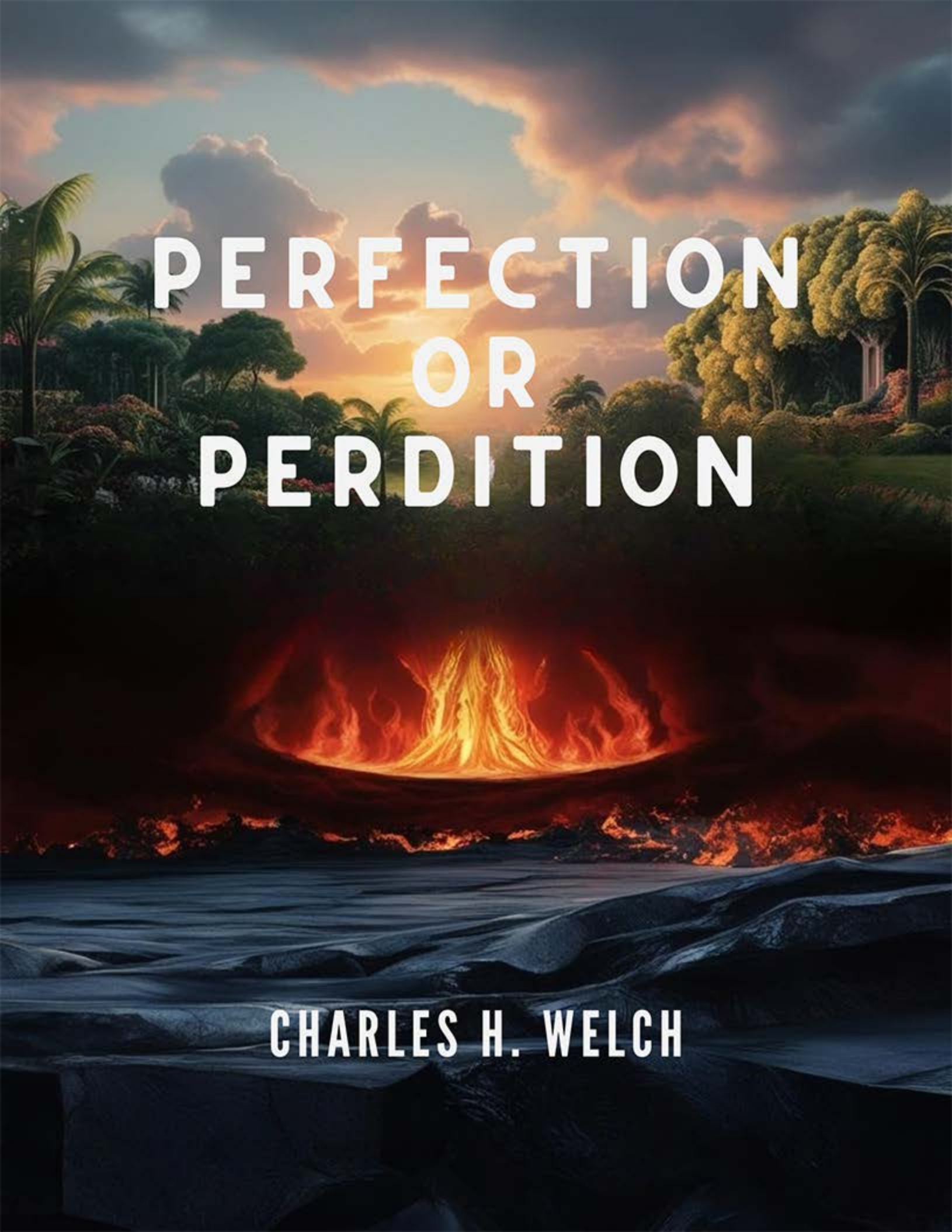

PERFECTION
OR
PERDITION
CHARLES H. WELCH

Perfection or Perdition

An Exposition of the Epistle
to the Hebrews

By
CHARLES H. WELCH

With an Introduction
By
STUART ALLEN

THE BEREAN PUBLISHING TRUST
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FOREWORDS

In the June 1918 issue of the monthly magazine, `The Berean Expositor', Mr. Charles H. Welch began a verse by verse analysis of the epistle to the Hebrews. Thirteen years were to pass before the exposition saw completion.

It is most fitting therefore that this monumental work should be recast in book form. This book is a welcome addition to the many others which came from his pen, and is a further testimony to his life's ambition to honour the Word of God.

The breadth and depth of this study will become evident as the book is read, and as many facets of truth are brought into clearer focus.

This book is sent forth with many prayers that the `God Who spake in times past' will speak again through the meaningful interpretation of this portion of `The Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever'.

A.C.L.

