

what he owed the apostle for having led him into the service of salvation. *Albeit I do not say*, etc. This unusual sentence is a sort of explanation, to assure Philemon that what he said was not for the purpose of reminding him of his indebtedness (morally) to the apostle for his conversion to Christ.

Verse 20. *Let me have joy of thee*. This he could do by receiving Onesimus in the way that Paul requested. Such an act of cooperation would constitute a *refreshing* or encouragement for the *bowels* or heart of the apostle.

Verse 21. *Do more than I say*. Not that Philemon would go beyond and add to the inspired word of the apostle, for that would be wrong (Revelation 22: 18). But it means he would even be more thoughtful in good deeds than Paul was requiring.

Verse 22. Paul had hopes of being released and permitted to go out among the churches, and the testimony of history indicates that it was accomplished. In view of such an experience, he asked that Philemon make provision for his lodging.

Verses 23, 24. The names mentioned are of some brethren who were with Paul. They were either in chains also, or were otherwise engaged in defence of the Gospel. As Paul was writing this letter, these brethren joined in friendly greeting to Philemon.

Verse 25. *Grace* is the favor of Christ, which Paul wished to come to Philemon. *With your spirit*. This is significant, for a true Christian is bound to have unpleasant experiences as it pertains to his body (2 Timothy 3: 12); yet he may be comfortable and refreshed in spirit all the while. (See 2 Corinthians 4: 16.)

Hebrews 1

General remarks. Much has been said on the subject of whether Paul, or some other person, is the author of this book. I shall offer a few statements in view of the importance of the question due to the general agitation. I believe Paul is the author because it has the same logical form of reasoning shown in his other epistles. Also, 2 Peter 3: 15, 16 declares that Paul had written an epistle to the brethren, and his discription of it ("some things hard to be understood") indicates one consisting of logical discussion. It is true also that many of the Nicene writers (known as Apostolic Fathers) ascribe the epistle to Paul. These men

lived only a few centuries this side of Christ, and hence had access to evidences that were well founded. Furthermore, there is no negative reason for ascribing it to any other writer, for the whole epistle contains nothing that differs in a single feature from the manner of Paul's language or reasoning.

Verse 1. The principal subject of this book is the law of Christ over that of Moses and the prophets. The revelation of God's will was made known through Christ in the place of all other means in former times. The most outstanding disturbance of the first century of the Gospel Dispensation was caused by Judaizers. That means Jews or any others who insisted that Christians should conform to the Mosaic system in connection with their profession of faith in Christ. This book was written to show the errors in such a teaching. *Sundry times and in divers manners* refers to the many instances and various plans under which God used to give his revelations of truth to the prophets, to be given on by them to the heads of the units of His people.

Verse 2. *Last days* means the closing days of the Jewish Dispensation, since that was when Jesus lived in his personal ministry. The Son gave the words of the Father to the apostles (John 17: 8) and they to us, and that is the way in which we of this age have been spoken to of God. *Appointed heir of all things*. Heir is used in the sense of possessor (John 17: 10) because God turned all things pertaining to the new dispensation over to Him (Matthew 28: 18). *By whom also he made the worlds*. This refers to the cooperation which Jesus showed in all of God's works. See the plural "us" in Genesis 1: 26; 3: 22; also read John 1: 3.

Verse 3. Thayer defines *brightness* by "reflected brightness," meaning that when Jesus was on earth he reflected the glory of his Father. *Express image* is from CHARAKTER which Thayer defines at this place, "A mark or figure burned in or stamped on, an impression; the exact expression (the image) of any person or thing, marked likeness, precise reproduction in every respect." God is not composed of substance as that word is commonly used, hence the word *person* as in the King James Version is a good translation. It means that when Christ was on earth, he had the form or image

of his Father. That is one reason why He said, "he that hath seen me hath seen the father" (John 14: 9). All of this agrees with the words of God that the man was to be created in "our" (God's and Christ's) image (Genesis 1: 26). *Upholding all things by the word of his power.* All power (or authority) being given to Christ (Matthew 28: 18), the arrangement of all things pertaining to the new system of salvation was disposed of according to His will and direction. *By himself purged our sins.* This took place when He died on the cross, thereby making the supreme sacrifice that was sufficient to purge all men from their sins who would accept it. By the death on the cross, the plan was made completely efficient, which is why He said "it is finished" (John 19: 30). By coming alive from the grave, Jesus validated the purchase price of man's salvation, and then He was ready to return to his Father. He did so and was seated at the right hand of the throne of God, having been welcomed by the angelic hosts in the city of everlasting glory. (See the wonderful reception given Christ in Psalms 24: 7-10.)

Verse 4. *Better* does not apply to the personal character, for the angels who are living in heaven are perfect in that respect. Thayer defines the original word, "It is more advantageous." The meaning of the phrase is that Jesus was given a greater advantage in the great plan of God than the angels. The word *excellent* is to be understood also in the sense of advantage. *By inheritance* means that Jesus received this mentioned advantage through his relationship with God. It was not merely given to him as a man might see fit to give something to a stranger, but this was his by right of being the Son of God; he inherited it. While the favors or honors that the angels enjoy were given to them by the Creator of all things.

Verse 5. The *more excellent name* mentioned in the preceding verse is that of Son, as we may observe by the argument of this verse. God never said *Thou art my Son* to a single one of the angels, as he did to Jesus. *This day have I begotten thee* occurred when Mary conceived of God by the services of the Holy Spirit (Luke 1: 27-38). The angels were not brought into being by any personal relations between God and another being as was Jesus, but was created directly by

the power of God. The rest of this verse restates the same relationship already mentioned.

Verse 6. When Jesus was born of the virgin Mary, God directed all the angels to *worship him*. That word in the Greek New Testament comes from several different words, and has a variety of meanings, depending on the connection in which it is used. In the present passage it means to "do homage" or manifest great respect for one. There are myriads of angels, and all of them were told to render homage to the babe in Bethlehem. The argument the apostle is making is that if such great beings as the angels were commanded to acknowledge the superiority of the babe that was laid in a manger, He certainly is to be ascribed a great giver of law. (If angels worshipped the humble babe thus posed in the city of David, common mortals like us should regard it an honor to be permitted the act of worshipping him today, when He is sitting at his Father's right hand, reigning as King of kings and Lord of lords.)

Verse 7. But even this contrast with angels would not mean so much, unless the angels themselves were important beings. Accordingly, Paul says God makes his angels ministering spirits, thus being very important personages in the great scheme of grace.

Verse 8. The superiority of Christ over all other beings (except his Father) is still the main subject. *Thy throne O God.* Jesus is called God because that is the family name of the Godhead. He is called God in Acts 20: 28, where his blood is mentioned as the purchasing price of the church. The throne of Christ is declared by his Father to be *for ever and ever* because He is to reign to the end of the age (1 Corinthians 15: 24-26). A scepter is a rod or instrument that a ruler holds that is a token of his authority. The scepter connected with the kingdom of Christ is a righteous one, because it requires the citizens of the kingdom to live a life of righteousness only.

Verse 9. *Loved righteousness and hated iniquity.* This phrase expresses two completely opposite terms. *Hated* is from a Greek word that sometimes has a milder meaning than it does here. In the present passage it is defined by Thayer, "To hate, pursue with hatred, detest." Because Christ had these qualities, He was given the great honor that the verse states. The speci-

fication, *God, even thy God*, is made because the name "God" is the family name of the Deity, and Christ had that name by virtue of his being a member of the family. But in the work assigned to Him as head of the kingdom, He was to be a king and the Father was to be God over him (1 Corinthians 11: 3). In old times it was customary to anoint kings with oil at their coronation. Christ was figuratively anointed with the *oil of gladness* or exultation. *Above thy fellows* means that Christ was exalted higher than any other ruler that had ever been on earth.

Verse 10. This and the following two verses are quoted from Psalms 102: 24-27. David was the famous ancestor of Christ, yet he recognizes him as his Lord (Matthew 22: 43-45). The work of creation is ascribed to Christ because he was associated with his Father in that work. It is so taught in John 1: 1-3, and it is indicated likewise by the plural pronoun "us" in Genesis 1: 26; 3: 22.

Verse 11. The main subject of this epistle is the superiority of Christ over all other persons or things (except his Father). The works of creation, in the making of which He had a part, will cease to be even though He will continue. *They* means the things of creation mentioned in the preceding verse. *Wax old as doth a garment* is an illustration drawn from a garment that has reached the end of its usefulness. When a garment gets into that condition, it is discarded and treated as the next verse states.

Verse 12. A *vesture* is a covering piece, to be folded up or discarded when no longer useful. *Changed* is from ALLASSO which Thayer defines, "To exchange one thing for another." This is said with reference to the earth and the other parts of the material universe related to it. They are finally to be discarded and dissolved, and other things will be used in their place. (See 2 Peter 3: 10-13; Revelation 21: 1.) *Thou art the same*. Not that Christ will never change his position in the great plan of God, for He will cease to be the king after the judgment day (1 Corinthians 15: 24-27). But He will never cease to be (as will the material universe), and in that sense His years *shall not fail*.

Verse 13. The second part of this verse is a quotation from Psalms 110: 1, in which David states something

that God said of Christ. The point that Paul is making is that since nothing like this was ever said to any one of the angels, Christ is to be regarded as superior to them. Making His enemies his footstool is equivalent to subjecting all things to him, which is the thing predicted in 1 Corinthians 15: 25, 26.

Verse 14. Unless the angels also are important beings, there would not be much significance in being made superior to them. Paul recognizes this point by the statement made here in question form. Angels are among the instruments or agencies which God uses, in his treatment of and care for His own. (Read the following passages. Genesis 24: 7; Daniel 6: 22; Matthew 2: 13; Acts 12: 11; 27: 23.)

Hebrews 2

Verse 1. *Therefore* means in view of the things set forth in the preceding chapter, the following conclusions should be observed. *More earnest heed* signifies that we should be all the more concerned about it, since we have heard our duty taught by the Son of God and his spokesmen. *Slip* is from PARARREO, which Thayer defines, "To flow past, to glide by; lest we be carried past, pass by." He then explains his definition to mean, "Lest the salvation which the things heard show us how to obtain slip away from us." Thayer also quotes from Greek literature to show the word to mean, "A thing escapes me, slips away from my mind." Even if Christians do not deliberately discard the sayings of Christ, they may forget about them unless they give earnest heed to them.

Verse 2. *Spoken by angels*. There were times when God delivered some special messages to individuals through the services of angels (Genesis 16: 9; 19: 17, and others). But the main thing Paul has in mind is the use God made of the angels in delivering the Mosaic law to the people (Acts 7: 53; Galatians 3: 19). *Was stedfast* means it was fairly established on the authority of Christ. *Transgression* denotes a going over and beyond an established law; not only the doing what it expressly says must not be done, but also the doing of what it does not give any authority to do. *Disobedience* means the simple failure to do what the law requires, regardless of the cause or motive for such failure. *Recompence of reward* is all from one Greek word that means the treatment

one receives on account of his conduct. *Just* signifies that what was done to those who transgressed or disobeyed the law of Moses, given through the services of angels, was proper and what they deserved.

Verse 3. *How shall we escape our just fate? If we neglect* is fully as dangerous as to be guilty of active wrongdoing. *So great salvation* is said because of the greatness of the means by which it was made known to us, which means will now be described. *Began to be spoken by the Lord.* Jesus spent more than three years in the personal work of preparing the foundation or fundamentals of His kingdom among men. *Was confirmed unto us by them that heard him.* This refers to the apostles who were chosen by Christ to be with him all of the time between His baptism and ascension (Acts 1: 21, 22). The apostles had first-hand information from Christ when he was on earth, and they afterward received "all truth" pertaining to the Gospel as the plan of Christ for salvation (John 16: 13). This word was *confirmed* by the miracles which they and their converts were enabled to perform (Mark 16: 20).

Verse 4. These miracles are to be attributed to God also, because He bestowed the Holy Ghost (or Spirit) on the apostles in answer to the prayer of Christ (John 14: 16). *Gifts according to his own will.* The miraculous gifts which the disciples were enabled to perform in the early years of the church were regulated by the Lord in the best way for the good of the work of salvation (1 Corinthians 12: 7).

Verse 5. Paul is still considering the superiority of Christ over the angels, and of His law over that which was "spoken by angels." Those beings were inferior even to all men that they were not to have dominion over the earth at the time of creation, while it was given to man. (See Genesis 1: 26-28.) The *world* means the inhabited part of the universe, and *to come* is said because when the dominion was given to man, the population of the earth was still in the future.

Verse 6. *One in a certain place* means David in Psalms 8: 4-6. *Testified* is a strong word in the original, and denotes a solemn and earnest declaration, as if the speaker felt surprise and admiration over something. *What is man* is not meant to lower the importance of man, except as a contrast

with so great a Being as the creator of all things. That God would be mindful of such a creature to the extent of the facts referred to, caused David to express himself as it is in this passage. *Son of man* is virtually the same as the simple term *man* above, except that it indicates a being that is reproduced by another like himself, and hence that he is inferior to his Creator. *Visitest* is from *EPISKEPTOMAI* which Thayer defines, "To look upon in order to help or to benefit, equivalent to look after, have a care for, provide for."

Verse 7. *Little lower than the angels* This same thing is said of Jesus in verse 9, and the sense in which it is said is explained, namely, *for the suffering of death.* Hence we understand that this inferiority of man to the angels in the present verse refers to the nature of his body, that it is possible for him to die which the angels cannot do (Luke 20: 36). Notwithstanding this humble status of man, God did crown him with the glory and honor of being placed over the works of His hands.

Verse 8. *Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet.* This is said in reference to what is declared in Genesis 1: 26-28. From here on the apostle extends his remarks to include Jesus, which is not considered in the original passage in the Psalms. This is not the only instance where a New Testament writer makes a second or extended use of an Old Testament passage. Hosea 11: 1 is said regarding the departure of ancient Israel from Egypt, but Matthew 2: 14, 15 quotes it and applies it to Christ. Likewise Matthew 1: 23 cites Isaiah 7: 14 and applies it to Christ, yet the passage in Isaiah first referred to an infant born to the prophet and his young wife. *See not yet all things put under him* is said of Jesus, and the next two verses will indicate what it is that is not yet *put under* or been conquered by Jesus, and what he must first suffer before His final victory over all except his Father.

Verse 9. Jesus was made lower than the angels in regard to his body only, as explained in verse 7; it is further explained in the present verse. In order to be able to taste death for every man, He must himself be able to die, which required such a body. It was by the grace or favor of God for mankind, that Jesus was enabled to die (and live again) for humanity.

It was a *glory and honor* for Jesus to be crowned with such an exalted privilege as that of dying for the salvation of man.

Verse 10. The pronoun *him* refers to God, and it *became him* or was befitting that He should do the things mentioned in the verse. *Whom* also is a pronoun standing for God, because all things were originally for and by Him. He planned to bring many (as many as would) persons unto the glory of spiritual service in this life, and eternal glory in the life to come. For such a grand accomplishment it was necessary to have a captain who could lead them in the manner. Such a captain was to be Jesus, and he was made *perfect* (completely qualified) by suffering. Such an experience was all that Jesus lacked before he came to the earth, and hence He was given a fleshly body that was capable of suffering and death.

