are a reference to Jesus. To die on a cross was the greatest possible shame and reputation destroyer. Jesus took that for us. We are to share that reputation destruction even if we do not die on a cross. It is to so identify with Jesus that His reputation becomes ours.

“For here we do not have a lasting city, but we are seeking the city which is to come.” Hebrews 13:14

“FOR HERE WE DO NOT HAVE A LASTING CITY”

The use of the word “for” indicates that an explanation is coming. It is in the form of a very strong contrast. The word translated “here” can be confusing. The author may well have been in Rome. The recipients we know are in Galatia. When he used the word “here” it shouldn’t be considered being either the place where he was or where they were. Though the author does not identify the place, it appears he is referring to most any place that is not Jerusalem. He begins this very strong contrast with the word (ἔχομεν) which means “we are having.” The word translated “not” is (οὐ) which is a heightened emphasis negative indicator. The word translated “lasting” is (μένουσσαν) which means a continuing city. We must keep in mind that to most of Jewry, the city of Jerusalem was viewed as “the eternal city.” This particular verse has a very strong, important meaning for dispersed Jews. For them, to live anywhere in the world rather than in Jerusalem was a huge loss. Because Jerusalem was their home, anywhere else in the world they might live would be a situation of exile. That is the reason for this statement and these people would completely understand.

“BUT WE ARE SEEKING THE CITY”

The word translated “but” is (ἀλλὰ) which is the most emphatic word to be translated “but.” When we encounter a contrast, it is important to identify the contrasted elements:

A. We do not have a lasting city

B- U-T – (ἀλλὰ)

B. We are seeking the city which is to come.

The author could not put stronger emphasis on his statement.

STUDY OF CHAPTER 13

The word translated “we are seeking” is (ἐπιζητοῦμεν) which means to make every attempt to realize one’s desire. The form is present tense and would be translated “we are seeking.” The word “city” does not appear, but it is understood.

“WHICH IS TO COME”

The word (μέλλουσιν) however, is used and means the one that is about to be.

“Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.” Hebrews 13:15

“THROUGH HIM THEN,”

This phrase is strong because it is so straight forward. The word translated “through” is (δι). The word translated “Him” is (αὐτοῦ) and is a reference to Jesus Christ. The word translated “then” is (οὖν) which is most often translated “therefore”. It almost always marks the conclusion of a reasoning process.

“LET US CONTINUALLY OFFER UP A SACRIFICE OF PRAISE TO GOD”

The word translated “continually” does not appear in the Greek text. The word translated “let us offer up” is (ἀναφέρωμεν) which means to offer up something/someone as a sacrifice. The form of this word is present subjunctive. (we have not seen this form for some time.)

A. Present tense – ongoing action

B. Subjunctive mood – the mood of possibility

Quite often when we see the words “let us” in the English text, it is a way to express the subjunctive. The author mentions “a sacrifice of praise.” This is difficult for us, but not for the Jews. We would see a bull or a lamb as a sacrifice, but not praise. They did. The phrase “to God” is a bit stronger in the Greek text – “To THE God.” The inclusion of the word “the” is both quite emphatic and stresses the fact that Jehovah is the ONLY God.

“THAT IS, THE FRUIT OF LIPS”

The words translated “that is” are very deliberately included to produce strong emphasis. The word translated “fruit” is (καρπὸν) which identifies the produce of a plant that is useful for food. To use this word in “fruit of lips” is a parallel statement. It would read, “In the same way that grain is the fruit of the plant, so words are the fruit of the lips. Words of praise to God are the product of our speech, which is intended to honor God and achieve his purposes.

“THAT GIVE THANKS TO HIS NAME”

The word translated “give thanks” is (ὁμολογούτων) which is a compound word which literally means to speak the same; to declare openly; the declaration of more than one witness. The form of this word is present participle which emphasizes a lifestyle. Much of the time, as here, the mention of one’s “name” is to speak of their authority.