A primary principle emphasized by Charles H. Welch in his prolific writings is the need to note to whom the books of the Bible are addressed. Nevertheless, equal stress has been placed on Paul's dictum that `All Scripture is inspired and profitable... '. Whereas we might have thought the epistle to the Hebrews had no great import for us Gentiles, yet on examination, we find there a most important message for us today, as brought out in this very thorough exposition.

We anticipate in brief. There is the vision of striving for something better that God encourages us to seek. What a God is ours that looks down and helps us to enter by faith the joys He has set before us. The epistle opens with the reminder that God Who in time past spake by the prophets, has come closer to us in speaking through His Son. We see a better Sacrifice, a better High Priest, a better Covenant. Chapter 11 gives the list of faithful witnesses who endured the hardships of this earthly pilgrimage but looked for a better reward in resurrection life. Their faith was the absolute conviction that the things they hoped for were true and real, and for them this faith was the title deeds of an inheritance as yet unseen.

For ourselves, we are enjoined not to stay with the foundations of our faith but to go on and build upon them with the good material pertaining to the will of God. Our own lives, short or long, are before us. With God's help we can let Him fill us and enable us to do and to be all for which we have been created and redeemed. Dare we look at the opposite to this, namely - WASTE - wasted time, wasted opportunities for Christian service?

May this study of such a vital book of the New Testament reach us out of the past and mould our plans for what portion of life is left to us.

We take this opportunity of rendering thanks to all who have so greatly assisted by reading the proofs and preparing the indexes.

L.A.C. April 1972

INTRODUCTION

THE AUTHORSHIP OF THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS

One peculiar characteristic of this epistle is that it commences without a customary salutation, or giving the name of the writer and those to whom it was addressed. This has caused, from the earliest times, considerable research and debate as to who the human author was, even though the epistle is accepted as canonical without question and part of the inspired Word of God. The Authorized Version heading: 'The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews' is only found in late Greek manuscripts; it is not found in the oldest manuscripts, which simply read *Pros Hebraious*, To Hebrews, and it is not certain that even this formed part of the original document, but it must have been given to the epistle at an early date in the second century, when it first came into public use as part of a collection of apostolic letters. That this title was undoubtedly right, the internal testimony clearly shows, for its setting forth of the types and shadows given to the fathers of Israel, finally finding their fulfilment in Christ, would have no meaning to the pagan Gentile world to whom the apostle Paul ministered. It might have had some meaning to the number of God-fearing Gentiles (as Cornelius) who attended the Jewish synagogue, but there is no evidence whatsoever that these are in the mind of the author of this epistle. It is much more natural to see those addressed as being a number of Hebrew Christians, to whom the Mosaic tabernacle and Levitical offerings would have real meaning, although their residence cannot be determined with absolute certainty.

It is a peculiar fact that, from the first, the Eastern Church decided that the epistle was the apostle Paul's, if not directly, then mediately, either as a free translation of his words or a reproduction of his thoughts and teaching; whereas the Western Church did not reckon it among the Pauline epistles or recognize its canonical authority until the fourth century A.D.

The first witness is Clement of Rome who shows clear evidence that he was acquainted with it, in the letter he wrote to the Corinthian church about A.D. 96, but he nowhere names the epistle or its author. The most explicit testimony is that of the Alexandrian church preserved by Eusebius (A.D. 264-340) from the lost writings of Clement of Alexandria (about A.D. 190-203) and Origen (A.D. 185-254). Eusebius relates that Clement in his *Hypotyposes* (sketches or outlines) says: '... that the epistle is Paul's, and that it was written to Hebrews in the Hebrew (Aramaic) language, and that Luke translated it with zealous care and published it to the Greeks, whence it is that the same complexion of style is found in the translation of this epistle and the Acts'. He states further that '... the phrase, 'Paul an Apostle', was not placed at the head of the epistle for good reason; in writing to Hebrews who had formed a prejudice against him and viewed him with suspicion, he was wise not to repel them at the beginning by setting his name there'. It is possible, from another quotation of Clement, that he derived the idea of an Aramaic original from his master, 'the blessed presbyter', Pantaenus.

Coming to the testimony of Origen, Eusebius gives it in Origen's own words:

> 'If I were to express my own opinion I should say that the thoughts are the thoughts of the Apostle, but the language and the composition that of one who recalled from memory and, as it were, made notes of what was said by his master. If therefore any church holds this epistle as Paul's, let it be approved for this also for it was not without reason that men of old time have handed it down as Paul's (that is as substantially expressing his thoughts). But who wrote the epistle God only knows certainly. The account that has reached us is twofold: some say that Clement, who became bishop of the Romans, wrote the epistle; others that Luke wrote it, who wrote the Gospel and the Acts. But on this I will say no more'.