Verse 11. This verse and on through the chapter, carries the main subject of the oneness and fellowship that was designed to exist between Jesus and those whom he planned to save. To be *sanctified* means to be devoted to the service of God. Such a state of devotion is accomplished through Jesus who is *he that sanctifieth*. They are *all of one* in that both Jesus and his disciples are united in reverence for God who makes all good things possible that exist. In this sense they are all brethren and Jesus is not ashamed in the happy relationship.

Verse 12. Paul verifies his statement of the preceding verse by a quotation from the Psalms 22: 22, which is a part of a chapter composed of predictions about Christ. *In the midst of the church*. In Matthew 18: 20 Jesus promises to be present in every scriptural assembly, and in such a meeting He will be joining in the praises.

Verse 13. This verse is a quotation from some Old Testament sayings, parts of them from David, pertaining to the close fellowship between the Lord and his disciples.

Verse 14. The fellowship is continued in this verse. The motive for sharing in a nature of flesh and blood is the same as indicated in verse 9. *Destroy* is used in the sense of counteract, for the devil will never be literally destroyed. But he had the *power* of causing death to come upon mankind, and Jesus died and rose

again in order to bring all men to life again.

Verse 15. *Bondage* is from DOULEIA which is literally defined by Thayer as follows: "Slavery, bondage, the condition of a slave." He then explains it to mean, "The slavish sense of fear." With no prospect of living again, mankind would have a feeling of dread for death that would be like the terror caused by a harsh master over his slaves. Such a fear of death would indeed be a cruel bondage, but the resurrection of Christ dispelled that fear in the minds of all who believe in Him.

Verse 16. *Nature* is not in the original text because angels are not natural beings. The thought is that Jesus did not come into the world with a body like those of the angels, for then He could not have died (Luke 20: 36). He came instead as a fleshly descendant of Abraham.

Verse 17. It was necessary for Jesus to be like his brethren with regard to His body, in order to have a sympathetic interest in their trials and other tests. Being so formed, He could have a feeling of mercy toward them in their transgressions. One meaning of *faithful* is to be "worthy of trust; that can be relied on." Christ became such a high priest by partaking of the nature of fleshly man, while not surrendering His divine character and likeness to God. This qualified him to make *reconciliation* (satisfaction with God) for the sins of the people.

Verse 18. Jesus was clothed with the flesh and was actually tempted (yet never yielded; chapter 4: 15) as we are. This made Him able to *succour* (support) others who were taken in their sins, or who are in danger of being so taken.

Hebrews 3

Verse 1. Let the reader keep constantly in mind the leading thought in this book, namely, the superiority of the system of Christ over that of Moses. *Holy brethren*. Not that worshipers under Moses were not holy, for they were required to be so (Leviticus 11: 44, 45). But they did not become brethren by their holiness; they were born into that relationship regardless of their knowledge of God. (See 1 Samuel 3: 7.) To be brethren of Christ requires a life of righteousness (Matthew 12: 50), hence Paul calls these people by the term itali-

cized. *Heavenly calling* is used mainly as a mark of superiority for the service under Christ over the old one. The word *apostle* means one who is sent on a mission with authority to speak and act. Jesus was sent from Heaven to earth to carry out a mission of salvation. After shedding His blood in a supreme sacrifice, Jesus was qualified to reenter the court of eternal glory, there to act as the High Priest for the Christians on the merits of His shed blood, even as the high priests in the Mosaic system entered the second court of the tabernacle and temple with the blood of animals.

Verse 2. *Who was faithful . . . as also Moses*. All of the good points about Moses were equalled and some of them were excelled by Christ. They were equal as to being faithful over their own houses or religious institutions.

Verse 3. *This man* means Christ, and a point in which he excelled Moses is stated, namely, that He was the builder of his own house (the church). The house over which Moses presided was the Jewish nation of which he was not the originator.

Verse 4. The word *man* is not in the original and *some* is an indefinite pronoun. The idea is that as a rule, each house has its own particular builder whose activities are limited to the one house. On the other hand, God is the Master builder whose architectural powers include everything in the universe.

Verse 5. Moses did not build the house (Jewish nation), but he was given the honor of being a servant over it. Since he was a faithful servant, his behaviour and teaching became a *testimony* or background for the *things which were to be spoken afterward*, meaning the ordinances under Christ. (See Romans 15: 4.)

Verse 6. Christ was even more than a faithful servant; he was a son, and was given the honor of presiding over His own house (the church), which his Father gave to him. *Whose house are we* refers to Paul and all others who are faithful. The faithfulness consists in maintaining our *confidence* or trust in Christ, which causes us to rejoice in the hope that such a divine house contains. It is necessary that our conduct in these matters be continued *unto the end* (of life).

Verse 7. Paul now makes a quotation from Psalms 95: 7-11, but strengthens it with the declaration

that it is the Holy Ghost (or Spirit) that says it. That means that David was inspired to make the statement. *Hear his voice* means to hear God who speaks to us through his Son (chapter 1: 1).

Verse 8. *Harden not your hearts* is a warning not to set their minds against the teaching of Christ. *As in the provocation* refers to the disobedience of ancient Israel by which they provoked God into punishing them. Paul specifies the circumstance to which he refers by mention of the days they were going through the wilderness.

Verse 9. The apostle gives further explanation of his preceding warning by the words of this verse. *Your fathers* means the first heads of the Jewish nation. *Tempted* and *proved* occurred when the disobedience of the Israelites put the patience of God to a test. Such conduct on their part was without cause, for they had abundance of evidence that He was able to care for them under all conditions, and also that He would punish them for their rebellion. All of this was manifested to them during the *forty years* in the wilderness.

Verse 10. To be *grieved* means God was "wroth or displeased with" them according to Thayer's lexicon. *That generation* has reference to the heads of the nation who were leaders in the rebellious actions. Their misconduct was due to a heart or mind filled with error. As a result of such an attitude toward God, they failed to become acquainted with *His ways* or the ways the Lord wished the people to follow.

Verse 11. God *swore* or made a solemn decision against the disobedient people. This was caused by His wrath or *grief* as mentioned in verse 10. The decision was that they should not be permitted to *enter into my rest*. This rest refers to their settlement in the promised land, which the Lord had designed should come to his people after the weariness of the wandering. God calls it *his rest* because he designed it to be an antitype of the rest on the seventh day from His works of creation.

Verse 12. *Take heed* is the same warning made in verse 8, for these Christians not to make the same mistake their Jewish forefathers made in the wilderness. *Unbelief* is shown to cause man to have an *evil heart*. Such a heart will cause a man to *depart from the living God*. This is the same

warning Paul gave in his epistle to the church at Corinth (1 Corinthians 10: 1-11). We should profit by the mistakes of others and thus avoid a like falling from the favor of the Lord. The record of these things is placed in the Old Testament for our benefit (Romans 15: 4).

Verse 13. To *exhort* means to insist on doing what we know to be our duty. These brethren knew it was their duty to listen to the teaching given by Christ, for they just had the instruction in this epistle. They were told to do the exhorting *daily* which would require frequent contact with each other. Such an intimacy was expected of the people of Christ, and it was even predicted that it would be so. In Malachi 3: 16 we may read, "Then they that feared the Lord spake often to each other." *While it is called to day* is equivalent to saying, "While the days are going by." This teaching of Paul is not very favorable to the notion of half-hearted disciples who insist that Christians have no need to assemble except on Lord's Day to "partake of the communion." *Hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.* The Lord knew that frequent contact with each other was necessary to prevent disciples being deceived by sin.

Verse 14. This verse is virtually the same as verse 6. To be a partaker of Christ is to have part in the good things He has in store for his faithful disciples.

Verse 15. *While it is said* signifies that the admonition will not always be given, hence while it is *to day* is the time to heed the admonition given by the apostle.

Verse 16. Again the apostle wishes his readers to profit by the mistakes of their forefathers. *For some* indicates that Paul has reference to a certain part of the Jewish people in the wilderness. We may often hear some such a remark as the following: "Of the vast congregation that left Egypt only two ever reached the promised land." This will be said in spite of the positive statement that the failure to go through did not happen to *all that came out of Egypt by Moses*. This kind of statement would indicate a greater number of exceptions than only two.

Verse 17. This verse explains that the forgoing sad fate pertained only to the sinners—those able to be responsible for their actions. Those were the ones only *whose carcasses fell in*

the wilderness. The identity of the class that fell is made still more definite in Numbers 14: 22-31. By considering these several verses it may be seen that only the men of war are considered when just two were to be permitted to enter the land of promise. We have no definite information as to how many women and children made the entire journey from Egypt to Canaan.

Verse 18. The ones who were to be unable to enter the land of promise are again mentioned under the general description of *them that believed not*.

Verse 19. All of the shortcomings the Israelites committed in the wilderness are charged up against *unbelief*. This is significant and teaches the fundamental truth that whenever professed disciples fail to do their duty, it may be laid to their lack of faith.

Hebrews 4

Verse 1. The word *fear* in this verse means anxiety or extreme caution, not to make the same mistake the Israelites made. There is a promise made to the disciples of Christ, to be considered a few verses below, and they might *come short* or miss it.

Verse 2. The simple meaning of *gospel* is "good news," hence any announcement of good news or promises may rightly be termed gospel. The Israelites had good information that they were to be given a land of rest from their wanderings. The disciples of Christ are given the promise of a rest from their worldly cares after this life is over, provided they are faithful to the end. The promise did not profit the Israelites under consideration because they did not believe it. (See chapter 3: 18, 19.)

Verse 3. *We which have believed* are the only ones who are promised the privilege of entering into rest. *As I have sworn*, etc., means God deals with all people on the same principle. That is that He declared to ancient Israel that their unbelief would keep them out of the promised land. *Although the works were finished*. A rest period implies a preceding one of work, and that took place in the beginning of creation. Hence the rest after the labor was established, which was to serve as a type of the next rest; the one in Canaan after the wandering in the wilderness.

Verse 4. The *certain place* where this is spoken is Genesis 2: 2, 3, and

that is where the Lord set the pattern of rest after labor that was to be a foreshadowing of another rest far into the future.

Verse 5. But the ones whom God planned to enjoy that second rest made themselves unworthy of it, hence He swore that they should not enter into it.

Verse 6. *Remaineth that some must enter therein*. God is sure to "have His own way" at last, even though certain ones may be rebellious and thus lose the benefits that He intended for them. Even if unbelief cuts off the ones first intended to have been favored, the Lord will find another outlet for the divine mercy.

Verse 7. *Limiteth* is from a Greek word that means "to determine, appoint" according to Thayer. *Saying in David* means it is said in the writings of David, namely, in Psalms 95: 7, 8. The thought of this verse is that God "determined" to have another rest and caused David to write about it, and to exhort the ones living before it not to make the mistake the former ones did.

Verse 8. The Greek word for Jesus is also defined "Joshua" in the lexicon, and should be so translated in this verse. Joshua led the few faithful ones across the Jordan into the Canaan rest, but God had already determined upon another rest, seeing so many of the candidates for the rest in Canaan had proved unworthy. In justice to the faithful ones at that time, they were permitted to be led by Joshua into the land of Canaan, but that circumstance was not to be regarded as the final arrangement of the Lord for a better rest. That is why our verse states that Jesus (Joshua) did not *give them rest*, meaning he did not give them the third and final rest. This truth is further indicated by the Lord's statement afterwards that there was to be *another day*.

Verse 9. This verse is the climax of the reasoning in the preceding verses. *There remaineth* signifies that the final rest is still in the future, and that is the one which Christians are warned not to miss on account of unbelief. It may be well to observe that three rests have been discussed by Paul, and he shows that God speaks of them as "my rest." That is because He originated them and determined the conditions affecting them. Briefly stated, the three rests are the seventh day after the creation, the national

rest in Canaan, and the rest in Heaven after the judgement.

Verse 10. This is a comment on the relation of the rest to work. The mere mention of *rest* implies a preceding period of *work* to be followed by the rest.

Verse 11. Verse 9 states the grand conclusion upon the line of reasoning the apostle has been giving. The present verse states the exhortation that would logically be given upon such a conclusive background. Since the term *rest* implies a preceding one of *labor*, the apostle makes his exhortation upon that basis. Disciples who are not willing to labor for the Lord, should not expect to share in His rest. If they at last "come short of it," the cause will be attributed to their disobedience or *unbelief*.

Verse 12. The original Greek word for *quick* is defined in the lexicon as "alive" and that for *powerful* is "active." The meaning of the clause is that the word of God is alive and active. When it is absorbed as spiritual food its effect should be to make one a living and active servant of the Lord. A *twoedged* sword is extra sharp because such instruments are made of the best material. Likewise the word of God is composed of the best material, namely, the wisdom of divine inspiration. It would not indicate any unusual keenness for a knife to sever between things that do not resemble, or that are not closely adhering to each other. The ability of the "sword of the Spirit" to distinguish between the *soul and spirit* of man is mentioned as a proof of its keenness. This indicates that there is not much difference between them, and yet that some difference exists. This subject is explained in the comments at 1 Thessalonians 5: 23. *Joints and marrow* are other parts of the human system that pertain to the flesh, and are used figuratively for the same purpose as the preceding illustration, showing the sharpness of the divine instrument. *Discerner* is from KRITIKOS which means a measuring rule or standard, by which things are measured and judged. The statement means that the word of God is the standard by which all our thoughts and intents are to be regulated. It is sometimes insisted that Christians may think whatever they please as long as they keep it to themselves. This verse condemns such a notion, and it is contradicted also by Philipians

4: 8, 9 which tells Christians the subjects on which they have a right to think.

Verse 13. The foregoing verse and remarks have special reference to the Word of God as an inspired volume. But if God can produce a book that has such qualities, then He certainly has a mind that is likewise able. Everything that we think (or do) is seen by the eyes of the Infinite One, because his "eyes are in every place, beholding the evil and the good" (Proverbs 15: 3).

Verse 14. Jesus is a *great high priest* because he is the Son of God. Another item of His greatness is his entrance into *the heavens* or the place where God is, whereas the high priests of the Mosaic system entered into the buildings on earth, which were only the figures or types of the ones above. Paul uses this truth as a basis for our holding *fast* or firm to our profession of faith; not going back to Moses.

Verse 15. In taking on a body with the same nature as ours, Jesus was able to have the same experiences as we. *Touched with the feeling* means to sympathize with our infirmities. Whatever would be a temptation to us would be likewise one to Him, and he came in contact with all kinds of temptations which are on the earth, yet never yielded once to them.

Verse 16. *Come boldly* denotes a feeling of confidence that we may have on account of such a sympathetic Intercessor. The Israelites came near the tabernacle or temple, relying on their high priest to officiate on their behalf, by making intercession for them before the mercyseat in the most holy place, which was a type of the *throne of grace*. Accordingly we as spiritual Israel may approach by faith unto this throne where Jesus is acting as our High Priest. Our prayers through Him will reach the ears of God, calling for *grace* or favor to help us in the *time of need* while in this world of temptation.

Hebrews 5

Verse 1. The superiority of the system of Christ over that of Moses continues to be the subject of this book. The discussion is especially formed around the priesthoods, making comparison to show wherein they are alike as well as where they differ. This and a number of verses following will deal (generally) with many of the points in which they are similar.