“And do not neglect doing good and sharing, Hebrews 13:16A

+there are two complete sentences in Hebrews 13:16

The word translated “and” is (δὲ) which identifies a contrast and is translated “but” with median emphasis. Again, the elements of the contrast are as follows:

A. (previous phrase) offer the fruit of your lips.

BUT

B. Do not neglect doing good

The word translated “doing good” is (εὐποιῖας) which means to do that which is beneficial to someone. The word translated “sharing” is (κοινωνίας) which identifies an association involving close mutual relations. This word is often translated “fellowship.” It is what the believers did in Acts when their very lives were threatened – they shared with each other. The word translated “not” is (μὴ) which is a median negative indicator. The word translated “neglect” is (ἐπιλανθάνεσθε) which means to fail to do something; to

overlook. The form of this word is present imperative. One would express this command “do not make a lifestyle of forgetting to do good and sharing.”

for with such sacrifices God is pleased.” Hebrews 13:16B

The use of the word translated “for” indicates that in this second sentence of this verse the author will give an explanation of the first sentence. The word translated “with such” is (τοιούτοις) which means such. This word is in the dative case and thus would be translated “to” or “for” such. The word translated “sacrifices” is (θυσίαις) which means that which is offered as a sacrifice. If the author had written “God is pleased” everyone would have understood. Instead, once more he wrote “to THE God” which is intended to add emphasis and affirm that Jehovah is the only God. The word translated “pleased” is (εὐαρεστέϊται) which means “well pleased”. The form of this word is present tense and would be translated “being well pleased.”

HEBREWS 13:17 – INSTRUCTIONS IN RESPONSIBILITIES TO LEADERS

“Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.” Hebrews 13:17

+There is one complete sentences in Hebrews 13:17.

“OBEY YOUR LEADERS”

The word translated “obey” is (πείθεσθε) which means to submit to authority. The form of this word is present imperative and this command is something they must do as a lifestyle. The word translated “leaders” is (ἡγουμένοις) which means the ones who rule over you. The emphasis here, however, is not so much control as it is providing direction and leadership. The form of this word is present participle and would be translated “the ones leading you.”

“AND SUBMIT TO THEM”

The word translated “submit” is (ὑπέικετε) which means to obey; to submit to authority. The form of this word, like that of the word “obey” is present imperative. The words “to them” are understood, but do not appear in the Greek text. Observe that the author used both the word “obey” and “submit.” If you “obey” a leader, are you not also submitting to them? Yes and no. It is one thing to obey a command. It is quite another to place yourself under the direction and leadership of a spiritual leader whose task is to guide you into a deeper spiritual life.

“FOR THEY KEEP WATCH OVER YOUR SOULS”

The word translated “for” indicates that an explanation is forth coming. The Greek text of this phrase is much more emphatic than the English translation. For instance, the word translated “they keep watch” is literally translated “they THEMSELVES...” Now, the recipients would have completely understood if the author had written “they keep watch.” The author, however, added the word (αὐτοὶ), which means “themselves,” in order to add serious emphasis to the statement. The word translated “keep watch” is (ἀγρυπνοῦσιν) which means to look after with the implication of watchful concern. The form of this word is present tense and would be translated “they are always keeping watch.” The words translated “over your souls” is literally translated “on behalf of the souls of you “(plural).

“AS THOSE WHO WILL GIVE AN ACCOUNT”

The report of this phrase is more of an interpretation than a translation. The words literally translated would be, “As word will perform.” The translation is an appropriate explanation of the author’s intent. The word translated “as” indicates that a comparison is being used. The elements of this comparison are as follows.

STUDY OF CHAPTER 13

A. Leaders keep watch over your souls

AS

B. People who must give an account of their leadership of the body of Christ.

“LET THEM DO THIS WITH JOY”

A literal translation of this phrase would be “that with joy they might do this.” The word translated “that” is (ὅτι) and indicates that a statement of purpose is being presented. The word translated “they do” is (ποιῶσιν) which means to perform; to do. The form of this word is third person plural present subjunctive. The form would be described as follows:

A. Present tense – ongoing action

B. Subjunctive mood – the mood of possibility

One would translate this as “they might be doing.” The closing words of this phrase are translated “doing this with joy.” The author was saying that if these people allowed their leader to give them leadership, it would be a joyous experience for all of them in contrast to what it would be like if they were not willing to obey.