This testimony is supplementary to that of Clement's. Origen was obviously aware that some churches did not receive the epistle as Paul's. In the strictest sense of authorship he agreed with them, but at the same time held that it could be regarded as the apostle's, as embodying his thoughts and doctrine and he (Origen) was prepared to defend it as such. In other writings he uses such phrases as 'in the epistle to the Hebrews, the same Paul says', and 'Paul himself, the greatest of the apostles, writing to the Hebrews, says' and then quotes Hebrews 12:18,23. Origen goes back to the opinion held 'in ancient times'. As he was born in A.D. 185, this must refer to apostolic, or sub-apostolic times. Consequently as Hallet remarks:

> 'It is very certain then, that the churches and writers who were ancient with respect to Origen, had one common tradition, that St. Paul was the author of the epistle to the Hebrews. And their testimony to this matter of fact cannot but be of great weight, since those Christians who were ancients with respect to Origen, must have conversed with the Apostles, or at least with their immediate successors'.

Origen therefore does not question the ancient tradition that linked the epistle to the Hebrews with Paul's name, but his standpoint is whether the epistle, precisely as we have it in Greek, can have come directly from Paul's hand. In other words the actual Greek may have been written by an amanuensis, which was a common occurrence in New Testament times, an example of which we have with the epistle to the Romans. Its material and doctrine is Paul's, but the actual writing was done by Tertius (Rom. 16:22), and just how much latitude was given to an amanuensis we have no means of knowing, this possibly varying according to the attitude of the author and capability of the actual writer. We cannot say that it was always merely verbal dictation. Bishop Westcott sums up as follows:

> 'Thus Clement and Origen, both familiar with the details of the tradition of the "men of old time" to whom they refer, agree in regarding the Greek epistle as Paul's only in a secondary sense. Clement regards it as a free translation of a Hebrew (Aramaic) original, so made by St. Luke as to show the characteristics of his style. Origen regards it as a scholar's reproduction of his master's teaching. Each view must have been consistent with what was generally received .... Both use the epistle as Paul's without any qualification, because it was naturally connected with the collection of his letters. Origen goes so far as to say that he was prepared to show that "the epistle was Paul's" in reply to those "who rejected it as not written by Paul" (Ep. ad Afric. 9); and in another passage, preserved in a Latin translation, he speaks of "fourteen epistles of St. Paul" (Hom. in Jos. VII)'.

The Epistle to the Hebrews p. lxviii.

Eusebius, having included Hebrews among the epistles of Paul, cites it as Pauline in some twenty seven passages. There is no doubt at all that the primitive tradition of the East associated the epistle with Paul, although not written with his actual hand.

In the West it was, as we have noted, altogether different. Irenaeus, bishop of Lyons (born circa A.D. 130) was among the first to cite the New Testament books by their titles apparently, but rarely mentions the letter to the Hebrews and never declares it to be Pauline. Victorinus (A.D. 303), the Muratorian Canon, and Gaius (circa 190) count only 13 epistles of Paul. Cyprian says that Paul wrote to seven churches: Rome, Corinth, Ephesus, Colossae, Philippi, Thessalonica and Galatia. There is no room here for an epistle to the Hebrews. Tertullian, with great decision, names Barnabas as its author. It can be said that, from the second to the fourth century, in Italy and Africa, the Hebrews epistle was held not to be an epistle of the Apostle Paul. It came to the Western church but late and slowly. Paul is not named in the introduction, and it was therefore, from this and its un-Pauline Greek, not reckoned to be an epistle of his.

Thus we find two traditions weighing against each other, but that of the East is the heavier in the scale. The latter bears a positive character, whereas the West is negative. Apparently there was no doubt in Alexandria as to who was the real author, but, owing to its style, the amanuensis and translator who had worked it out was questioned. Those who come to a conclusion of authorship solely on internal grounds, should give an adequate explanation as to how the Eastern church so early arrived at the idea that this epistle was one sent from the apostle Paul, even though he may not have been the actual penman.

Was Clement of Rome right in saying that the Hebrews epistle was a translation from an Aramaic original? There are grave doubts that it could have been a literal translation. The epistle has a good number of paronomasias or play on words, such as we find in the Greek of 2:8; 7:3,19,22-24; 10:29 etc. These and other genuinely Greek constructions would have no corresponding Aramaic equivalents and the development of thought would not lend itself either to Aramaic. The most that can be said is, that if there was such an Aramaic original, the Greek letter is a free reproduction of it, using it only as a basis, and is in no sense a translation.