The high priests of the Mosaic system were men—human beings—who were *ordained* (appointed) to act on behalf of the nation's relation to the things of God. These priests acted in these things by offering the *gifts* and *sacrifices* for their sins. The two words are much alike in many respects. The first means the offerings that were made voluntarily, consisting of money or fruits that could be used for the living of the priests or the maintenance of the temple. The second has reference to animals that were to become victims on the altar; the blood of some of these was taken by the high priest into the most holy place.

Verse 2. The *ignorant* means those less informed than the priests who were better acquainted with the matters of the service. (See Leviticus 10: 8-11; Deuteronomy 17: 8-13; John 11: 49-52.) Out of the way denotes those who err in their ways on account of their lack of knowledge. *Can have compassion* means the same as "being touched" as was explained by the comments on chapter 4: 15. *Compassed with infirmity* means those priests had the same fleshly tendencies as others of the nation.

Verse 3. This can apply to the high priests under the old law only, since Jesus had no sins to be atoned for.

Verse 4. The apostle again takes up the points in which the high priests of both systems were similar. Numbers 16 and 18 will clearly show that Aaron did not seek the office of high priest, but that he was called into that service by the Lord.

Verse 5. Thou art my Son, etc., was not what made Jesus the High Priest of the Christian Dispensation. It is quoted as an identification of the One who did call Christ into that office. David is the one who wrote the statement by inspiration, and it was written many centuries before Christ was born.

Verse 6. This verse cites another passage in David's writings (Psalms 110: 4) that predicts the priesthood of Jesus, even specifying one of the particulars in which He was to be superior to the Levitical priests (which is another of the points of difference referred to above); being like Melchisedek in that it was not to be changeable as were the Levitical priests. Having been determined upon and predicted of God long before he was born, Jesus could not be accused of usurping the office.

Verse 7. *Days of his flesh* means while Jesus lived on the earth before his crucifixion. He often prayed to his Father, but we are not always told what was the subject of the prayers. The one in the garden (Luke 22: 41-44) is an instance of *supplications with strong crying and tears*. Our present verse indicates one subject of His prayers was to be saved from death. This could not mean that when He prayed in the garden he was asking God to shield him from death on the cross. Peter was rebuked for trying to shield his Master from death (Matthew 26: 51-54; John: 18 10, 11). But the prayer of our verse received a favorable answer, for it says He *was heard*. *Save* is from the Greek word *sozo* which Thayer defines. "To bring safe forth from." Jesus was saved from death in the sense that He was brought "safe forth from" the grave, hence the conclusion is established that He prayed for that favor from his Father, intensifying the prayers with the *supplications and tears*.

Verse 8. *Though he were a Son*, Jesus was not excused from undergoing the program his Father planned for him. Jesus learned by practical experience what it means to obey his Father, when the trials of His life led up to his suffering and crucifixion.

Verse 9. The word *perfect* means complete and fully qualified or equipped. The experience of suffering is what gave Jesus this completion. *Author* is from a Greek word that primarily means "cause." Jesus suffered many trials and finally went to His death on the cross. This qualified Him to cause a plan of eternal salvation to be effected for mankind. *Eternal* is from *AIONIOS*, which Thayer defines at this passage, "Without end, never to cease, everlasting." The salvation offered by Christ will go on endlessly after the world ceases to be. However, the important condition on which men may obtain this salvation is that they obey Him.

Verse 10. Melchisedec had no successor in his priesthood, neither will Jesus have any, for He is now and will continue to be High Priest.

Verse 11. *Of whom* has direct reference to Melchisedec because he was the last person named. But the apostle concluded his readers were not ready for the fine points in the comparison between this man and Christ. He drops that line of argument for the

present, and will take it up again (in chapter 7) after giving them other instructions that may prepare their minds for the further study of types. *Hard to be uttered* means "difficult of explanation" according to Thayer's lexicon. *Dull of hearing* denotes a mind that is slow in apprehending what is said.

Verse 12. These disciples had been in the church long enough *time* to have become teachers, but were still in need of being taught by others. There is no criticism to make merely because someone needs to be taught—all people need that. The fault is in being so indifferent as not to advance beyond the "kindergarten grade." The word first means "beginning," and *principles* denotes "steps or elements." The phrase means the beginning steps of the oracles of God. These steps include the types revealed in the Old Testament, that pointed forward to the institution of Christ. The system of the Levitical priesthood and that of Melchisedec were steps or elements that looked forward to Christ. Being unable to grasp the comparisons, Paul described them as being like babes who can partake of milk only.

Verse 13. *Unskilful* is defined "inexperienced" by Thayer's lexicon. This does not mean that the lack of experience is due to their babyhood, but it is the other way around. They were still babes because they had not launched out after further activities or experiences, such as a normal babe will do.

Verse 14. The Englishman's Greek New Testament renders *strong meat* as "solid food." *Of full age* means those who are adults instead of babes. *By reason of use* denotes the experience a Christian has in practicing the things taught in the "oracles of God." *Senses* is defined "Faculty of the mind" by Thayer, and he explains it further, "For perceiving, understanding, judging." The Bible is like an appliance that has been obtained for the home; it must be used to be understood and appreciated. But in order to make the proper use of it the owner must observe "instructions" that are given by one who furnished him the appliance. Likewise the Lord has provided instructions in the "oracles" for the proper use of the items making up the system of Christian living. By following these instructions the disciples will learn to make correct distinctions between the various situ-

ations in life, accepting the right and rejecting the wrong. (See 1 Thessalonians 5: 21.)

Hebrews 6

Verse 1. *Therefore* signifies that a conclusion is being drawn from the truths set forth in the preceding chapter. *Leaving* does not mean to desert or disregard, but not to remain with the beginning steps thus making no advancement. A builder *leaves* the foundation and goes on with the building. He should not find it necessary to *lay again* the foundation, for that was done in the "beginning" of the project. Likewise Christians should advance beyond the *principles* ("beginning") of their service to Christ and become *perfect* or full grown. *Not lay again the foundation*. These Jewish disciples had begun their service to Christ (had laid the foundation) by turning from the things on which they had been relying all their lives. Some of those things consisted of items commanded by the law of Moses, while others were the erroneous notions taught by some of their leaders. These disciples had begun their new life—had laid the foundation—by no longer adhering to the former practices or observances. A number of these items are considered in this and the next verse. *Dead works* means the works of the old law which are no longer able to impart spiritual life; they have become dead works. *Faith toward God*. Christians are not told to turn away from faith in God, for then they could not please Him (Hebrews 11: 6). The Jews had faith in God *only*, not including Christ since they had not been taught concerning Him. This verse means that disciples must have faith in both the Father and the Son.

Verse 2. *Baptisms* is from the Greek word BAPTISMOS which Thayer defines "A washing, purification effected by means of water." It refers to the washing of animals prescribed by the Mosaic law. (See Exodus 29: 4,17; Leviticus 1: 9; 9: 14.) The word is never used for the ordinance of Christian baptism. *Laying on of hands*. Under the Mosaic system the priests or others laid their hands on the animals that were to be offered in the service (Leviticus 3: 2; 4: 4, 13; 16: 21). *Resurrection of the dead . . . eternal judgement*. These phrases must be considered together, for they are connected with one of the erroneous theories that were maintained in

those days, and were shared in by the Jews. The theory was false but Jesus never bothered about exposing it in His day. However, when the apostles came to induce the Jews to accept the Gospel, it was necessary to tell them they must give up such notions; that they must do "repentance from" such errors. The false theory referred to is known in historical literature as "Transmigration of souls." The doctrine taught that when a man dies his soul passes into the body of another, thus enabling him to live again or experience a resurrection. If the person had been unrighteous, he would be punished by being sent into some other being who was afflicted, or into an abnormal child then being born. (See John 9: 1-3.) If necessary this form of punishment or *judgement* would be repeated again and again. (a form of "eternal judgement") as here expressed.

Verse 3. *If God permit*. No passage should be interpreted so as to contradict another in the Bible. 2 Peter 3: 9 says that God is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." The italicized phrase, then, does not imply that God will prevent any man from doing what is right. The thought is as if Paul would say, "We who are determined to be right, will go on unto maturity in the spiritual life, God being our helper."

Verse 4. *It is impossible*. The thing that is impossible and the reasons for it will require a number of lines of the text to explain. After the simple announcement of an impossibility, the apostle drops the subject and gives a description of the characters concerning whom it is said, then tells what it is that is impossible. We shall carefully study this description before attempting to state the conclusion. *Enlightened* is from PHOTIZO which Thayer defines, "To enlighten spiritually, imbue with saving knowledge." Thayer defines the original for *taste* as follows: "To feel, make trial of, experience." It means to have experienced enough of the *heavenly gift* of Christianity to know how precious it is. The Holy Ghost (or Spirit) was bestowed upon the church (Romans 5: 5; 14: 17; 1 Corinthians 6: 19), hence when people become Christians they are *made partakers of the Holy Ghost*.

Verse 5. *Tasted the good word of God* means to have "experienced" the help of that word enough to know

what its benefits are. When a person knows by experience what effect for good the Gospel will have on one in preparing for the *world to come*, he may truly be said to have tasted of that coming *power* even in this life.

Verse 6. To *fall away* means to desert or purposely turn away from a thing. It here applies to those who have had all the experience just described, then deliberately pull away from such a manner of life. Now we are ready to see what it is that is impossible, namely, to *renew such a person to repentance*. The impossibility is upon the part of the would-be restorer and not on the one who falls away. It does not say he cannot repent, but it is impossible for anyone else to induce him to. The reason is that the apostate already knows as much about the subject as the one who wants to renew him, and hence the exhorter cannot offer any new arguments or reasons. On the basis of the foregoing statements of the apostle, it is proper to say that if persons fall away after all those experiences, then "It is impossible . . . to renew them again unto repentance." If they ever come back to Christ it will be on their own change of heart, which will always be possible for them. Paul describes this falling away as another crucifying of the Son of God, since it puts them outside the church and in the class of the enemies who actually did crucify Him. It is an *open shame* because the radical turning from a life of righteousness is apparent to the world about the apostate.

Verse 7. Paul is making an illustration out of the earth and its products. Not all ground is desirable as the parable of the sower in Matthew 13 teaches. The blessing of moisture will fall on the earth regardless of the character of some particular spots. If any portion responds by producing useful herbs, it will be blessed of God and be worthy of additional showers.

Verse 8. On the same basis as the preceding verse, if some spot receives the rain but yields only the thorns, such products will be burned, and that spot will be rejected by the owner as unprofitable.

Verse 9. Paul expected his readers to understand the general lesson in the parable, but he does not mean for them to make a personal application of it as yet. Hence he makes the kindly remark that he is counting on a better

showing from them than was indicated by the thorny ground. However, we are sure the apostle intended the illustration as an exhortation for them to be thoughtful and not fail at last. It is similar to the warning given in chapter 3: 12 and 4: 1.

Verse 10. This verse is consistent with the preceding one. The Hebrew brethren were given credit for the good work they had done. We are not told the particulars of what they were doing, but it has the highly commendable credit of being a *labor of love*. An important part of their motive for the work is indicated by the statement that it was *toward his name*. Such a motive corresponds with Matthew 25: 40.

Verse 11. It is not enough to be doing one's duty just at intervals and then stop, but it must be persisted in until the end of life.

Verse 12. To be *slothful* means to be sluggish or indolent. A *follower* is an imitator, but a person cannot imitate those who are patient (persistent) if he is indolent.

Verse 13. Persistence was the outstanding characteristic of Abraham, and he manifested it because of his faith in the promises of God. Until the Christian Dispensation there was no command against taking oaths. God made use of an oath in the promise to Abraham, but it was necessary to swear by himself because He is the greatest Being in existence. In making such a personally-supported oath it was similar to the statement of a man who says, "I give you my word of honor."

Verse 14. The particular blessing promised to Abraham meant in this verse was that he was to have a son with whom the covenant was to be established (Genesis 17: 19).

Verse 15. He finally obtained that son as a reward for his patience (Genesis 21: 1).

Verse 16. The usual practice of men as to oaths is cited by the apostle by way of illustration. If a contract is bound under an oath it will prevent any dispute.

Verse 17. God had no one greater by whom He could swear, yet he wished to provide some means of assurance to those interested in His *counsel* or promise. *Immutability* means that it is unchangeable—nothing can be done to change it. God accomplished the

assurance by adding His oath to the promise thereby *confirming* it.

Verse 18. The *two immutable* (unchangeable) *things* were the promise and the oath of God. It was impossible for God to lie concerning either the promise or the oath, and hence by applying both for the sake of the heirs, it gave them the *more abundant* evidence. As a further result, the heirs of that promise (meaning all who believe in Christ as the seed of Abraham that was promised) have a *strong consolation* for the future, because that is the direction toward which hope must look. *Fled for refuge*. This phrase is based on a provision under the Mosaic system whereby persons accused of crime (whether guilty or not) could "flee" to a place called a city of *refuge*. (See Numbers 35.) Today men are all under accusation, justly, of being sinners and in danger of punishment at the hands of the avenger of sins. But a city of refuge (the church) has been built and those who will hasten (flee) to enter this institution may be saved from their past sins. And if they will remain in that city as faithful citizens, they have the promise of salvation in the world to come.

Verse 19. This prospect of eternal salvation is the *hope* that stimulates Christians in this work for Christ. It is fastened, like an anchor, to Christ who is our High Priest. He has entered *within the veil*, the phrase being based on the veil in the temple that enclosed the most holy place, which was a type of Heaven.

Verse 20. Jesus is called the forerunner because he has gone on before us to be the intercessor for His people. For this purpose He was made a High Priest like the order of Melchisedec. The advantage of being after that order instead of the order of the Levitical form was predicted in the Old Testament (Psalms 110: 4), and it will be discussed in the next chapter.

Hebrews 7

Verse 1. This epistle was written for the special benefit of the Hebrews (or Jews) who had become Christians. The Judaizers in those days were very busy in trying to force the Mosaic system upon Christians, claiming it to be still in force. The argument of this book is based on both contrasts and likenesses between the two systems. But a special argument is

made in connection with the priesthood of Melchisedec. All readers of the Old Testament know it was predicted that the "other priest" (verse 11) was to be more like Melchisedec than Aaron. The present argument, therefore, is concerning that remarkable character. Salem is a short name for Jerusalem (Psalms 76: 2), where this man was located as both king and priest. The Jews made great claim of being related to Abraham, yet this verse (citing Genesis 14: 18-20) shows that Melchisedec blessed Abraham. And since a person would need to be greater than another in order to be able to bless him (verse 7), this circumstance shows that even their father Abraham was not as great a person as Melchisedec. Proper nouns in Bible times often had distinctive meanings, and Thayer says that the name Melchisedec means, "King of righteousness," which is the statement in our verse. *Salem* is defined in this verse as *King of peace*, and the brief information given in Thayer's lexicon does not contradict it. Melchisedec is set forth as a type of Christ, hence it was fitting to connect him with a place signifying "peace." (See Isaiah 9: 6.)

Verse 2. Another fact showing Melchisedec to have been greater than Abraham, is that the latter paid tithes (a tenth) of his personal property to the former.