“AND NOT WITH GRIEF”

The text literally translates “and not grief.” The word translated “not” is (μὴ) which is a median level negative indicator. The word translated “grief” is (στενάζοντες) which means the groaning which is caused by grief filled experiences. The form of this word is, again, present participle and would be translated “not with grieving.”

Again, the use of the word “for” indicates that an explanation is being presented. He is explaining why it is best to obey their leaders. One must ask, why the author found it necessary to give these instructions. In most instances it was because this was something the local believers were failing to do. The literal translation would be, “For this unprofitable for you.” The word translated “unprofitable” is (ἀλυσιτελής) which means no advantage; no purpose. It is also identified with divorce. In that culture, divorce was the epitome of uselessness; void of purpose. Observe that the verb “would be” is understood, but not written. It is like saying that they would find it more personally and corporately rewarding if they allowed the chosen leaders to lead than if they did not.

HEBREWS 13:18, 19 – PRAYER REQUEST FOR PRISON RELEASE

“Pray for us, Hebrews 13:18A

The word translated “pray” is (προσεύχεσθε) which means to pray; to speak to God. The form of this word is present imperative. This command would be translated “be praying. The word translated “for” is (περί) which means on behalf of. Note that the author did not say, “be praying for me,” but “pray for us.” This tells us something about him:

A. He was a team man.

B. He and others were going through the same kind of problems these recipients were confronting.

C. He saw the solution to their problems to be in prayer and in nothing else. It was a way to help the recipients see that prayer was their only solution as well.

for we are sure that we have a good conscience, desiring to conduct ourselves honorably in all things.” Hebrews 13:18B

“FOR WE ARE SURE”

The word translated “for” again indicates that an explanation is being presented. In this instance, the author is explaining why he so forcefully commanded them to pray for him and those with him.

The word translated “we are sure” is (πειθόμεθα) which means total certainty based upon being convinced. The form of this word is present tense and would be translated “we are being convinced.”

“THAT WE HAVE A GOOD CONSCIENCE”

The word translated “that” is (ὅτι) rather than (ἵνα) which identifies purpose. The word translated “we have” is (ἔχομεν) which means to have or possess. The form of this word is present tense and would be translated “we are having as a lifestyle.” The word translated “conscience” is a compound word:

A. (σὺν) which means with.

B. (οἶδα) which means to know absolutely.

This is a testament to our inner ability to be absolutely sure of right and wrong. The word translated “good” is (καλήν) which means to value a positive moral quality.

“DESIRING TO CONDUCT OURSELVES HONORABLY IN ALL THINGS”

The word translated “desiring” is (θέλοντες) which means to want; to desire to experience something. The form of this word is present participle and would be emphatically translated “we are having.” The word translated “to conduct” is (ἀναστρέφεσθαι) which means to live; to conduct oneself with a focus on overt daily behavior. The form of this word is present infinitive and would be translated “to be conducting oneself.” The word translated “honorably” is (καλῶς) which focuses on a positive moral quality. The words translated “in all things are” (ἐν) which means “in;” (πάντων) which means all; everything.” It is a way to exclude exceptions.

*“And I urge you all the more to do this, so that I may be restored to you the sooner.”
Hebrews 13:19*

“AND I URGE YOU ALL THE MORE”

The word translated “I urge” is (παρακαλῶ) which means to encourage; to ask for earnestly. The form of this word is present tense and would be translated “I am urging.” The word translated “all the more” is (περισσότερως) which means excessively; more than one would anticipate.

“TO DO THIS”

The word translated “to do” is (ποιῆσαι) which means to perform; to do. The form of this word is aorist infinitive and would be emphatically translated “to do.” The word translated “this” refers to the author’s request in verse 18 to pray for them.