From the earliest times many scholars have found difficulty in accepting the Pauline authorship of Hebrews, the chief difficulties being (1) the style of the Greek, (2) the statement of chapter 2:3, which apparently militates against the independent apostleship of Paul. As regards (1) it must be conceded that the Greek of the epistle to the Hebrews is generally unlike that of the apostle. It shows everywhere traces of effort and care and polish, very unlike the impetuous, almost rough Greek at times of the apostle Paul. We must be careful here however. No one can say with

certainty that Paul *could not* have written such elegant Greek had he desired to do so. On the other hand we may ask why he should have so altered his style when writing to Hebrew Christians? And there seems to be no definite answer. Coming to (2) which has often been put forward by expositors as making the Pauline authorship impossible, we will first quote the verse in full:

> 'How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him' (Heb. 2:3).

Nothing is clearer than Paul's independent apostleship received from the risen Christ separately from the Twelve, but here the writer states that he was indebted to those who heard the Lord, namely the Twelve. There are several points which must be considered before we can come to a satisfactory conclusion. The 'us' can be regarded as the editorial 'we', the first person plural of exhortation being used right throughout this epistle. Note in the immediate context '*we* ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which *we* have heard, lest at any time *we* should let them slip ... how shall *we* escape, if *we* neglect so great salvation'. In such a context 'Confirmed unto us' is perfectly natural, whereas 'confirmed unto you' would not have been. It is possible that these Hebrew Christians were not the apostle's converts. They easily could have come to a knowledge of Christ from saved Jews at Pentecost who were afterwards scattered through persecution (Acts 8:1,4; 11:19). The latter could have come directly under the earthly ministry of the Lord Jesus, and thus be truthfully described as 'those who heard Him'. We have the antithesis between the word of the law, spoken at Sinai through angels, and the special aspect of salvation which is characteristic of this letter, that of the salvation of the soul (10:32-39) first spoken by the Lord (Matt. 16:24-28 which Paul never could have heard), and confirmed 'unto us', that is, Hebrew Christians generally, by those that heard Him. It is significant that one of these, the apostle Peter, develops this in his first epistle (1 Pet. 1:6-9), linking it with the *goal* of the tested believer's faith, not his initial salvation from sin. The author of Hebrews had in view not so much himself, as his readers. It is because the word salvation here has been construed as the salvation of the sinner, rather than the perfecting of the believer, that the problem has arisen. Most certainly Paul received the Gospel of grace to the sinner apart from any human instrumentality (Gal. 1:11-12), but salvation in this sense is not found in Hebrews. It should be remembered that the typical teaching in this epistle does not start with the bondage in Egypt and deliverance through the blood of the Passover lamb (which it would have done had the salvation of the sinner been in view), but with the account of a redeemed people journeying through the wilderness with its tests and difficulties, to Canaan, the land of promise. Hence the particular suitability of that aspect of salvation, that of the soul, which so intimately pertains to the saved, having reward in view at the judgment seat of Christ.

From time to time various others, beside Paul, have been put forward as the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews. Tertullian was the first who suggested Barnabas. As a Cypriot and a Levite, he was evidently a man of standing at Jerusalem and would have had an insight into the ritual of the Tabernacle and Temple. He was named by the Apostles as the 'son of consolation' in Acts 4:36, and the word 'consolation' is the same as 'exhortation' in Hebrews 13:22. We have no other early evidence beside Tertullian, nor do we know anything of the capability of Barnabas as a writer. The apocryphal epistle attributed to him does not help as there are too many divergencies between it and the Hebrew epistle. Luther advocated Apollos as author and has been followed by others including Kurtz, Farrar, Alford, and today T. W. Manson, W. F. Howard and C. Spicq. That Apollos was an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures, we are assured by the New Testament, but again we have no writing of his to compare with, so this is really nothing more than clever guesswork. Harnack maintained that Aquila and Priscilla wrote the epistle, with Priscilla as the main partner, but against this we have 11:32 '... the time would fail me telling ...' where the participle *diegoumenon*, 'telling', is masculine, and once more we have nothing written by Aquila and Priscilla with which to compare the letter to the Hebrews. Sir William Ramsay hazarded Philip the deacon, while Calvin thought of Luke or Clement of Rome as the author, and in the case of Luke we are on different ground, for we have the Acts of the Apostles and his Gospel with which to compare.

Professor F.F. Bruce writes:

> 'Stylistically Hebrews is closer to the writings of Luke than to anything else in the New Testament, but this may be because our author and Luke approximate more closely than other New Testament writers to the model of literary Hellenistic - our author even more than Luke' (*The Epistle to the Hebrews*, p. xli).

Many scholars have noticed the remarkable likeness of Luke's Greek to that of Hebrews.