Verse 3. The key to this misunderstood verse is in the meaning of the phrase *without descent*. It is from the Greek word AGENEALOGETOS which Thayer defines as follows: "Of whose descent there is no account." This was no accident nor is it due to a lack of custom or facilities for recording *descent* which means a record of family names. Many other persons of those times had their pedigrees or family names recorded in the Bible. (See Genesis 10.) This shows that God had a purpose in leaving out all record of Melchisedec's family, namely, so that he would appear in that sense to be like that "other priest" who actually was not to have any descendants. (See Isaiah 53: 8; Acts 8: 33.) In other words, the verse describes the situation of Melchisedec as God permitted it to *appear* in history, in order to form a type of Christ whose situation as to family relationship was to be *actually* that way. *Without father and without mother* means he did not obtain his priesthood from his ancestors as did the Levitical priests (Exodus 29: 29,

30; Numbers 20: 28). The *beginning* of the days of Melchisedec and the *end of life* are all kept from the record for the purpose of carrying out the type, and it is to be understood on the same principle as "without descent" explained above. In this way he was *made like unto the Son of God*. This shows they were two separate persons, but were *like unto* each other in certain respects. If no record is given of the death or replacement of Melchisedec, then logically his priesthood was continuous. This was true of him *apparently*, as it was true of Christ *actually*.

Verse 4. Paul did not underestimate the greatness of Abraham; he emphasized it. However he used that fact in support of his reasoning, since it was made clear that notwithstanding his greatness, he was inferior to Melchisedec who was declared in so many points to be like Jesus in the priesthood order.

Verse 5. This verse continues the argument based on likenesses and contrasts between important characters. It is evident that he who *pays* tithes is less than the one to whom he pays them. Abraham paid tithes to Melchisedec hence was of less importance than he. But the Levite priests (who descended from the great man Abraham) took tithes from the people. The argument is that although the Levitical priests were great enough to *receive* tithes from the people, yet their great ancestor was not great enough to receive tithes from Melchisedec, but rather had to *pay* them to him. All this is according to the teaching, that the priestly order of this great man Melchisedec being more like that of Christ than was that of Levi, it follows that the priesthood of Christ should be accepted over all previous ones.

Verse 6. The reasoning of this verse is virtually the same as the several preceding ones. There is one additional point on the greatness of Abraham, namely, he was the one to whom God made the first promise of Christ.

Verse 7. *Without all contradiction* means it is so evident that it cannot be successfully disputed. *Blessed* is from EULOGEO which Thayer defines at this place, "To invoke blessings." In order for a good wish to have any assurance of fulfillment, it must be uttered by someone endowed with special knowledge and authority. Mel-

chisedec had such qualification since he was the *priest of the most high God*.

Verse 8. The word *here* stands for the Levitical priesthood, and *there* refers to that of Melchisedec. *Men that die* is said because the priests under the Levitical order ceased to serve because of death and the event was recorded. Whereas there is no record of the death of Melchisedec, and as far as the historical account is concerned he is still living. The point is that while the priests designated by *here* had tithes given them, yet they were subject to death. The priest designated by *there* also received tithes, but there is no account of his death. This makes him superior to the other priests notwithstanding both orders received tithes.

Verse 9. Another contrast between Melchisedec over Levi is that the latter (though being given tithes), himself paid tithes to Melchisedec while in Abraham's body.

Verse 10. *Was yet in the loins*, etc. Paul takes advantage of a common theory believed by the Hebrews concerning the seat of the reproductive function. The word for *loins* is OSPHUS which Thayer defines. "A loin . . . the (two) loins," and then explains it by, "The Hebrews thought the generative powers resided in the loins." Strong defines it, "The loins (externally), i. e., the hip; internally (by extension) procreative powers." There was a pure blood line from Abraham to Levi, who was only the fourth generation from his great ancestor. In this sense Levi was represented by Abraham as he paid the tithes to Melchisedec. This is a phase of the argument based on the superiority of Melchisedec over Levi.

Verse 11. The law of Moses was inspired and served the purpose of the Lord, but it was not intended to be permanent as to the duration of its force. (See Galatians 3: 18-25) The Judaizers (Jews who tried to force the law of Moses on Christians) maintained that it was to be permanent. Paul reasons that since the law was received under the Levitical priesthood, such law would necessarily be changed whenever the priesthood was changed. But it was well established that *another priest* was to arise like Melchisedec more than like Aaron (father of the Levites), therefore the point is made that the law was not longer in force.

Verse 12. This is a repetition of the argument in verse 11.

Verse 13. *These things* refers to the statements about *another priest* who was to bring a change in the law. That priest belonged to *another tribe*, which had nothing to do with the altar service.

Verse 14. *Evident* denotes something that is plainly established and understood. *Juda* is a short spelling of Judah, the tribe from which Christ *sprang* or was produced. The genealogies of Matthew 1 and Luke 3 show Christ to have descended from David, who all readers of the Bible know was a descendant of Judah the fourth son of Jacob. And the writings of Moses concerning the system of priesthood were completely silent about the tribe of Judah.

Verse 15. *Yet far more evident* means the testimony on behalf of the priesthood of Jesus is still more clearly shown. Paul refers to the comparison made between Melchisedec and Him, and the point is made stronger by the fact that Melchisedec lived several centuries before the Mosaic system was started. And it was concerning Melchisedec that *another priest* was to arise; that is, another besides him.

Verse 16. *Carnal* means pertaining to the flesh; the Levitical priests received their office through their fleshly birth. Melchisedec was made a high priest by the Lord independent of any fleshly relationship to anyone. *Endless life* is used in the sense set forth in verse 3, namely, his life is still continuing as far as any record of his death is concerned. This makes Melchisedec's priesthood more like that of Christ than was that of the priests in the Levitical order.

Verse 17. The pronoun *he* refers to God, who *testified* or declared that the Son was to be priest *for ever* (unchanging, throughout the age) after the order of Melchisedec.

Verse 18. To disannul signifies to cancel the force of the law which *went before*. God declared that such an act would be done by changing the priesthood and also the *commandment* (law of Moses). The reason for this annulling was the *weakness and unprofitableness thereof*. This weakness was not through any failure of God, for it was not brought into the world with the idea of its being final and complete. (See Galatians 3: 18-25.)

Verse 19. *Law made nothing perfect.* The last word means something complete regardless of the quality of the thing spoken of. Since the law was added for a limited time only (see reference in Galatians cited above), it follows that God did not equip it with the entire requirements of a spiritual life. *Better hope* is a term used to designate the hope that is held out to those who serve under the priesthood of Christ in the place of the Levitical one.

Verse 20. Another contrast in favor of Christ is that he obtained the priesthood under the oath of God (verse 21).

Verse 21. *Without an oath* is a negative statement, based on the truths that are recorded in the books of Exodus and Leviticus. In all those passages where so much is said about the priesthood of the Levites, the reader will not find one instance of an oath in connection with their office. On the other hand we find a positive declaration (Psalms 110: 4) that an oath was made in reference to the priesthood of Christ. *Will not repent* means that the Lord will never change his mind concerning the priesthood of Christ, namely, that it is to be after the order of Melchisedec.

Verse 22. *By so much* refers to the oath by which Jesus was made a High Priest, and it enabled Him to make a *testament* (or covenant) that was *better*. The last word does not infer that the first one was not good as to its qualities or principles of righteousness. Paul elsewhere (Romans 7:12) declares the law to be good and holy, but the second is better in the sense of having more advantages and being more useful.

Verse 23. The first system was served by priests whose terms were terminated by death, which made it necessary for it to have many priests.

Verse 24. *This man* refers to Christ who *continueth ever* because He never died after becoming a priest. *Unchangeable* means the priesthood did not pass or change from one man to another, hence it necessarily was a stronger system.

Verse 25. An advocate or representative may start pleading for a client, and be getting the case in good shape. Then if something makes it needful to change representatives, he may be unable to do as satisfactory a service as the previous one because of the break in the procedure. Christ never died and hence he is always on

the case and is at all times "up to date" on the conditions.

Verse 26. *Became us* means it was fitting that we of the last dispensation should have a High Priest having the best of qualifications. *Holy, harmless, undefiled* all means a character that is perfect, and Christ has such because He is *separate from sinners*; has no association with them. *Higher* refers to rank or importance rather than bodily position; Jesus is more lofty as a High Priest than all the heavens.

Verse 27. There are two contrasts between Christ and the Levitical priests, namely, they had to offer sacrifices *daily* and also needed to atone for their own sins. Christ had to offer a sacrifice only *once* for the people, and not one time for Himself for he had no sins for which to make atonement.

Verse 28. The priests made under the law were infirm in that they were subject to death. *Word of the oath* came after the law since David (to whom the oath was made) lived some centuries after Moses (through whom the law was given). The point is that since the oath came after the law, it proves that document was not considered absolutely perfect. This later act (the oath) *maketh the Son* (High Priest). The grand total conclusion is our High Priest has a service that continues *evermore*.

Hebrews 8

Verse 1. *Sum* is from ΚΕΦΑΛΑΙΟΝ which Thayer defines, "The chief or main point, the principal thing." It refers to what Paul said in the preceding chapter, together with what follows in the present one, concerning the priesthood of Christ. *Such an high priest* has virtually the same significance as *sum*. *The Levitical priests* served in Jerusalem while Christ is at the right hand of his Father. *Majesty* pertains to the greatness of the throne of God. *In the heavens* has the same significance as "higher than the heavens" in chapter 7: 26.

Verse 2. The building used in the Mosaic system was regarded as a sanctuary (holy place) and a tabernacle as truly as is the one in the service under Christ. The difference is in the description given in the rest of this verse. *True tabernacle* means that of which the first one was a type. *Pitched* is defined by Thayer as follows: "To make fast, to fix; to fasten together, to build by fastening

together." The Lord directed the building of the Old Testament tabernacle, but it was made of literal material and the work was actually done by human hands (See Exodus 36-40.) The last tabernacle employed the services of man also, but the materials were not literal and the formation of the system was the handiwork of God.

Verse 3. *Every high priest* refers to those under the Old Testament line. Thayer defines *ordained*, "To appoint one to administer an office." *Gifts and sacrifices* were in the same general class, but the first refers especially to articles that were not intended to be used as victims on the altar. *This man* means Christ who was called upon to make a *somewhat* offering. That is, Christ offered many contributions to the New Testament service, and then made the "supreme sacrifice" of himself on the cross just before ascending from earth to his Father in Heaven.

Verse 4. *If he were on earth*. This means as long as Christ was on earth he could not act as a priest. That is because the law was in force all the time He was on earth, and it already had its priests to offer according to that law.

Verse 5. The institutions of the Mosaic system were *examples* and *shadows* (patterns or types) of the *heavenly things* (the institutions under Christ). *Who* means the priests mentioned in the preceding verse. In Exodus 25: 40 is the instruction that God gave Moses to make all things according to the "pattern" shown to him in the mount. The idea is that when God mentioned this pattern for the tabernacle service, He had in mind that it was to be a type or pattern of the greater things to come, as well as to serve the purpose of that first dispensation.

Verse 6. Several words of comparison in the second degree are used in this verse which should not be misapplied. God never made any mistakes and all that He ever did was good from the standpoint of being righteous. But the purposes to be accomplished by His plans were not always considered as final. He had a terminal to be reached in the preparation of mankind for the Hereafter, and until the final plan had been reached (that which was "perfect" 1 Corinthians 13: 10), each step in the unfolding of the divine plan may be considered as looking forward to something *more excellent* and *better*.

Verse 7. A part of the *fault* of which the Lord complained was concerning the shortcomings of the people. They did not do even as well as they could with the system which God had given them. However, God has always been inclined to give His creatures every opportunity for developing a desirable character. In view of this, He regarded the old law as not the best that could be accomplished in the future, and in that sense He would not consider the old covenant to be *faultless*.

Verse 8. *Finding Fault* is explained at the preceding verse. It should be constantly borne in mind that most of this book, as well as many parts of the New Testament, was called for by the disturbances from Judaizers (Hebrews trying to bind the Jewish law on Christians). Had all people understood and been satisfied with the New Testament as the fulfillment of the law and the prophets, these books would not have been needed. But they maintained that the Mosaic system was intended by the Lord to be permanent. That made it necessary for the apostles to cite many places in the Old Testament (being disregarded by the Judaizers) that clearly predicted a change in the whole religious system. *The days come* has reference to the days of the New Testament. *Saith the Lord* is citing Jeremiah 31: 31-34 where the prophet plainly declares that He was going to make a new covenant. *Israel* and *Judah* are mentioned because at the time of Jeremiah the nation was divided, the ten tribes being called *Israel* and the two tribes called *Judah* (recorded in 1 Kings 12). The tribes were destined to be reunited after the captivity, but the two parts are named to show that every Jew (as well as the Gentiles) was to be included in the new covenant.

Verse 9. *The day* refers to the period in general when Sinai was the principal place of interest. (See Jeremiah 34: 13, 14.) The shortcomings of the Israelites was the reason on the human side for a change. (See verse 7.)

Verse 10. This verse states one of the main differences between the old and the new covenant. When a male child was eight days old he was circumcized, and that made him a full member of the covenant, notwithstanding he had no mind to receive anything; the law was put in the flesh instead of the mind. The new covenant

laws were to be put in the mind (or heart) instead of the flesh.

Verse 11. Samuel was a full "brother" to Eli although he "did not yet know the Lord" (1 Samuel 3: 7); his circumcision introduced him into the brotherhood (Genesis 17: 9-14). That is why it was necessary for Eli to make his brother Samuel acquainted with the Lord. It was done in verse 9 of the same chapter where he told Samuel to say, "Speak, Lord: for thy servant heareth," which is the same as *know the Lord* in our present verse. Such an introduction in the brotherhood under Christ will not be necessary because *all shall know me from the least to the greatest*. That is because under the New Testament system a person cannot become a member until he is old enough and has mind enough to receive the law of Christ intelligently. This would completely rule out all such conditions as "cradle rolls" or infant church membership in the New Testament church. All must have mind enough to "know the Lord" through the law of the Gospel before they can come into the church.

Verse 12. This verse contains a likeness and a contrast between the two covenants. God showed mercy under the old, and the passages that show it are too numerous to mention. (It should be stated what was overlooked at verse 10, that another likeness between them is that in each case the relation of *God* and *people* holds good.) The contrast in this verse is that the sins would be remembered *no more*. The word "against" is often added in quoting this subject which is incorrect, for God never did remember a sin against a man after he had been forgiven. This point will be dealt with in detail by the comments on chapter 10: 3.

Verse 13. The main point in this verse is a conclusion based on the term *new covenant*: it proves that the other one was considered old. Since old things are expected to disappear, the conclusion is that the old covenant was to be replaced by the New Testament.

Hebrews 9

Verse 1. The apostle now enters into more of the typical features of the Mosaic system, occasionally pointing out some of the places in which it differed from the one under Christ. *Ordinances* means ceremonies that

were ordained to be observed in the service. *Worldly sanctuary* is used because that part of the tabernacle was a type of the church that is in this world, and not in Heaven where God lives.

Verse 2. This verse names what was in the *first* part of the tabernacle, the part called "worldly sanctuary" in the preceding verse. This room is called the *sanctuary* because the word means "holy," a type of the church which is said to be holy (Ephesians 5: 27). The placing of the articles named is recorded in Exodus 40: 4.