“SO THAT I MAY BE RESTORED TO YOU”

The word translated “so that” is (ἵνα) which indicates that a statement of purpose is about to be given. The word translated “I may be restored” is (ἀποκατασταθῶς) which means to send back; to restore. The form of this word is aorist subjunctive:

A. Aorist tense – adds strong emphasis.

B. Subjunctive – this is the mood of possibility which accounts for the use of the word “may.”

It is clear that the author is writing this from prison. It is interesting that the author wrote “restored TO YOU.” This suggests that upon his release from prison, the author intends to come to the area where these recipients live. It gives us an idea of just how close his relationship is with them

“THE SOONER”

The word translated “the sooner” is (τάχιον) which simply means “quickly.”

HEBREWS 13:20, 21 - BENEDICTION

“Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord,” Hebrews 13:20 “equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.” Hebrews 13:21

“NOW THE GOD OF PEACE”

The word translated “now” is (δὲ) which is almost always translated “but.” The word “now” can be used in two different ways:

- A. It can identify a point in time.
- B. It can be used to indicate a change in the direction of the text as it is used in this instance.

It is interesting that the author begins the benediction with the words “the God of peace.” He would have been clearly understood if he had simply used the word “God.” We must keep in mind that these believers were being persecuted to the point of death. Life, for them, was anything but peaceful. They needed the strong reminder of the fact that God was the essence of peace – not the absence of conflict, but the author of peace in the midst of life-threatening conflict.

“WHO BROUGHT UP FROM THE DEAD”

The word translated “brought” is a compound word: (ἀναγαγὼν)

- A. (ἀνάγω) which means to led up
- B. (ἄγω) which means to lead.
- C. This word is also used to describe the upper room of a house.

The form of this word is aorist participle and would be emphatically translated “being brought up.” Though the word “the” is understood, it does not appear in the Greek text. The word translated “dead” is (νεκρῶν) which means to be lifeless; to be completely dead.

“THE GREAT SHEPHERD OF THE SHEEP”

The author could have written “the shepherd of the sheep,” and everyone would have completely understood. The addition of the word (μέγαν), which means “great,” is important. In the midst of their apparent failing experience, these suffering Christians needed to be reminded not just that they had a shepherd, but that He was great; outstandingly powerful

The word translated “shepherd” had two very different understandings:

- A. THEY WERE OUTCASTS. At hotels, there were signs, “no shepherds allowed.”
- B. THEY WERE BRAVE; LOYAL – On the main road from Jerusalem to Jericho I observed a shepherd risk his life to stop traffic and get transportation to get medical attention for an injured lamb.

The choice to refer to believers as “sheep” is also interesting. In that culture, sheep had a very unfortunate reputation as the dumbest of animals. They would walk straight into the path of a predator. They would follow each other off the edge of a cliff. Sheep need someone to care for them; to look after their well-being. It is an apt identification.

“THROUGH THE BLOOD OF THE ETERNAL COVENANT”

The word translated “through” is (ἐν) which is almost always translated “in.” There are occasions when it is translated “through.” There is an important difference:

- A. IN – This word is used in two ways:
 - 1. It identifies a location.
 - 2. It also identifies an association.
- B. THROUGH – This word is used to describe a means of action, which is the way it is used in this instance.

The author wrote of the “blood of the eternal covenant.” Remember, this epistle is written to suffering Jewish Christians. They would be fully aware of the author’s emphasis here.

- A. The two parties involved in making the covenant would do these things:
 - 1. They would agree to the terms of the covenant.
 - 2. They would eat a meal together – establish friendship.
 - 3. They would each cut their wrist and drip their blood into a cup of wine.
 - 4. Both parties would drink of the mingled blood and wine. This identifies them as family to each other.

The Superior Jesus

B. This covenant could never be broken. It was an eternal agreement.

“EVEN JESUS OUR LORD”

The word “even” may be understood as necessary for translation, but does not appear in the Greek text. Observe that the author referred to the “Son of God” as “Jesus” rather than “Christ.”