Hebrews and Galatians

One solution to the difficult question of the authorship of this epistle was put forward in 1916 by Dr. J.W. Thirtle, then editor of *The Christian*, namely that the Hebrews epistle was a covering (No, Galatians was the covering letter to the Hebrews not the other way round, see p. 233 JP) letter or enclosure circulated with the epistle to the Galatians. He pointed out that in early times the epistle to the Hebrews followed that to the Galatians. This is evident from an examination of the Greek manuscript known as Codex B (Vaticanus) belonging to the fourth century. This famous manuscript exhibits, in the words of Bishop Westcott:

> 'A marginal numeration which shows that the whole collection of Pauline epistles was divided, either in its archetype or in some earlier copy, into a series of sections numbered consecutively. In this collection the epistle to the Hebrews comes between the epistles to the Galatians and the Ephesians'.
>
> (*The Epistle to the Hebrews*, p. xxx).

This arrangement approximates to that of the Thebaic and Bashmuric versions, in which the epistle comes between 2 Corinthians and Galatians. The mass of later Greek MSS follow the Syriac and place the epistle after the pastoral epistles and Philemon, which order has passed into the Received Text probably under this influence, and so gives us its present place in the New Testament Dr. F.H. Scrivener gives a similar testimony in his *Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament*, p. 54:

> 'The Pauline epistles are reckoned throughout as one book in the older notation, with however this remarkable peculiarity, that though in the Codex Vaticanus itself the epistle to the Hebrews stands next after the second to the Thessalonians, and on the same leaf with it, the sections are arranged as if it stood between the epistles to the Galatians and Ephesians .... It plainly appears then, that the sections of the Codex Vaticanus must have been copied from some yet older document, in which the epistle to the Hebrews preceded that to the Ephesians'.

This arrangement undoubtedly exhibits this association as obtaining in very early times, possibly the sub-Apostolic age, and that originally the one epistle followed the other with nothing between. In which case, in a professedly Pauline section of the New Testament, we find Galatians and Hebrews merely separated the one from the other by two words: *Pros Hebraious*, To Hebrews, and this, as we have noted, may not have formed part of the original text.

Dr. Thirtle asks: 'Was this in reality dividing? Why not - sub-dividing?' He goes on to propound the theory that the epistle to the Hebrews was a covering letter to the Galatian letter and circulated with it, being specially addressed to a Hebrew Christian section in Galatia. In which case, the problem of the introduction without the author's name is solved, as the name of the apostle Paul is evident in Galatians 1:1, and would not need to be repeated in the covering letter. As these two epistles became detached in course of time the anonymity of Hebrews naturally became a problem and its position in the New Testament writings became lost, being finally located after the Pastoral Epistles and Philemon, its present position.

Another problem would also be solved if Galatians and Hebrews circulated together and that is the extraordinary omission of the passing of the privilege of circumcision in Hebrews, one of whose main objects is to show that the types and shadows of Israel's economy had been fulfilled in the Antitype, the Lord Jesus Christ, and thus had become redundant. Yet circumcision, one of the main bases of Jewish pride and privilege, is not mentioned in the epistle to the Hebrews. This is understandable if these two epistles were designed to be kept together, for circumcision had been adequately dealt with in Galatians.

Dr. Thirtle leaned toward an Aramaic original. He felt that Galatians 6:11, 'Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand', refers not to large lettering due to defective eyesight, but to an epistle written by the apostle 'with my own handwriting', possibly Aramaic; just as some have held to have been the case with the Gospel of Matthew. That gramma, 'letter', in the plural can mean this is confirmed by Arndt and Gingrich:

> 'A document, piece of writing, mostly in the plural even of single copies 1 Esdras 3:9,13; Esther 8:5, etc.' (*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*).

To the objection to an Aramaic original (the writer of Hebrews citing generally from the LXX and not the Hebrew text) he states that this feature 'is consistent with a translation made by someone who saw reasons for following the general guidance of the LXX, but has not troubled to tell us why'. And as regards the difficulty of the

Greek being a literal expression of the Hebrew (Aramaic) he says: 'If the apostle could write good Hebrew (Aramaic), then a really competent translator could give the same in attractive Greek. Such a writing as we actually possess, the Salkinson-Ginsburg version of the New Testament into Hebrew, shows that every sentiment of the epistle of the New Testament may be expressed in glowing Biblical Hebrew. With a corresponding original, even though in later Hebrew or Aramaic, why should not a good translator produce a version in strong and even rhetorical Greek? To be successful, a translation should have such characteristics'.

We have given reasons for doubting whether the Hebrews epistle is an attempt to translate Aramaic literally. The epistle could be a free reproduction, using an Aramaic original as a basis. If this epistle to the Hebrews is such a reproduction, whose work was it? We have already given various opinions of Bible scholars, most of them being little more than clever guess-work. The fact is, no one knows for certain. Some, however, have more probability than others. We have already alluded to the remarkable likeness of Luke's Greek to that of the Hebrews epistle, and here we are on different ground, for we have his Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles to put alongside our epistle for comparison. Bishop Westcott writes:

> 'It has been already seen that the earliest scholars who speak of the epistle notice its likeness in style to the writings of Luke; and when every allowance has been made for coincidences, which consist in forms of expression which are found also in the LXX or in other writers of the New Testament, or in late Greek generally, the likeness is unquestionably remarkable. No one can work independently at the epistle without observing it' (*op. cit.* p. lxxvi).