Verse 3. *After the second vail*. The entrance to the tabernacle was enclosed with a vail (Exodus 26: 36). That makes the next one the *second* as it is called here, and it is described in Exodus 26: 31-33. The room of the *tabernacle* enclosed by this vail is called *Holiest of all*. It is so called because it contained the ark and was a type of Heaven, into which our High Priest (Christ) has gone (chapter 6: 19, 20). This service of Christ will be considered further when we come to verse 24 of this chapter.

Verse 4. *Golden censer*. According to Leviticus 16: 12 the high priest burned incense in the most holy place on the day of atonement. A censer is a vessel to be carried in the hand and used in the manner of fumigating. This instrument was necessary because the golden altar of incense was in the first room or holy place of the tabernacle. As proof of this we read in Exodus 40: 24 that the candlestick was placed in the "tent" of the congregation. Then in verse 26 it says the golden altar also was in the "tent" or the same place where the candlestick was. Hence, the golden altar of incense was in the holy place or first room of the tabernacle, making it necessary to have this censer in the most holy place. *Ark of the covenant* is so called because it contained the *tables of the covenant* (Deuteronomy 10: 1, 2). For the history of the pot of manna and Aaron's rod, see Exodus 16: 32-34 and Numbers 17: 1-11.

Verse 5. The mercy seat was made of solid gold and served as a covering for the ark as well as a resting place for the cherubims. (See Exodus 25: 17-21.) *Cannot speak particularly* means he was not ready to enter into detail about the separate services of these parts.

Verse 6. *Ordained* signifies to be prepared or made ready, and refers to

the articles in the two rooms of the tabernacle. The priests *went always* is said in the sense of going daily or frequently, in contrast with "once a year" as in the next verse. *First tabernacle* refers to the first room of the tabernacle, and the common priests might enter this place any time it was necessary, and they were the ones who did most of the service of that room.

Verse 7. *The second* means the most holy place which was "within the vail" (chapter 6: 19, 20), and no one but the high priest was permitted to enter this room while it was in service. *Once every year* means on the one day only, for he made more than one entrance into the most holy place on that day. (See Leviticus 16.) *Not without blood*. The passage just cited explains where and how he got the blood. *Offered for himself*. That was necessary because those priests were all erring creatures (contrary to our High Priest). *The people* signifies that the service performed in the most holy place by the high priest was for the sake of the nation as a whole. If any individual was personally indebted to the Lord because of his sin, he was required to attend to that as his own personal duty. (See Leviticus 4: 27-35.)

Verse 8. The Holy Ghost (or Spirit) inspired the writers of the Bible, and in the present case it signified something by the "setting" of things in the tabernacle. The thing signified was the idea that the *way into the holiest*—the way by which man could reach the holiest place, or Heaven—was still unrevealed. The vail is what kept the most holy place out of sight, for the high priest only was ever permitted to enter that room, and that on one day of the year only. As long as that tabernacle was standing the vail also was standing between. But the death of Christ and his resurrection, after which He entered Heaven, was equivalent to removing the vail to the extent at least of giving others a glimpse (by the eye of faith) into Heaven. That is why the vail was rent from top to bottom at the death of Christ (Matthew 27: 51). This vail is connected with the flesh of Christ in chapter 10: 19, 20.

Verse 9. *Which was a figure* means these things were types of the institutions of Christ. *Gifts and sacrifices* is explained at chapter 8: 3. *Not make him . . . perfect*. A popular notion is

that sins were not forgiven under the Mosaic law. This subject will be dealt with fully when we come to chapter 10: 4.

Verse 10. *Meats and drinks* has reference to the regulations under the law of Moses concerning what they were to eat and drink. *Washings* is explained at chapter 6: 2 on the word "baptisms." *Carnal ordinances* refers to the outward ceremonies such as animal sacrifices and burning of incense, not that they were "carnal" in the sense of being sinful. *Imposed* is not used in the sense of forcing something unjustly upon them in the sense that we usually understand the word. Its meaning is that the ordinances were put in force over the people of that dispensation. *Time of reformation* means the institution of Christ. It is so called because Christ remodeled (reformed) the scheme of human redemption, by bringing into the world the last or final religious plan, of which those in force under the Mosaic system were types or figures, which were to be used until the Lord was ready to set up the completed form.

Verse 11. *Not made with hands* has the same meaning as "pitched" in chapter 8: 2. *Good things to come* signifies that the greatest values to be obtained from the New Testament institution will be enjoyed in the future. *This building* refers to the tabernacle all parts of which were on the earth, while that part called the holiest of all typified Heaven which is not on the earth. That is why the institution of Christ is called a *greater and more perfect tabernacle*.

Verse 12. This verse states another of the contrasts between the two dispensations. The first used the blood of dumb animals, while the second used that of the High Priest himself. *Eternal redemption* contains the special idea of spiritual benefits, and not those that pertain to bodily or fleshly ones. Since this redemption is *eternal* and hence is endless, it was necessary for Christ to provide it only *once*.

Verse 13. The cleansing of fleshly or bodily impurities (which might be either physical or "ceremonial" or both), is fully described in Numbers 19 which should be carefully read. With that ceremony as a background it will be easier to appreciate the argument of our verse and the next one.

Verse 14. The Hebrews admitted that the blood of animals could cleanse

the bodies of men from outward impurity. That should enable them to believe in the greater sterilizing power of the blood of Christ. The animals used under the old law were required to be without spot. Likewise the sacrifice of Christ was perfect since He had no blemish either in body or mind or spirit. This sacrifice was made possible through the Spirit, which was necessary because the literal blood of Christ was poured out on the ground and never reclaimed. But the *spiritual* worth of it was taken into the Most Holy place (Heaven) by Him (verse 12). *From dead works* means to draw the Christians from the works of the law. (See comments at chapter 6: 1.) *To serve the living God* in this age can be done only by accepting the perfect sacrifice made through the Son.

Verse 15. The argument of this verse will receive further attention when we come to chapter 10: 4. For the present it is well to state that whenever a man was forgiven under the Mosaic exercises, the sins were charged up against the blood of Christ (not "rolled forward"). Hence when Jesus came into the world in the form of flesh, it was necessary for Him to make all of those instances good by His own blood. Thus Christ was not required merely to give "a pint of blood" but He was made to give it all, and thus assure the whole world of the possibility for *eternal inheritance*.

Verses 16, 17. This paragraph may be regarded as a companion passage of chapter 8: 4, in that the New Testament which is the covenant or will of Christ was not in force until after His death. This is a rule that is generally recognized concerning testaments (or wills) that men make, in that such wills are not in force during the lifetime of the men who make them.

Verse 18. *Death* is the central idea in this part of Paul's argument, hence he states that the first testament was *dedicated* (consecrated) with blood. Since the shedding of blood requires the death of the creature furnishing it, the circumstance makes the type and antitype complete. The animals died in order to dedicate (or put into force) the Old Testament or covenant, and Christ died and gave his blood to dedicate and render forceful His New Testament. (See Matthew 26: 28). Therefore the animals slain in sacrifice under the law constituted the *testator* of that system.

Verse 19. In keeping with the truth just referred to, Moses used blood to put into force the words of the law after he had spoken them. Regardless of the excellence of the words of that law, it required the blood of the testator (the animals) to render them valid. Likewise the words of Christ spoken in his personal ministry and to be spoken by the apostle afterwards, required the blood of Him who was to be the testator of the new law or new covenant.

Verse 20. This language is similar to that spoken by Jesus when he was instituting the ceremony that was to symbolize the dedicating virtue of the New Testament. (See Matthew 26: 28 and 1 Corinthians 11: 25.)

Verse 21. The passages in Exodus and Leviticus that record this use of the blood of animals are too numerous even to cite at this place.

Verse 22. Paul confirms the remark made in the preceding paragraph, by the general statement that *almost all things are by the law purged with blood*. He was therefore considering only the blood of animals when he said *without the shedding of blood there is no remission*. He had no reference to the blood of Christ in this statement. His blood is not even referred to until the latter part of the next verse, and then indirectly only. The statement is frequently quoted by brethren when presiding at the Lord's table and applied to the blood of Christ. Such a use of the passage is not only a perversion of it, but it destroys the interesting argument the apostle is making.

Verse 23. *It was therefore necessary*, etc. Paul is still speaking about the *patterns* or types in the Old Testament, that even they had to be purified or dedicated *by these*, meaning the blood of animal sacrifices. The blood of Christ has not been considered as yet. Then the apostle introduces by inference only the necessity of the blood of Christ. If the *patterns* or types of heavenly things required such blood (without the shedding of which there was *no remission* for the Hebrews), then the heavenly things themselves—the things pertaining to the New Testament—called for *better sacrifices*. This is Paul's introduction for the blood and sacrifice of Christ, which has not been the subject for several verses.

Verse 24. Christ never did any official or priestly services in the temple

at Jerusalem while on earth, for the priests of the law were still in that service (chapter 8: 4). Hence He entered that place of which the one made with hands was a figure or type. He is there to be in the presence of God *for us* or on our behalf as our High Priest. This is another item in Paul's reasoning with the Hebrew Christians. He is showing them that in clinging to the service of the Levitical priesthood, the Judaizers are repudiating the One who has actually entered into the presence of God.

Verse 25. Another contrast is in the frequency with which the two priests performed their services in the most holy place. The high priests of the Levitical order had to repeat theirs often (*every year*). *Blood of others* means that the high priest of that law used the blood of a victim and not his own blood.

Verse 26. If the sacrificial service of Christ was exactly like that of the Levitical priests, then He would have been required not to wait so long before beginning it. He would have needed to begin it at the same time the world (inhabitants of the earth) began to exist. Since one time only was necessary because the sacrifices of the old system were taking care of the sins for the time (to be explained at chapter 10: 4), He could wait until the *end of the world* to perform His *World* in this place is from *αιωνιον* which means age or dispensation. Jesus died in the last weeks of the Jewish Dispensation; fifty days after His death the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles, thus cancelling the Old and ushering in the New Testament Dispensation. Unlike the high priests of the Levitical system, Christ performed his by the *sacrifice of himself*.

Verse 27. The preceding verse maintains that Christ needed to make his sacrifice only once. However, that is on the ground that man will go through death and the judgment but once. Hence this verse proceeds on that principle to affirm that it is appointed unto man to die *once*, and the judgment will come afterwards.

Verse 28. Having but one sacrifice to offer, Christ waited until the typical dispensation was at its end before He did it. *Bear the sins of many*. The sacrifice of Christ was for the sins of the whole world (John 1: 29). That means that by His one great sacrifice Christ made provision for the remis-

sion of sins for all men who will avail themselves of it under whatever dispensation they live. The rest of the verse is a beautiful likeness drawn from the procedure of the high priest of the Mosaic system. While he was in the tabernacle (or temple) performing the services for the people, they were on the outside waiting for him. After the services were completed he would come out and bless the waiting throng. (See Leviticus 9: 15-24; Numbers 16: 15-17; Luke 1: 9, 10.) Likewise faithful servants of God who are looking (with pleasure 2 Timothy 4: 8) for Christ, will see Him come to earth the second time. *Without sin* means He will not come to make another sacrifice for sin. (One offering was all that was necessary.) When He comes it will be *unto salvation*; that is to complete the salvation of those who will be faithfully looking for Him.

Hebrews 10

Verse 1. The difference between *shadow* and *very image* is the same as between type and antitype, or between form and substance. The sacrificial system under the law was a figure of the one under Christ. *Can never . . . make . . . perfect* which means complete. (See the comments at verse 4.)

Verse 2. Had those sacrifices been complete (of themselves or by their own virtue) they would have ceased to be offered. When a devoted Hebrew nation had made one full program of atonement for sin, it would have been permanent and would not have to be repeated. Such a conclusion is logical, and it should have convinced the Judaizers that something was to come in the place of those institutions.

Verse 3. *Remembrance again made*. But it does *NOT SAY* that the sins were remembered *against* them as it is so frequently expressed. Every year when the national atonement day arrived, the nation had a public and formal *reminder* of sin by the entrance of their high priest into the most holy place with the blood of atonement. Contrary to that, our High Priest entered once and forever into the presence of God with the blood of the New Covenant, and it has never had to be repeated.

Verse 4. *It is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins*. Any explanation of a passage that contradicts another plain

one is bound to be wrong, for the Bible does not contradict itself. To say that sins were not forgiven under the Old Testament is a contradiction of the following. Leviticus 4 describes the sin offerings under the Mosaic system that were required of various Hebrews who had sinned. Verses 20, 26, 31 and 35 state these persons are to offer these sacrifices for sin, and in each case after doing it the passage plainly declares, "And it shall be forgiven him." Perhaps someone replies that it does not say they were to be forgiven *then*. Well, we will consider another place in the Old Testament, namely, 1 Kings 8. After the temple was completed, Solomon offered a prayer on behalf of the people in which he asked God to forgive them upon their prayer to Him. Verse 30 makes it definite as to when the forgiveness was to take place, for it says, "When they shall pray toward this place; hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and *when thou hearest, forgive.*" This is very definite; when they prayed was the time God was to hear and when He heard was the time the forgiveness was to be granted. But was this prayer of Solomon granted? Chapter 9 and verse 3 of that book says, "And the Lord said unto him, I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication that thou hast made before me." That settles the point that sins were actually forgiven under the Old Testament times.

This is another place where we should remember the main subject of this book. The Judaizers were insisting on the permanence of the old law and its ordinances of religious service. They thought that the benefits to be obtained from those performances were by reason of the virtue of those things and hence that they were good enough to be continued. Were Paul to write an epistle to many disciples and others today, he would use the same argument about baptism and the other items of service to Christ. He would say that it is impossible for baptism and the other formalities of the Gospel to take away sin. Indeed, the denominational world actually does see that and that only with reference to the ordinances. They will say "there is no salvation in water," and that is true in the same sense that the blood of animals could not take away sins. No, the saving virtue is in the blood of Christ and *it* is the purchasing power for salvation on behalf of mankind in what-

ever age he lives. But He will not apply that blood to any man unless he has enough faith in the Lord to do whatever he is told to do. That may be the command to offer animal sacrifices or be baptized, depending on what age he is under. Hence in any of the dispensations that God has placed among men, all who will do whatever they are told to do, will be forgiven on the strength of the blood of Christ. The virtue in the blood is why it never had to be repeated.

Verse 5. The two pronouns *he* and the one *me* refer to Christ, and the two pronouns *thou* stand for God. When Christ was ready to come into the world He knew it was to fulfill the promise made to Abraham (Galatians 3: 16, 19), also that He was to make of himself a sacrifice to replace the animal sacrifices of the old law. Yes, Christ existed before he was born of the virgin (John 8: 58), and hence when God made the promise to Abraham, He made it also to Christ. (See the passages in Galatians referred to above.) The coming of Christ into the world by way of the virgin birth was therefore voluntary on His part, in the spirit of obedience to his Father. He also knew that a spiritual body could not die, and hence that a fleshly body would be needed. That is why it was said that God had prepared a body for Him, to be produced within the fleshly body of the virgin and consisting of one that could be made to die.

Verse 6. This verse represents Christ as explaining why the plan was needed referred to in the preceding verse, namely, that God no longer was pleased with burnt offerings offered under the law.