A. JESUS means savior

B. CHRIST – is a translation of the Hebrew word for Messiah.

The Gnostics in this province brutally persecuted anyone who spoke of Jesus as Deity or savior. The choice of the name “Jesus” pointed to His sinless life and sacrifice for our sins. This would bring deadly persecution from the Gnostics.

The words translated “Our Lord” are more graphic. It would be literally translated “The lord of us, Jesus.” The word translated “Lord” is (κύριον) which means owner; it is what every slave called his owner; master. It identifies the one who has complete authority over a person. It is an important way to identify our relationship to Jesus.

“EQUIP YOU IN EVERY GOOD THING”

The word translated “equip” is (καταρτίσαι) which means to make one adequate to the need. The form of this word is aorist optative, an unusual form:

A. Aorist tense – adds strong emphasis.

B. Optative mood – a weaker form of the subjunctive which stresses possibility – hesitation.

C. These combined forms provide emphasis, but are quite dependent upon other issues.

This may seem quite surprising. The use of the optative mood is not a reflection of a possibility that God will not equip their lives. God is abundantly able and desirous to do so. The possibility lies on their desire for God to equip them. In many situations, God is far more prepared to equip than the believers are willing for God to do so.

“TO DO HIS WILL”

Again, the words “to do” are a translation of (εἰς – ποιέω) which means “to do.” The form of the word translated “do” is aorist tense which adds serious emphasis. The word translated “His” is a reference to Jesus. The word translated “will” is (θέλημα) which means desire; purpose.

“WORKING IN US”

The word translated “working” is (ποιῶν) which describes the way God works in creation as well as in everything that happens in our lives. Observe that the author used the word “us” rather than the word “you.” The author includes himself as being a part of all that God is doing. This is an expression of real humility.

“THAT WHICH IS PLEASING”

Once more, the translated words, “that which is” is really a translation of (τὸ – εὐάρεστον) which literally translates “the pleasing.” The word translated “pleasing” is (εὐάρεστον) which literally means acceptable; well pleasing. This word is most often used to describe God’s attitude toward human conduct.

“IN HIS SIGHT”

The word “in” does not appear in the Greek, but it is understood. The word translated “His” is (αὐτοῦ) and is a reference to Jesus. The word translated “sight” is (ἐνώπιον) which means in the opinion of.” It is not a reference to eye-sight.

“THROUGH JESUS CHRIST”

The word translated “through” is (διὰ). The inclusion of this word suggests the means through which something is to happen. Observe that the author refers to “Jesus Christ” rather than to “Christ Jesus.”

“TO WHOM BE GLORY”

The word translated “to whom” is (ὃς) which is well translated. The word “be” is not in the Greek text, but is understood. Instead of “glory” in the Greek text, is (ἡ δόξα) which translates as “THE glory” which is

Not for sale or resale

STUDY OF CHAPTER 13

much more emphatic. The word translated “glory” is (δόξα) which literally means splendor; greatness; honor.

“FOR EVER AND EVER. AMEN”

The words translated “for ever and ever” are (εἰς) which means “unto” (τούς) which means “the” (αἰῶνας) which means “ages.” The word translated “amen” is (ἀμήν) which means truly; let it be so.

HEBREWS 13:22, 23 – PLAN TO VISIT

“But I urge you, brethren, bear with this word of exhortation, for I have written to you briefly.” Hebrews 13:22

+There are two complete sentences in this paragraph.

“BUT I URGE YOU BRETHREN”

The word translated “but” is (δὲ) which indicates that we are in the midst of a contrast. The contrasted elements are follows:

A. The benediction which is presented in verses 20 and 21.

BUT

B. The author pleads that they accept his instructions that he has presented in the epistle.

Again, the word translated “I urge you” is (παρακαλεῶ) which as we explained previously means to beseech or implore. The form of this word is present tense and would be translated “I am urging” or “I am imploring.” The word translated “you” is (ὁἱ) and is well translated.

The addition of the word translated “brethren” is (ἀδελφοὶ) which literally identifies family. Today, in the church, we tend to use the word to identify a fellow Christian. In the early church, they treated each other as family. That is the background of the author’s intent here.