We find that Franz Delitzsch and other scholars, including Calvin, take the same attitude. In his second volume of *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, Delitzsch devotes a chapter at the end to the authorship and decidedly favours Luke:

> 'That St. Paul was not the direct author of the epistle to the Hebrews, we hold to be incontestably certain. Taking into account the observations made in the course of the exposition from the beginning to the end, we consider it in the highest degree probable that Luke composed the epistle from statements made to him by the Apostle, being commissioned by the latter thereto'.

There are some 49 Greek words which only occur in Luke's writings and the epistle to the Hebrews. A word such as *hothen*; out of 15 occurrences in the New Testament, Luke and Hebrews use it 11 times. The same is true of *diamarturomai*. *Tungchano* occurs 12 times in the New Testament; Luke and Hebrews use it 9 times. In Luke 20:35, we have 'they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain (*tungchano*) that world (age), and the resurrection from (*ek*) the dead'. While Hebrews 11:35, reads: 'that they might obtain (*tungchano*) a better resurrection', an obvious parallel and only found in Luke's writings and the Hebrew epistle. Then we find *eis to panteles*, no wise, uttermost, in Luke 13:11 and Hebrew 7:25; *diapantos* continually, in Luke 24:53 and Acts 10:2; 24:16; Hebrews 9:6;13:15. The Gospel of Luke and the Acts must be carefully studied in the original and compared with Hebrews to note the stylistic likeness, which is too complex to deal with adequately here. It could be, as Professor F.F. Bruce states: '... because our author and Luke approximate more closely than other New Testament writers to the model of literary Hellenistic - our author even more so than Luke'. But we feel the likeness goes deeper than this, and while we cannot say dogmatically that Luke was the penman of Hebrews, we believe there is more evidence for his association with the epistle than any other who has been put forward.

While we are dealing with the difficult question of the unPauline Greek of Hebrews, we would mention an important work by a Roman Catholic writer, W. Leonard, D.D., *The Authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews* (1939) in which he seeks to show that this has been sometimes exaggerated, as has the influence of Philo on the writer of this epistle. Dr. Leonard's work is very scholarly and merits the attention of every serious Bible student. While one is not able to accept all his viewpoints, distinctive Roman Catholic doctrines are not pressed. We strongly recommend the careful study of this exposition.

If it is not the apostle Paul's hand that has written Hebrews, can we say that it is his material and mind that is behind it? It is the fashion at present in evangelical circles to say 'no'. Yet, as we have seen, from the earliest times, the Eastern church accepted it as Pauline, whatever doubts they may have had regarding the amanuensis or editor. It has been represented that this was nothing more than an attempt to give the epistle canonicity. But the question can only be settled by the internal evidence of the epistle itself. Those who deny the apostle Paul's connection with Hebrews bring forward a number of objections, the chief of which are the following:

(1) There is no trace of allegorical interpretation of the Old Testament in Paul's epistles. But the association of allegory with the Hebrews is wrong. This is confusing allegory with type. Types are only types, and one of the great aims of this letter is to show that the Old Testament types were only partial foreshadowings of the reality found and fulfilled in Christ alone. They could never perfect or bring the believer to maturity.

(2) The doctrine of resurrection is missing. The apostle Paul never introduces doctrine just for the sake of it. In 1 Corinthians, resurrection is introduced because some in the church doubted it, (1 Cor. 15:12). The epistle to the Galatians is undoubtedly Paul's, and there is no mention of the doctrine of resurrection in it!

(3) There is no Gentile stress in the Gospel. We have already shown that the Gospel which presents salvation to the sinner is not the theme of Hebrews. This letter is addressed to a group of Hebrew believers whose faith was being severely tested and they were in danger of giving up, drawing back and apostatizing.

(4) The characteristic Pauline doctrine of faith versus works is not developed. But this evidently was not the problem of these Hebrew Christians. However, the law is stressed as a shadow only, which can neither save nor perfect, (Heb. 8:4,5; 10:1). So Paul's teaching is implicit here. The same objection could be brought against the Thessalonian epistles.