Verse 7. *Then said I* (Christ), *in the volume of the book it is written of me*. Christ knew that the Old Testament predicted His coming into the world as a sacrifice for sins. The great respect Christ had for the Father, also for the majesty of the ancient writings, induced Him to cooperate in the great plan. That is why He said, *I come to do thy will, O God*.

Verse 8. This verse is mostly an explanation or repetition of the preceding ones, to the effect that the displeasure of God was concerning the sacrifices of the law. Of course it should be understood that such a condition of mind came after those sacrifices had served the divine purposes.

Verse 9. The forepart of this verse is a repetition of verse 7. The antecedent of *first* is *will*, referring to the old will or covenant consisting of the ordinances of the Mosaic law. God took away the first one that He might establish the second. He never had two systems of religion in force at the same time for the same people. This verse is a complete refutation of the Sabbatarian heresy even if there did not exist a single other passage on the subject.

Verse 10. *By the which will* means that by the *second* will or system of salvation, we are sanctified (or consecrated) through the body of Christ, (not that of animals).

Verse 11. This is explained by the comments at verse 4.

Verse 12. *This man* refers to Christ, and *for ever* means His sacrifice would be permanent and would not have to be repeated as did those of the old law.

Verse 13. *From henceforth expecting* signifies that He expects to remain on the right hand of God till his enemies are made his footstool. (1 Corinthians 15: 25, 26.)

Verse 14. This is equivalent to chapter 9: 26; and verse 12 in this chapter.

Verse 15. *Holy Ghost* (or Spirit) *also is a witness to us*. The prophets of the Old Testament and the apostles of the New were all inspired by this Spirit.

Verses 16, 17. This makes specific reference to one of the Old Testament predictions, and it is to be found in Jeremiah 31: 31-33, which is explained at chapter 8: 8-13.

Verse 18. See the comments at verse 3.

Verse 19. *Boldness* does not mean a spirit of forwardness but rather one of strong confidence. *Enter into the holiest*. Not literally but by faith through the merits of the blood of Jesus Christ.

Verse 20. *This new and living way . . . through the veil* is explained by the comments at chapter 9: 8. It is *living* in that it need not be repeated.

Verse 21. This verse shows one of the likenesses between the two systems in that each had the services of a high priest. The distinction is the truth that Christ is over the house of God which is said in the sense of the church and Heaven.

Verse 22. *Draw near*. The nearest the people of the first priesthood could

get to the most holy place was by way of or near the vail. Likewise Christians may get very near the throne of God (by the *full assurance of faith*). The *heart* and *conscience* are the inner and invisible part of man, hence we know that *sprinkled* is used figuratively and means to be cleansed spiritually. The figure is drawn from the fact that the blood was actually sprinkled on men to consecrate them for the priesthood under the old law (Exodus 29: 21). Our bodies are literal and hence they are literally washed in the water of baptism. *Pure water* has no reference to the subject of sanitary conditions. The word means "unmixed" and is a contrast from the water of purification used under the law. That water was mixed with the ashes of an animal (Numbers 19).

Verse 23. *Hold fast* means to be faithful to the end. *He is faithful* denotes that the Lord is always true and makes His promises good.

Verse 24. *To provoke* means to induce or stimulate others to do that which is good. We should do this by exhortation and that will require the following verse.

Verse 25. *Forsaking is from* ΕΓΚΑΤΑΛΕΙΠΟ, which Thayer defines, "To abandon, desert, to leave in straits, leave helpless; leave in the lurch." The word does not refer to those who are "irregular in attendance" or who "just come occasionally." (There are other scriptures which take care of such delinquents.) But it means those who remain away from the assemblies so long that they can no longer be considered as a part of the group. *Assembling of ourselves together*. This does not apply to any one of the public gatherings of Christians any more than it does to another. The assembling to have the Lord's Supper is included in the passage, but it does not apply to that any more than to any other scriptural gathering of the church. Malachi 3: 16 is clearly a prediction of conditions to exist in the dispensation of Christ, and it says "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another." They cannot do this unless they are together, and coming together once a week cannot truly be said to be "often." *The day* first refers to the day when the city of Jerusalem was to be destroyed, which was then near at hand. At that time a general disturbance was expected when many opportunities for assembling would be hindered and in some places would be completely im-

possible. Since that event is now past, *the day* means the judgment day when all opportunities for Christian assembling will be forever ended on earth. We can see *the day approaching* by faith, for each day brings us "One day nearer our Father's house than ever we've been before" (Romans 13: 11).

Verse 26. *Sin wilfully* means to sin deliberately or purposely, in contrast with that committed incidentally or through weakness. *No more sacrifice* does NOT SAY there is no more chance of forgiveness. Jesus taught that all manner of sins would be forgiven except that against the Holy Spirit. This passage is in the same class or principle as chapter 6: 4-6, in that it mentions that the persons had *received the knowledge of the truth*. The point is that Christ made one sacrifice for sin and will make no other. If this one is repudiated there is no other to which we can look as the Hebrews could in the Mosaic system. Those sacrifices were repeated over and over again and after every transgression the guilty ones could look forward to another sacrifice. If we reject the one in Christ there will be no one and nothing else to which we may look (Galatians 5: 4). But that does not say we cannot change our mind and return to the sacrifice that is still available for all who will receive it on the Lord's terms.

Verse 27. If we do not return to Christ then we must look for that which is fearful, namely, the judgment of God at which He will exhibit *fiery indignation*. *Devour* is from a word that literally means to eat. However, we do not eat that which we dislike, hence the thought is that God will dispose of these adversaries by abandoning them to the regions of endless destruction.

Verse 28. *To despise* means to disrespect and refuse to obey. The punishment for disobeying the law of Moses in extreme cases was death without mercy (Numbers 35: 30; Deuteronomy 17: 5, 6).

Verse 29. The law of Christ is so much more final and far-reaching that the violation of it deserves a much *sorer* (worse) punishment than an unmerciful death of the body. But since such a punishment as that is the most severe of any that can be imposed on a human being in this world, the *sorer* punishment will have to wait until the next world to be inflicted. That is why the unjust are to be "reserved unto the day of judgment to be punished"

(2 Peter 2: 9). All of the wrongs mentioned in the rest of this verse may be charged against the Judaizers, because they have *trodden under foot the Son of God*. They did so by rejecting Him and going back to the sacrifices that were offered under the law. *Blood of the covenant* refers to the blood of Christ because it was shed to make good all the promises God made to the descendants of Abraham. To reject it and go back to the sacrifices for salvation is equivalent to *counting it an unholy thing* in that it implies that it is no better than the blood of animals. *Spirit of grace* is a phrase signifying the New Testament since it is the final system under the favor of God, and it was given through the means of the Holy Spirit.

Verse 30. Paul cites a statement of God recorded in Deuteronomy 32: 34-36, in regard to the determination of God to *judge* (execute punishment) the people who reject His terms of mercy.

Verse 31. All men and all things are ever in the hands of God in a general sense, and hence cannot *fall into* His hands. The verse therefore has a special meaning which is related to the mediation of Christ. There is no being in the universe who is between God and man but Christ, by whom man may escape the judgment mentioned in the preceding verse. Hence if a man repudiates Christ (as the Judaizers were doing), he deprives himself of any intercessor, and must take his chances with an avenging God who has declared vengeance against all who are not pardoned by the blood of Christ.

Verse 32. *Illuminated* means to be enlightened by the Gospel. Soon after these people became Christians they were persecuted by the unbelievers of both Jews and Gentiles. Paul terms this experience with afflictions as a *fight*, and of course it would be a "fight of faith" (1 Timothy 6: 12).

Verse 33. *Made a gazingstock* denotes an exhibition of something for people to gaze at with contempt. By *reproaches* and *afflictions* the enemy drew attention to the Christians with the result that they were made light of. Some did not personally have this experience, but they associated with and showed friendship for those who did, and thus brought upon themselves the same kind of reproaches.

Verse 34. Paul was a prisoner in chains for the sake of the Gospel, but these disciples manifested sympathy

for him and thus invited the darts of the enemies. As a punishment for their manifestation of faith, they were forced to submit to the *spoiling* (plundering) of their possessions. They did not even fret about such losses because they believed there were better riches awaiting them in Heaven.

Verse 35. *Confidence* means strong assurance which prompts one to face danger or affliction on behalf of the truth. The reward will be great in the end.

Verse 36. *Patience* is the same as perseverance, and it is manifested by those who continue to have confidence. We need not expect to receive the fulfillment of God's promises unless we first do the will of the Lord.

Verse 37. *Little while* is comparative, for the endless term of the reward will make even centuries of waiting seem but a short time.

Verse 38. *Live by faith* agrees with the idea of persevering on the strength of our faith. *Draw back* means to hesitate or shrink from going forward against afflictions.

Verse 39. *But we are not, etc.* In placing himself with them the apostle regards them in a favorable light. It is true that many of the Hebrews had remained true. However, many others had gone backward, and others were in danger of doing so on account of the Judaizers among them. That made it necessary for the apostle to warn them repeatedly against the disastrous results of faltering.

Hebrews 11

General remarks. The point has been frequently emphasized that the outstanding subject of this book is the disturbances of the Judaizers. There would seem to be a shift now to the subject of unbelief. And yet it is not so much of a change at the base. All failure to do that which is right may be charged up against unbelief. In 1 Corinthians 10 Paul enumerates a number of misdeeds that contributed to the overthrow of the Israelites in the wilderness. But in Hebrews 3: 19 where he has the same history in mind, the apostle says they could not enter in because of unbelief. By the same token, the mistake of rejecting Christ for the sake of going back to the old law may truly be attributed to unbelief. Much has been said against the denominational teaching of "faith alone," and justly so. At the same time we should be careful not to under-

estimate the importance of belief or faith. It is true that we cannot be saved by faith alone, neither can we be saved without it. We cannot be saved by "faith only," but we can be lost by unbelief only. That is because it requires all the items of the plan of salvation to please God, while the omission of one fundamental item is enough to displease Him. This is especially true of such a principle as faith which is the motive power of all our actions as the present chapter will show.

Verse 1. *Substance* is from a word that means basis or foundation on which something rests. *Faith* constitutes such a basis for our hope since it is produced by testimony. Even *things not seen* but desired may be expected and thus hoped for when we have the evidence of their truthfulness.

Verse 2. *Elders* is from PRESBYTEROS and Thayer defines it at this place as "forefathers." *Good report* is used in the sense that they obtained a good reputation by their faith that was "put into practice."

Verse 3. *Through faith* does not mean that the following things of this verse were accomplished by faith, for God does not have to act on faith. He knows what he can do. It is through faith that we understand about it. *Worlds* is defined by the lexicon at this place, "The worlds, the universe," and *framed* is defined, "To fit out, equip, put in order, arrange, adjust." *Are seen* and *do appear* are both in the present tense, and *made* is from a Greek word that means "caused to be." The sentence means that the universe which we see was not made out of anything else that appears to us. But that does not say that God "made something out of nothing." Such a notion is not taught in any scripture that I have read. Just because we cannot see what God made the universe of does not prove that He made it out of nothing. *Word* is from RHEMA, which Thayer defines at this place, "The word by which some thing is commanded, directed, enjoined." This agrees with Psalms 33: 9, which says, "He spake and it was done; he commanded and it stood fast." Also the phrase "and God said" occurs nine times in the first chapter of Genesis.

Verse 4. *By faith Abel*. Romans 10: 17 says faith comes by hearing the word of God. Hence Abel had been told by the Lord what to do or he could not have done it by faith. When

he offered an animal *by faith*, therefore, it was because God had told him to do so. That made it a *more excellent* (superior) sacrifice than the one Cain offered, for God had not told him to offer the fruit of the ground. *Obtained witness* means that testimony was borne him that he was a righteous man. *Dead yet speaketh*. Although Abel is dead physically, yet the record of his righteous performance is preserved down to the present time, and it *speaks* or testifies to the good deed that was done through his faith in the word of God.

Verse 5. *Translated . . . not see death*. The last phrase explains the first word, and *was not found* any more on earth because he was taken to Heaven. *Had this testimony*. It is recorded in Genesis 5: 24 that *Enoch walked with God*, which means he walked or conducted himself according to the "word of God" which produces faith.

Verse 6. The apostle interrupts his line of special instances to state the general principle of faith. Regardless of whatever apparent good there might be in one's actions, it will not be pleasing to God unless he has authorized it. *Believe that He is* means to believe in the existence of God. *Furthermore*, unless a man believes that God will reward a diligent seeker, he will not make any effort to come to Him.

Verse 7. The flood of which Noah was warned was over a century in the future (Genesis 6: 3), yet he prepared an ark according to the Lord's instructions. That was because he believed what God told him and acted accordingly. *To the saving of his house* from the flood that destroyed the rest of mankind. *Condemned the world*. Thayer defines the first word at this place as follows: "By one's good example to render another's wickedness more evident and censurable." *Heir of righteousness*. The last word is what is done and not inherited, hence the phrase means to inherit the reward that comes to one whose faith leads him to seek a righteous life.

Verse 8. The main point that showed Abraham's faith was his obedience even when he did not know where he was going. But God promised that it was to be towards a place which he should some day inherit.

Verse 9. *Strange* means "belonging to another"; Abraham considered himself a sojourner which means a temporary dweller. That is why he lived

in tabernacles (or tents) because he regarded himself as well as his immediate descendants as heirs only. He believed the land would sometime be actually possessed by the nations coming from him.

Verse 10. Abraham did not expect to possess personally the land of Canaan, hence he did not provide himself any permanent building for a home. He believed that his descendants would finally get possession of it. As for himself, he chose to be faithful to God while sojourning in the land, then finally enter the city with *foundations*, which means the permanence of the Eternal City or Heaven.

Verse 11. Being delivered of a child was not the miracle in this case, but it was the ability to conceive one to begin with. Sarah was ninety years old and thus was past the usual age of child-bearing. She also had been barren all her life so that she was not at any time able to conceive by the natural process of reproduction. Hence she would have felt no urge to cooperate with her husband in carrying out their part of God's plan. But on account of her faith in the promise of God she acted and was rewarded with the *strength* (ability) to conceive.

Verse 12. *As good as dead*. The second word is not in the original as a separate term. The phrase is used figuratively because all appearances were that way. We know Abraham's reproductive powers were not gone, for at least thirty-seven years later he married the second time and begat six sons (Genesis 23: 1; 25: 1, 2). There is no evidence that a miracle was performed to enable him to beget these sons. Besides, they were not needed to fulfill the promise made in the beginning. *Stars* and *sand* are used to indicate the vast number of his descendants.

Verse 13. *These* means Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, who never lived to see the fulfilment of the promises. *Died in faith* means that their faith remained with them as long as they lived. *Seen them afar off* (by the eyes of faith). Being *strangers and pilgrims* (temporary dwellers), they did not expect to possess the land personally, but they never doubted that their descendants would according to the promises.

Verse 14. The faith described in the preceding verse implies a belief in some other country than was then visible.

Verse 15. The country *from whence they came out* (Mesopotamia) was visible and would require no faith to realize it. Moreover, it was still obtainable and had they been *mindful of it* or cared for it, they could have returned to that place, although in so doing they would have lost their favor with God.

Verse 16. This verse expresses the same hope mentioned of Abraham in verse 10. God is pleased to own people who are trusting Him, and as a reward he will admit them into the heavenly city in the "sweet by and by." Such a home will be a *better country* than the one from which they came, or even than the one in which they were "sojourners."