“BEAR WITH THIS WORD OF EXHORTATION”

The word translated “bear” is (ἀνέχεσθαι) which is a compound word:

A. (αν) means up.

B. (ἐχ) means to hold.

It is a way to encourage one to endure the hardships they are facing. The form of this word is present imperative. The author would issue this command to “be bearing”

The Greek text literally translates, “Be bearing with my word of exhortation.” The word translated “exhortation” is (παρακλήσεως) which is the same root word we found earlier in this verse translated “urge.”

“FOR I HAVE WRITTEN TO YOU BRIEFLY”

The use of the word translated “for” indicates that an explanation is in progress. The next word in the Greek text is (καὶ) which in a situation like this would be translated “also.” The word translated “I have written” is (ἐπίστειλα) which means to write a letter. The form of this word is aorist tense which adds serious emphasis. The words translated “briefly” are (διὰ- βραχείων) which means through briefly; or through an abbreviated form.

“Take notice that our brother Timothy has been released, with whom, if he comes soon, I will see you.” Hebrews 13:23

“TAKE NOTICE THAT OUR BROTHER TIMOTHY”

The word translated “take notice” is (γινώσκετε) which means to know increasingly. As indicated earlier, there are levels of knowing in the Greek language:

A. (γινώσκω) – means to know and increase in knowing.

B. (ἐπιγινώσκω) – means superior knowledge.

C. (οἶδα) – absolute knowledge

The form of this word is present imperative. The author would express this command “be knowing.” The author wrote of Timothy as “our brother.” It is a way to indicate that a fellow believer has all the privileges and responsibilities that a family member would have. The identification in this letter is one of the reasons that many people associate the writing of this letter with the apostle Paul.

“HAS BEEN RELEASED”

The word translated “has been released” is (ἀπολελυμένον) which means to be set free; released. The form of this word is perfect participle:

- A. Perfect tense – completed action.
- B. Participial form – ongoing action.

The sense of this form is that Timothy’s release is an accomplished fact and it never ceases to be true.

This statement has caused considerable distress among scholars. Some say that this had to be a different Timothy. It is true, that we do not know the details of Timothy’s imprisonment. The fact that we do not have the details does not prove that he was never imprisoned. There is no decisive statement that Paul worked closely with another believer named “Timothy.” Neither side can be proven. It appears that this is the Timothy whose family we know about and who has now been released from prison.

“WITH WHOM, IF HE COMES SOON”

The writing style has changed. Throughout chapters 11- 13. The author has used very complicated and involved sentence structure. At this point, however, the author is using very simple, straight forward sentence structure. The words translated “with whom” are a very simple, but accurate translation of words used regularly. The phrase translated “If he comes soon,” is a simply stated conditional statement:

- A. CONDITION – If he comes soon
- B. CONSEQUENCE – I shall see you.

The form of the word translated “he comes” is present subjunctive and would be translated “he may be coming.”

“I WILL SEE YOU”

Again, just two simple words convey the author’s message. The word translated “I will see” is (ὄψομαι) which means to see with the eye. The form of this word is future tense and is accurately translated. The intensity of this phrase gives one an impression about just how anxious the author was to see these people again.

Think about verse 23 again. This verse makes it clear that the author, in prison, was not only expecting to be released, but was making serious plans for what he would do immediately upon his release. If this is the apostle Paul, then he is clearly anticipating that he will be released very shortly. We know, however, that Paul was never released, but was put to death as a Roman prisoner. Could this be a prayer that God did not answer in the way that the believer requested?

HEBREWS 13:24, 25 – PARTING GREETING

“Greet all of your leaders and all the saints. Hebrews 13:24A

“GREET ALL YOUR LEADERS”

There are two complete sentences in Hebrews 13:24. The word translated “greet” is (ἀσπάσασθε) which means to welcome; to offer a greeting. The form of this word is aorist imperative which adds serious emphasis to the command. The word translated “leaders” is (ἡγουμένους) which means one who governs. We do not know how large the congregations in Galatia were or how many of them there were. It appears that there must have been a substantial number of Christian communities throughout the province. One must ask, why the author specifically addressed the greeting to the leaders and then to the members. It would be absolutely essential that he do this in this way. This epistle would be passed from one fellowship to another through the whole province. It would pass through many hands, but in each community it would end up in the hands of their leader. He would share it with the congregation and teach them as instructed

before passing the epistle on to the next group of believers. This was a way to let the leaders know that the author was supporting them. It was also a way to let the believers in that fellowship know that their leader was under the tutelage of the author.