(5) There is no mention of Christ as High Priest in Paul's epistles. While this is true, yet Romans 8:34, 'Christ ... is even at the right hand of God, Who also maketh intercession for us', and Galatians 2:20 and Ephesians 5:2, which stress Christ's giving Himself for us, surely show Him both as High Priest and Offering. The Lord is not represented as a layman offering Himself to another priest. His position as High Priest is implicit in the prayer of John 17, as is His appearance in Revelation 1. In Paul's later epistles He is brought forward in His great title as Head over all things to the church, which is His Body, (Eph. 1:22,23; 4:15; Col. 2:19), and this is inclusive of all other titles. It was absolutely necessary for the apostle to develop the theme of Christ as High Priest after the order of Melchisedec in Hebrews, as one of the main aims of this letter is to demonstrate to these Hebrew believers that the Lord Jesus was better than angels, or any position that any leader of Israel occupied in the Old Testament days. He was infinitely better than Aaron, or the priesthood from Levi, and this could only be stressed by comparing the Melchisedec priesthood of the Lord with the Levitical.

We see, therefore, that such objections cannot be sustained. Unless the theme of Hebrews is clearly understood, its links with Pauline doctrine cannot be appreciated. It is not a manual showing the sinner how his sins may be forgiven, or how he may escape condemnation and receive eternal life. In other words, it does not cover the same ground as Romans. It is for the saved, specially the Hebrew believer, undergoing the trials of the wilderness journey, and with its perfecting or maturing effect spiritually, leading to the recompense of reward, or if failing and turning back to Judaism, eternal loss and Divine disapproval. If we give this great epistle an unbiased examination, we shall certainly find the mind and doctrine of Paul therein, even if it is expressed by another hand.

Verbal links between Paul's Epistles and the Epistle to the Hebrews.

To all conversant with the subject of style, it must be clear that it is not the mere occurrence of a peculiar word, but the manner and connection or background in which it occurs, that stamps it with the impress of a particular author. We shall now consider not only words that are peculiar to Hebrews and Paul's epistles, but their context and background, and in doing so we are bound to note many links between the two. The figure of a *race*, with its striving and running with a reward in view, is peculiar to Paul and the Hebrews letter. *Agon* occurs six times in the New Testament, five times used by Paul and once in Hebrews '... let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the *race* (*agon*) that is set before us'. The same conception is found in Philippians 3, where the apostle is reaching forth to the things that are ahead and pressing forward to the goal for the *prize* of the high calling. Similarly in 1 Corinthians 9:24; 'Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain'. Linked with *agon* is *athleo* and its cognates *sunathleo* and *athlesis*, to strive in the games, all of which are peculiar to Paul and Hebrews. In connection with these are the same words and ideas such as: *hupomene* endurance; *trecho* to run; out of 20 occurrences Paul uses this latter word ten times, and the author of Hebrews exhorts his readers to '*run* with *patience* the race ... set before us' (12:1). *Apekdechomai* to wait for, is used only in Paul's epistles and Hebrews, according to the Received Text, where it occurs seven times. In the Pauline writings it is used exclusively for the hope of the believer connected

with the Second Advent, and it is significant that Hebrews uses it in just the same way '... unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation' (Heb. 9:28).

Aphilarguros, not covetous, occurs only in 1 Timothy 3:3 and Hebrews 13:5; in both cases there is the thought of *hospitality* in the context. 'A bishop then must be blameless ... given to *hospitality*' (1 Tim. 3:2). 'Be not forgetful to *entertain strangers* ...' (Heb. 13:2). *Douleia*, bondage, occurs five times in the New Testament, and is used by the apostle four times and once in Hebrews 2:15, referring to those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. There is a verbal link between Galatians 5:1, '... be not entangled (*enechest*) again with the yoke of bondage' and Hebrews 2:15, '... subject (*enochos*) to bondage'.

Endunamoo, to be strong, is used eight times in the New Testament, six by Paul, one by Luke (Acts 9: 22), and one in Hebrews. It is a characteristic Pauline word. Luke's one reference is to Paul himself, and the occurrences in the apostle's last letter, the second one to Timothy, with the insistence on suffering and endurance (2 Tim. 2:1; 4:17), with a view to the crown and reigning with Christ, are very parallel to Hebrews 11:34, where Hebrew believers are being tested in a similar way, and 'out of weakness were made strong'.

Euarestos, well pleasing, and its cognates *eurestos* and *euaresteo* are limited to Paul's writings and the letter to the Hebrews. Note the link of *sacrifice* between Hebrews 13:16 '... with such sacrifices God is well pleased', and Romans 12:1 '... present your bodies a living *sacrifice*, holy, *acceptable* (well pleasing) unto God', and Philippians, 4:18, '... I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you ... a *sacrifice* acceptable, *well-pleasing* to God'. Also the thought of the will of God links Hebrews 13:21, '... make you perfect in every good work to do His *will*, working in you that which is *well-pleasing* in His sight' with Romans 12:2, '... that ye may prove what is that good, and *acceptable*, and perfect, *will of God*'.