Verse 17. *When he was tried* means when his faith was put to a test. *Offered up Isaac*. Abraham did not literally sacrifice his son, but he went as far as the Lord permitted him to go. Not knowing that God would change the order, Abraham was put to as strong a test of his faith as if he had slain his son. *His only begotten son* is mentioned to emphasize the severity of the test.

Verse 18. Regardless of how many other sons he might have had, that would not have lessened the severity of the test for the promise was restricted to Isaac.

Verse 19. Abraham never doubted God's ability and faithfulness in fulfilling the promise, even though his only son should die. The reason for that faith is explained in this verse in that he expected God to bring his son back to life. *Received him in a figure*; this may be regarded in two senses. The performance came so near to actual death for Isaac that the change in God's order was virtually the same to Abraham's mind as if the son had died. It was in the nature of a case where it is said that one "is snatched from the jaws of death." Another phase is the truth that it all was a figure or type of the restoration of the Son of God from death after having been slain and made an offering at the cross.

Verse 20. This blessing is recorded in Genesis 27, and it pertains to favorable experiences that were to come to his sons in the future. Being a patriarch, Isaac could speak as by a revelation from God, but he would not have done so had it not been for his faith in the declarations of God.

Verse 21. Jacob was another patriarch and could speak by the Lord's

instruction. The favorable predictions he made for Joseph's sons are recorded in Genesis 48.

Verse 22. When Joseph was taken into Egypt it was said that "the Lord was with him" (Genesis 39: 2), and He continued to be with him all the time. Hence he was able to make the prediction (by faith) that is mentioned here and at Genesis 50: 24, 25.

Verse 23. It should be understood that it was the parents of Moses who had the faith. They were true servants of God and believed that He would protect their child if they did what they could to help him live. *Not afraid* means they were not frightened by what the king of Egypt had ordered to be done to the infants.

Verse 24. *Come to years* corresponds with "full forty years old" in Acts 7: 23. At that time he repudiated his relation to the daughter of Pharaoh in order to join himself with the Hebrews. The circumstance of becoming related to Pharaoh's daughter referred to here is recorded in Exodus 2: 5-10.

Verse 25. *Pleasures of sin* refers to the life he was connected with while a part of the royal family of Egypt. A season would be the comparatively short time in this world, for sinful pleasures will all cease at the judgment and endless punishment will follow. On the other hand the faithful people of God, though afflicted by the enemy in this life, will enjoy endless pleasure in the world to come.

Verse 26. *Reproach of Christ*. Moses did not yet know the full system of salvation of which Christ is the central figure, but Paul considers any suffering endured in service to God as also being for the sake of Christ. *Treasures in Egypt* were the luxuries experienced by the royal group of Egyptians. (See comments at verse 25.)

Verse 27. *Forsook Egypt*. This was forty years later than the preceding verse, referring to the time he led the Israelites out of the land. *Not fearing the wrath* means notwithstanding the wrath of the king. *Seeing* (by the eye of faith) *him who is invisible* to mortal eyes.

Verse 28. This event is recorded in Exodus 12, where the sprinkling of blood was to save them from death. Since such a means could not naturally prevent death, the observance of it was necessarily done *through faith* as an act of obedience.

Verse 29. There was no natural cause for the Red Sea to open up and stand as walls, hence the Israelites marched down between them because they believed God would hold them up until His people were passed over. Egyptians *assaying* (trying) to go through the same passage were drowned because God was not with them.

Verse 30. There was no physical force in the marching and shouting of the Israelites to bring down the walls of Jericho. The power of God brought them down, but it would not have been done had they not believed in God who told them (through Joshua) to march around. The power was in God as in other cases, but He would not have used it had the people lacked the faith to obey.

Verse 31. Joshua 6: 25 says that Rahab was preserved "because she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho." But she hid them because she believed the reports of the favorable things the Lord had done for His people. Acting on that faith she cooperated with the messengers in escaping the wrath of the king of Jericho. As a reward for her faith she was permitted to dwell with the Israelites, and was honored by being permitted to be in the line of ancestors of Christ. (See Joshua 6: 25; Matthew 1: 5.)

Verse 32. *What shall I more say?* Why go into details further in illustrating the fruits of faith by the lives of ancient worthies? *Time would fail me*. This is an accommodative expression, meaning that the time that would be used in going on into the same details concerning the following cases individually, would be more than is suitable to an epistle of the length of this one. Paul therefore groups a number of outstanding characters and also groups a list of things they did among them. The remainder of the chapter will be devoted to a description of heroic deeds performed through the incentive of faith. If the reader wishes to get the details of the particular persons named he may see Gideon at Judges 6: 11; Barak at Judges 4: 6; Samson at Judges 13: 24; Jephthah at Judges 11: 1; David at 1 Samuel 16: 1; Samuel at 1 Samuel 1: 20.

Verse 33. *Subdued kingdoms*. An instance of it is in 2 Samuel 8 where David overcame the Philistines; God gave him the victory because of his faithfulness. *Wrought righteousness* means to do righteous work through

the motive of faith. *Obtained promises* means they obtained the fulfilment of them because they had the faith to comply with the conditions on which the promises were made. *Stopped the mouths of lions*. This was done directly by Samson in Judges 14: 5, 6, and by Daniel indirectly in Daniel 6. In each case God gave the victory because of the faith of the men.

Verse 34. *Quenched the violence of fire* occurred when the three companions of Daniel were cast into the fiery furnace (Daniel 3). *Escaped the edge of the sword*. Instances of this are too numerous to mention all, but a notable one is in 1 Samuel 20. *Out of weakness were made strong*. An outstanding instance was that of Samson in Judges 16: 28-30, where his strength was given back to him because of his returning faith and dependence upon God. *Waxed valiant* means the servants of God were strong and brave in their contests with the enemies of God. The unassisted strength of man is a failure when faced with the might of worldly hosts, but God rewards his faithful servants with victory when the attack is made. Aliens refers to those of another nation. Gideon routed the Midianites in connection with his war cry, "The sword of the Lord and Gideon" (Judges 7: 20-23).

Verse 35. The phrase *raised to life again* and the word *resurrection* are from the Greek word *ANASTASIS*, and the phrase is a good definition of the word. Two cases of such a favor shown to women are in 1 Kings 17: 17-24 and 2 Kings 4:18-37. *Were tortured*. This was done to force the servants of God to renounce their faith. They were promised relief from the torture if they would turn against the Lord, but they would *not accept* deliverance on such terms. Their motive for such resistance was that they might obtain a *better resurrection*. All mankind will be resurrected, but only those who are faithful till death will come forth to a happy life (Daniel 12: 2; John 5: 29.)

Verse 36. Not all the persecuted ones were put to death, but they were mistreated in various ways. Jeremiah was placed in prison (Jeremiah 37: 15-21), and afterward was put into the dungeon (Jeremiah 38: 1-6).

Verse 37. *They were stoned*. Two instances of this are recorded in 1 Kings 21: 1-14 and 2 Chronicles 24: 21, 22. *Sawn asunder*. This is a correct translation according to Thayer, and he says that an ancient tradition claims

that the prophet Isaiah was put to death in that way. This was one manner in which the ancient worthies *were tempted* or put to a test of their faith. Others were put to death by having their head severed from their body, or by being thrust through the bowels. The reason for their wandering *in sheepskins and goatskins* is explained by the next phrase, namely, *being destitute*. Of course the condition of destitution was brought about by the cruelty of their enemies, who *afflicted and tormented* them in whatever way they could devise.

Verse 38. *Of whom the world was not worthy*. The world of mankind that mistreated those faithful servants of God was not fit to have their presence. They wandered in these places to escape their enemies. (See Judges 6: 2 and 1 Samuel 13: 6.)

Verse 39. *Good report* signifies they were well spoken of on account of their faith. The passage says they received not *the promise* which refers to the promise of the seed of Abraham who was to bless the nations of the world. It means they did not live to see the fulfillment of the promise, but their confidence in the promises of God was so strong that they maintained their faith until death.

Verse 40. The *better thing* is the New Covenant established on "better promises" (chapter 8: 6), that was to be brought into the world through Christ. God's purpose was to provide this institution for *us* (Christians). Because of such a plan He did not bring the fulfillment of the promise in the lifetime of those worthies. *Not be made perfect* or complete, denotes that the scheme that was started in their days could not be completed until the time of *us* (Christians).

Hebrews 12

Verse 1. This is an illustration drawn from the footraces that were popular in ancient times. There were always some witnesses whose business was to look on to see that the runners observed the "rules of the game." Knowing that they were being watched, the contestants would be more careful to do their best to run according to the regulations. The word *cloud* means a great throng, and the *witnesses* refers to the list of worthies who are described in the preceding chapter. Those persons were dead and hence could not actually be looking on as the Christians were running the race. The

idea is that the examples of faith that were performed by those characters should serve as an incentive for us to do our best also. *Weight* is from a Greek word that is defined in the lexicon as anything that might be a hindrance. The contestants in the races would discard all extra clothing or whatever was attached to their bodies that would make it more difficult or uncertain in running the race. Likewise the Christian should put off all practices or other conditions that would interfere with the service to Christ. Paul specifies one such hindrance which is the *sin which doth so easily beset us*. That sin is evidently unbelief, since the importance of belief (or faith) is the subject of the entire eleventh chapter. A lack of faith in the Lord would necessarily hinder anyone from rendering acceptable service. *Patience* means endurance or perseverance, and the Christian must not be irregular or unsteady in his service, but should continue steadfastly to the end. *Race* is from AGON which means any kind of contest in general use, but is here applied to the contest of the footrace. *Is set before us* denotes that the contest is open for us, but we must voluntarily enter it if we engage in it at all.

Verse 2. A runner would forget the things behind him and be looking toward the goal and what it would mean to reach it. Likewise the Christian should have his eyes on Jesus who has set the goal at the end of a faithful life. *Author* means one who sets an example for others to follow, and *finisher* is one who carries out that example by a faithful life unto the end. The pronoun *our* is not in the original and is not necessary to the thought in the mind of the apostle. The sentence denotes the faith of the Gospel as it is demonstrated by the life of Christ. The *joy* that was set before Jesus was that of being the Saviour of the world, even though it required Him to die on the cross. *Despising* means to belittle or count as nothing the *shame* of such a death. It was bad enough to die at all, the just for the unjust, but it was more humiliating to die by crucifixion because only the worst of criminals were usually executed by that means. That is why Paul makes the remark that Jesus obeyed his Father unto death, "even the death on the cross" (Philippians 2: 8). Christ was rewarded for his humble service by being seated at the right hand of God, and those who fashion their lives

after the pattern set by Jesus will be permitted to live with him and God.

Verse 3. Christians were persecuted for the sake of Jesus and often thought their sufferings were unnecessary. On this account they sought to avoid it by deserting Him and going back to Moses as their lawgiver. But Jesus also suffered for righteousness' sake, including mistreatment from sinners who were usually contradicting His teaching. Christians should consider this example and take courage for the conflict. *Faint in your minds* means to be discouraged on account of trials.

Verse 4. They had not suffered as much as Jesus did, for he was compelled to defend His faith to the extent of shedding his blood.

Verse 5. The *exhortation* referred to is in Proverbs 3: 11, 12. This exhortation by Solomon is based on a truth that is in force under all ages of the world, hence Paul cites it and applies it to the servants of God in the Christian Dispensation. *Despise not* denotes that they should not belittle or disrespect the correction. *Chastening* refers to the discipline that a righteous parent will exercise upon his son for disobedience. To *faint* means to become despondent over the rebukes of our Heavenly Father.

Verse 6. The Lord chastises his children because of His love for them, even to the extent of scourging (suffering them to be afflicted) for their training.

Verse 7. Paul is making his comparison to an earthly parent who is the proper kind, not one who fails in his duty of controlling his children. God chastens his children for their good as do fleshly fathers their sons. Christians are exhorted to submit humbly to the chastisement from God, on the principle that His love for them prompts the correction.

Verse 8. *Bastards and not sons*. Even so-called "illegitimate" boys are sons of men and women, and are brought forth by the same law of reproduction that is the source of all human beings. Hence the term as used in contrast with *sons* is employed in a technical or legal sense. The idea is that if a man refrained from using discipline on a boy it would be on the ground that he was not his son; that he belonged to another outside his own family. Likewise, if a professed Christian objects to being chastised by the Lord, it implies that he does not claim to be a son of the Lord.

Verse 9. All good persons remember with appreciation the punishment they received from their fathers in the days of their minority, for they realize that it was for their good. How much more should we accept with humility the correction from *the Father of spirits* (our spiritual Father) and live a life of uprightness.

Verse 10. *For a few days*. During the days when we were minors which was a comparatively short time in the light of the endless future. *Their own pleasure*. Not that the fathers obtained any enjoyment from the punishing of their children, but the word means that it was according to their best judgment. God is infinite in judgment and totally unselfish in His motive for chastising his children, and does it solely for their own advantage.

Verse 11. Punishment is always unpleasant to the body and cannot bring any enjoyment for the time being. The good done is to be realized in the form of a better line of conduct by having been corrected from a life of waywardness. Of course this is on condition that the children are *exercised thereby*, which means they take the correction properly and amend their ways.

Verse 12. Hands hanging down and feeble knees indicate a spirit of despair or aversion to the chastisement for the punishment of wrong. Such persons should take a different attitude in the matter and look upon the situation as one where they really have been favored.

Verse 13. *Make straight paths*. Christians are not permitted to devise their own plan of religious life; that has been done by the Lord. The meaning is that they should be careful to walk in the path that has been prepared for them. They should do this not only for their own sake, but for others who may be influenced by their example. Otherwise if they do that which is not right, those who have less knowledge or ability might be confused and caused to lose the way. Instead of such a result, their lives should be such that the *lame* or weaker ones may be *healed* or led aright.

Verse 14. *Follow peace* should be on the basis of James 3: 17 which requires the peace to be in harmony with the pure wisdom from above. Paul recognizes the necessity of this proviso in Romans 12: 18 where he says "if it be possible." *Holiness* is the same as righteousness and without it no man

shall see *the Lord* which means to enjoy Him.

Verse 15. *Look diligently* denotes the idea of being careful how one conducts himself, otherwise he may get out of the right path and fall from the grace or favor of God. *Root of bitterness* means a feeling of hatred against others, which could be only a source of *trouble* among disciples that would spread defilement among them.

Verse 16. This verse specifies some of the things referred to in general terms in the preceding one. Fornicators should not be permitted to remain among the disciples because of their evil influence (1 Corinthians 5: 6, 7). A *profane* person is one who makes a temporal use of a sacred thing. That is what Esau did when he sold his *birthright* (a sacred possession) for a mess of food (a temporal article). In general practice it means any disciple who would try to obtain some earthly advantage out of his profession of faith in Christ.

Verse 17. *Found no place for repentance*. Repentance means more than sorrow or regret for a mistake, but also requires that it be corrected. Esau knew afterward that he had acted foolishly in selling his birthright, but he had no opportunity for getting it back, for Jacob would not give it up.