“AND ALL THE SAINTS”

The word translated “saints” is (ἁγίους) which means holy; dedicated. We are quite uncomfortable with such a reference. This is because some believers have suggested that the word “saints,” which is a translation of the word “holy,” means flawless; perfect. One could not read Romans chapter seven and think of saints as sinlessly perfect. The word translated “holy” is (ἁγίους) which always contains two considerations:

- A. SEPARATED FROM SIN – as a result of the forgiveness of God in Christ.
- B. PURE – living a life that is always increasingly fashioned after the example of Jesus. It never suggests sinless perfection.

Those from Italy greet you.” Hebrews 13:24B

This second sentence makes it abundantly clear that the author is writing this letter from Italy. It would seem appropriate to go a step farther and say that he is writing from the area of Rome. Paul was not the only Christian incarcerated in Rome. There were many. It is fair to assume, however, that if he was a prominent Christian leader and being in Italy, it would not be at all surprising if he were a prisoner in Rome.

There was a substantial Christian community both in Italy and especially in Rome. It was always customary to share the greetings of the local Christian community with those to whom you are writing a letter. This may seem quite casual to us, but it was a very risky gesture both for the one sending the greeting and those who were the recipients.

“Grace be with you all.” Hebrews 13:25

The word translated “grace” is (χάρις) which means kindness; good will. Grace is the visual expression of God’s holy love that expresses itself in His limitless mercy. This mercy is demonstrated in His unequalled forgiveness of our sins so that in forgiveness, God sees us as though we were as sinless as Jesus. Every one of these Christians needed to be reminded of just how completely this grace blots out the failures of the past and enables God to dwell in us and be an active participant in everything that we do in serving His Son.

“THE CONCLUSION”

As indicated in the opening of our study, these believing Jews had suffered to the point of death in Jerusalem and finally fled to Galatia to survive. In Galatia, however, they faced the same deadly persecution from several sides. Unbelieving Jews sought to kill them. The Gnostics pledged to exterminate them by death if necessary because they were convinced that Jesus could not be Deity because he was completely human and every human being was a sinner. These people also struggled as other believing Jews attacked them over the question of whether a Gentile could become a Christian without first becoming a Jew. These people were simply weary of the struggle and were about to abandon their faith.

At times of intense persecution, a person’s focus tends to turn to self-preservation which inevitably leads to severe persecution within the body of Christ. In this frame of mind, it is impossible to demonstrate the love of God even for our enemies and the witness of God’s people diminishes severely.

The author wrote, in chapters 1-4, to renew their focus and encourage them to return to their faithful witness of the love of God in Jesus Christ. In this first section of the epistle, the author beautifully describes the greatness of Jesus as a person. Jesus is greater than Abraham; greater than Moses; even greater than the angels.

This is very helpful, but it is not enough. In chapters 5-10, the author does a commanding job of demonstrating that Jesus is a superior High Priest. This leads to a description of the presentation of a covenant that is greater than the covenant presented in the Jewish scriptures of the Old Testament.

The Superior Jesus

Chapter 11 is a beautiful picture of a host of people, just like these struggling believers, who in impossible situations trusted God in Jesus Christ to do the impossible. In the midst of this long list of situations where God's people believed in Him to receive the impossible, the author described a long list of ingredients involved in their lives as they lived by faith.

Chapters 12 and 13 form the final section of this epistle. As you look at these two chapters, you will notice that there are at least 51 commands all together. As the author looked at the situation in the church in Galatia, these 51 commands are his evaluation of what they need in order to continue to trust God faithfully in an impossible situation.