Verse 18. From here through several verses the apostle returns to the leading subject of the epistle, namely, the contrasts between the system under Moses and that under Christ. The mount that *might be touched* was Sinai because it was a literal one (Exodus 19: 12), and it was from this mount that the old law was given. The rest of the verse is descriptive of the conditions when the Israelites approached the area.

Verse 19. This continues the conditions at Sinai which are recorded in Exodus 20: 19 and other passages in connection therewith.

Verse 20. *Could not endure that which was commanded* sounds as if God required something that the people could not do, which we know was not the case. The meaning is that the conditions were so awe-inspiring that it overwhelmed them with terror. The things mentioned in the latter half of the verse are recorded in Exodus 19: 12, 13.

Verse 21. This remark of Moses is not recorded in Exodus, but Paul was inspired and was able to report this

part of the circumstance for our information.

Verse 22. The preceding verses describe the mount to which Christians do *not come* (as the Israelites did); the apostle now will describe the mount to which they have come. He does so by a series of points of identity which apply to the one divine institution under Christ, which was set up in Jerusalem which is termed *Mount Zion*. Christians do not actually go to the city of Jerusalem, but they come to the institution that was set up in that city. In coming to this divine institution we are brought into near relation with other spiritual places and things, to be named in this and the next two verses. *City of the living God* is that one in which He lives and which is the one "which hath foundations" (chapter 11:10). *Heavenly Jerusalem* is a contrast between Heaven above and the literal one below. The angels live in Heaven but are used in service for the people of God (chapter 1:14). By coming into the church it brings us into the benefit of these holy services.

Verse 23. *General assembly* is from PANEGURIS, which means the same as a mass meeting, and refers to the universal membership of the church of Christ. The same institution is composed of the *firstborn* which is plural in the original Greek and also is in the possessive case. The members of the church are called *firstborn* in a figurative sense. In old times the firstborn child was heir to the possessions of his father. Since all faithful members of the church are heirs of the spiritual possessions of Christ, they are here called the *firstborn* (ones). The phrase *church of the firstborn* is not a scriptural title or name of the church as it is erroneously used often by our brethren. *Written in heaven*. The names of the faithful children of God are enrolled in heaven (Luke 10:20; Revelation 21:27). Membership in the church of Christ brings us into fellowship with God who is the *Judge of all*. It also makes us have relationship with the *spirits of just men made perfect*, meaning those who have reached the complete state under the providence of God, such as those described in Matthew 27:53; Romans 8:29; 1 Corinthians 15:20; Ephesians 4:8; Jude 14.

Verse 24. Jesus became the mediator of the new covenant by giving that law into the world to take the place

of the law of Moses. *Blood of sprinkling* is so worded because under the system of Moses the blood of animals was literally sprinkled on the objects to be affected. The blood of Christ is sprinkled figuratively when men obey the Gospel which brings them into the benefits of that blood. (See 1 John 1:7.) *Speaketh better things than that of Abel*. The blood of Abel cried for vengeance (Genesis 4:10 and 15), while the blood of Christ calls for mercy (chapter 2:17). The word *better* means "more useful or serviceable." The blood of Christ opened up a way of salvation for all mankind, which was not true of the blood of Abel.

Verse 25. *Him that speaketh* means Christ whose blood speaks better things than that of Abel. Judaizers would have the Christians *refuse* Jesus by going back to Moses for their law. Moses *spoke* on earth (at Sinai) and even his law dared not be refused (chapter 2:1, 2; 10:29). Jesus *spoke from heaven* when he sent the Holy Spirit down to the apostles in order to give them the new law. Paul asks how can we escape rejection from the Lord if we refuse His law.

Verse 26. *Whose voice* means that of God, speaking in conjunction with that of Christ who was always associated with God in all that was done (Genesis 1:26; John 1:3). *Then shook the earth* occurred at Sinai as described in verses 18-20. That shaking brought in a new system of religious practice, but it was one that was not destined to be permanent. Instead, God purposed to bring about one more shaking that was to be more extensive and would involve both heaven and earth; the event is predicted in Haggai 2:5-9. The prediction refers to the time when the Lord was to bring in the New Covenant and thereby disannul all other systems that had been in use.

Verse 27. Paul explains that since there was to be but one more shaking, it signified that what would be left in force after the shaking would be so firm that it would be useless to try the shaking again. Such was the case, for when the great shaking took place at Jerusalem on Pentecost, the Jewish and Patriarchal Dispensations were gone and only the kingdom of Christ was able to *remain* as our verse says.

Verse 28. *We* (Christians) *receiving a kingdom* takes place when people renounce the worldly life and come into the kingdom of Christ. *Cannot be*

moved is explained in the preceding verse, and in Daniel 2: 44. With such an institution in which we may live, there is much reason for our serving God acceptably, and the apostle prays that divine grace may be had in the service. *Reverence* and *godly fear* are virtually the same, meaning profound regard for God and resolve to treat him with full devotion.

Verse 29. God is merciful to all those who will accept His mercy, but he is a revenging God upon those who do not respect His law (chapter 10: 28, 29; verse 25).

Hebrews 13

Verse 1. The main argument of this epistle is completed and the present chapter is given to various subjects pertaining to the church and individual duties. *Brotherly love* signifies the love extended to others by reason of the common relationship in the family of God.

Verse 2. *Entertain strangers* is from a Greek word that is defined in the lexicon as hospitality, especially toward those outside one's immediate personal acquaintances. *Entertained angels unawares* was done by Abraham in Genesis 18. However, Jesus taught the principle of discretion in the bestowal of favors (Matthew 7: 6), hence a Christian is not required to keep "open house" for all stragglers regardless of circumstances.

Verse 3. The *bonds* were the chains fastened upon disciples because of their devotion to Christ. Those who are fortunate enough not to be in chains as yet, should consider themselves as partakers of the same persecutions. *Also in the body* refers to the body of Christ (the church); being in the same body with the persecuted ones should create a feeling of brotherly sympathy.

Verse 4. *Marriage is honorable* because it is the Lord's arrangement for the perpetuation of the race, hence the marriage bed should be regarded as undefiled. As an inducement for man to cooperate with God in this plan, He has made the intimate relation a pleasurable one. All good things may be abused, hence there are people who use this relationship for the one purpose only. Such people should remember the case of Onan in Genesis 38: 8-10 and beware. The fact of having contracted legal marriage does not justify Christians in counteracting God's original purpose for the insti-

tution. *Whoremongers* refers especially to men who are immoral and *adulterers* to either sex.

Verse 5. Conversation means one's conduct or manner of life, and the sentence means that their lives should not be influenced by an overmuch desire for the wealth of this world. *To be content* does not deny one the right to "look out for a rainy day," or to acquire more of the good things of life than he needs for his own personal use; such a theory would contradict Ephesians 4: 28. The thought is that while we are making lawful efforts to produce the desirable things of life, we should not be fretting because we are not as successful as others or as much so as we had expected to be ourselves. We may always have the assurance that we will be cared for in some way.

Verse 6. We may *boldly* or confidently say that the Lord is our helper. Men may persecute us even to the extent of depriving us of the comforts of life, yet we should not fear about the outcome if we are faithful to Him.

Verse 7. *Remember* means to be mindful of these rulers which means the elders. They have spoken the word of God in their work as shepherds over the flock (Acts 20: 28). *Whose faith follow*. That is we should imitate the example of faithfulness in the discharge of their duties. Verse 17 is more direct in its requirements of the treatment of the rulers in association with the flock, hence the present verse has especial reference to the ones who have gone on out of life, but whose examples of faith were still worthy of imitation. The disciples are told to consider the object and outcome of those noble lives of faith.

Verse 8. This verse continues the thought begun in the preceding one, telling us what was the *end* or object or motive of the faithful lives of the rulers, namely, the Lord Jesus Christ. Since He is *the same yesterday, and today, and forever*, to have Him as the motive of one's life would insure a life of faithfulness till death.

Verse 9. The *divers* (different) and *strange* (from the outside) *doctrines* (or teachings) refers especially to the disturbances of the Judaizers. *To be carried about* indicates something that can be moved with the wind and hence having very little weight. Paul wishes them to be *established* or firmly set with the *grace* or favor of Christ, instead of relying on the regulations of

the old law regarding meats. A few more verses are devoted to some contrasts and likenesses between the two dispensations.

Verse 10. The Mosaic system had a literal altar service on which animals were burned in sacrifice. Some parts of the beasts were reserved for food to be eaten by the priests who performed the service. We Christians also have an altar that is not a literal or temporal one; it is the sacrificial service of Christ. Those who accept the teaching of the Judaizers in going back to the old tabernacle, forfeit their right to the benefits of Christ's sacrifice; they have fallen from grace (Galatians 5: 4).

Verse 11. *The bodies of those beasts*, etc. (See Exodus 29: 14.) The blood of those beasts was used in the most holy place while the bodies were taken to the outside of the camp and burned as a sacrifice for sin.

Verse 12. There is a beautiful parallel drawn here between the bodies referred to and that of Christ. He was taken outside the city of Jerusalem to be put to shame by death on the cross as the worst of criminals.

Verse 13. But this humiliating treatment of Jesus was imposed upon him by his enemies, although it was a part of God's great plan of salvation to be accomplished through His only begotten Son. True followers of Him therefore will not be ashamed to "stand by" Him in his humiliation and will take joy in sharing in the reproach.

Verse 14. The material things of this world are all finally to pass away. Even the cherished city of Jerusalem in which was located the temple and center of the Mosaic worship, was then about to be destroyed by the Romans. Then why not give attention to the service under Christ which will prepare one for the city which is *to come* and which will never pass away.

Verse 15. Instead of the material incense that was used with the sacrifices of the Mosaic system, let us offer the kind that is spiritual. Instead of the fruit of the field or sheepfold, let it be the *fruit of our lips* in the form of praise to God for all the wonderful blessings which we have received.

Verse 16. Not that all physical or temporal services are to be dropped from our activities. We may still do good to others by *communicating* or sharing with them the good things necessary to their personal wellbeing.

God is still pleased with that kind of sacrifices.

Verse 17. *Obey* is from PEITHO and Thayer defines it at this place as follows: "To listen to, obey, yield to, comply with." The definition agrees with the connection in which it is used here. The persons are said to *have the rule* which could not be accomplished unless they were obeyed. This thought is repeated by the word *submit* which is from HUPEIKO, which Thayer defines in the same passage as follows: "To give way, yield, to yield to authority and admonition, to submit." No institution can succeed without government, and that calls for governors or rulers. But such officers cannot govern unless they are obeyed, hence the members of the church are commanded to be obedient to the rulers which means the elders. *They watch for your souls*. Since the souls of men cannot be seen it follows that the elders must watch the actions of their bodies. The members sometimes resent their elders and seem to think they have a strong complaint when they say "we are being watched." But the elders are not doing their duty unless they watch the actions of the members. The elders will have to *give account* for the conduct of the flock, and if the members do not live in obedience to their rulers the account will not be a joyous one. If the facts require an unfavorable report to the Chief Shepherd, such an account will be unprofitable for the sheep for it will cause their souls to be rejected at the day of judgment.

Verse 18. *Pray for us*. Inspired apostles felt the need of fellowship and the benefit of the prayers of their brethren. Paul professes to have a good conscience which was doubtless suggested by the accusations that had been made against him, making him a prisoner in Rome. The original for *honestly* is really a stronger word than it, for a man could be honest while doing wrong. It truly means to live "so that there shall be no room for blame"—Thayer. In order for a man to have a *good conscience* in the sight of God, it is necessary that his life be right as measured by the will of God.

Verse 19. Evidently the Hebrew brethren to whom this epistle was written were principally those living in Judea. Paul was in Rome and detained as a prisoner on account of his testimony for Christ. He besought the brethren to pray for his deliverance so that he might again come

among them and labor in the work of the Lord.

Verse 20. *God of peace* is said of Him because he is the source of all genuine peace that is in harmony with divine wisdom (James 3: 17). He brought his Son from the dead in order to give the assurance of genuine peace to all true servants of righteousness. *Great shepherd of the sheep* is Christ who is called the "chief Shepherd" in 1 Peter 5: 4. This emphasized title is given to Christ because elders are referred to as shepherds in that they are told to "feed the church of God" which is termed the flock (Acts 20: 28). The things Paul wishes God to do for them in the next verse are to be accomplished *through the blood of the everlasting covenant*. It is called everlasting because it was not to be replaced by any other as was the Mosaic covenant.

Verse 21. *Make you perfect* means to equip them completely for every good work in doing His will. It is to be done through Jesus Christ which will make it *well-pleasing in his* (God's) *sight*.

Verse 22. *Exhortation* means to insist on doing one's known duty, and Paul has clearly made known to them their duty to serve under Christ and not Moses. *Few words* is a comparative term. The epistle to the Hebrews though consisting of several chapters, yet it embraces arguments covering the books of Exodus and Leviticus and parts of others in the Old Testament. That makes the book of Hebrews comparatively "few words."

Verse 23. This is the only place I have found that mentions the imprisonment of Timothy. Paul's confidence in the prospect of his own release (verse 19) was so strong that he planned on joining Timothy soon in going to meet with these brethren.

Verse 24. *Salute* means to give a friendly greeting which implies a wish for the wellbeing of the one saluted. This was to include the rulers (elders) as well as other saints (Christians). Others in Italy (of which Rome was the capital) joined Paul in his salutation for the brethren in Judea.

Verse 25. *Grace* means the unmerited favor of the Lord and it was the sincere wish of Paul that his brethren everywhere should so live as to receive that favor. *Amen* is from a Greek word that is spelled the same as English. In the King James Version it

is rendered "amen" 50 times and "verily" 100 times.

James 1

Verse 1. I have consulted a number of works of reference such as commentaries, lexicons, dictionaries and histories, as well as the various passages in the New Testament that are related to the subject, and my conclusion is that the author of this epistle is "James the Lord's brother" (Galatians 1: 19). In the passage just cited he is called an apostle but not one of the twelve. He was an important man as may be seen by the following passages. Acts 12: 17; 15: 13-21; 21: 18; Galatians 1: 19; 2: 9, 12. James calls himself a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is significant, for it indicates that both of these members of the Deity must be recognized as having divine authority. The epistle was especially written to Jewish Christians who were scattered among the Gentiles. The term *twelve tribes* is used figuratively only, for in Christ there are no tribal distinctions. It is used in the same sense as Paul used it in Acts 26: 7, where we know he was speaking of them as Christians. The truth is that there were disciples of Christ made from all the twelve tribes. *Greeting* means a friendly salutation from one who wishes well for the one greeted.

Verse 2. *Count it all joy* cannot mean to pretend that they get enjoyment out of that which is disagreeable, for that would be an act of insincerity. The idea is they should regard it as something that would result in a benefit. *Temptations* refers to adversities or hardships such as might be imposed upon them by their enemies.

Verse 3. *Patience* means endurance and if the disciples remain true to Christ amidst the trials, it will demonstrate the genuineness of their faith.

Verse 4. Since the good result of trials that have been endured through faith is to demonstrate *patience*, the disciples are urged to "let the good work go on." The word *perfect* means complete, and if the good work is allowed to continue to the end, it will result in a life that is completely devoted to God or that is willing to go far enough that it will be *wanting* (lacking) *nothing*.

Verse 5. The word *wisdom* is from the Greek word SOPHIA which occurs 51 times in the New Testament. It