Entungchano, to intercede, out of five occurrences in the New Testament is used three times by Paul, once by Luke in Acts 25:24 (translated 'dealt with'), and once by the writer to the Hebrews. Two of the Pauline references are in Romans 8 in connection with the intercession of Christ and the Holy Spirit at the right hand of God (8:27,34), and once in 11:2, of Elijah's intercession against Israel. It is significant that Hebrews 7:25 likewise deals with the intercessory work of the Saviour, Who can save to the uttermost and ever lives to intercede for His people. *This ministry is peculiar to Hebrews and Paul's epistle to the Romans.*

Tharreo, to be bold or confident, has six New Testament references, all exclusive to Paul and Hebrews. It occurs five times in 2 Corinthians (5:6,8; 7:16; 10:1,2), and once in Hebrews (13:6). Comparing this reference with 2 Corinthians 5:6,8, we find the apostle in the Corinthian letter stating his confidence because of what God has wrought for us in the provision of a resurrection body, '... a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens'. This looks to the future; the reference in Hebrews looks to the present and the confidence in what God has wrought for us *now* in the tremendous promise 'I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee' (Heb. 13:5). In both cases the link is the boldness and assurance that comes from what God has accomplished for us.

Latreia, service, except for John 16:2, is confined to Paul's epistles and Hebrews. The apostle in Romans 9, lists the nation of Israel's divine privileges, and states: '... to whom pertaineth ... the giving of the law, and the *service* of God ...', the service being largely related to the ceremonial law. Comparing Hebrews, we find it used in a similar way. 'Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine *service'* (Heb. 9:1), and in verse 6, '... the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the *service* of God'.

Leitourgeo, *-ia*, *-os*, *-ikos*, to minister, ministry, are predominantly Pauline words and that of Hebrews. The verb *leitourgeo* is used by Luke once (Acts 13:21, and the other two occurrences are Romans 15:27 and Hebrews 10:11. *Leitourgia*, is used by Luke once (Luke 1:23). It occurs three times, in 2 Corinthians 9:12; Philippians 2:17,30, and twice in Hebrews, 8:6 and 9:21. *Leitourgos* is used three times by Paul, Romans 13:6; 15:16; Philippians 2:25, and twice in Hebrews 1:7; 8:2, and nowhere else. *Leitourgikos* is only found in Hebrews 1:14.

Mesites, mediator, occurs only in Galatians 3:19,20; 1 Timothy 2:5, and Hebrews 8:6; 9:15; 12:24. The Lord Jesus Christ as Mediator is peculiar to the witness of the apostle Paul, and the three references in Hebrews are a strong link with Paul's ministry.

Mimetes, follower, is found five times in Paul's writings (1 Cor. 4:16; 11:1; Eph. 5:1; 1 Thess. 1:6; 2:14), and once in Hebrews (6:12), and nowhere else. (In 1 Pet. 3:13 the critical texts read *zelotai* instead of *mimetes*). Note the link between 1 Thessalonians 2:14 and Hebrews 6:12:

'For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God ... for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews' (1 Thess. 2:14).

'That ye be not slothful, but *followers* of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises' (Heb. 6:12).

In the background of each is testing and suffering. In Hebrews this is expanded in chapter 11, where those linked with faith and patience and testing are given in detail.

Nekroo, to treat as dead, occurs only three times in the New Testament (Rom. 4:19; Col. 3:5; and Heb. 11:12). The similar usage in Romans 4:19 and Hebrews 11:12, is surely apparent. Both refer to Abraham '... as good as dead' as far as his physical capacity to have a son was concerned.

Olothreuo, to destroy, and its cognate *olothreutes* have only one occurrence each in the New Testament, the latter in 1 Corinthians 10:10, 'neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the *destroyer*', ... and the former in Hebrews 11:28 '... lest He that *destroyed* the firstborn should touch them'. The usage of the word is identical in both cases.

Homologia, profession or confession, has six New Testament references, three by Paul and three in Hebrews (2 Cor. 9:13; 1 Tim. 6:12, 13; Heb. 3:1; 4:14; 10:23). The essence of the three passages in Hebrews is condensed in 1 Timothy 6:12,13:

'Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses. I give thee charge in the sight of God, Who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, Who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession ...'.

Oneidismos, reproach, occurs five times in the New Testament (Rom. 15:3; 1 Tim. 3:7; Heb. 10:33; 11:26; 13:13). In Romans 15:3, we have: 'For even Christ pleased not Himself; but, as it is written, The *reproaches* of them that reproached Thee fell on Me', and in Hebrews 13:13, 'Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His *reproach*'.

Timoreo and *timoria*, to punish and punishment, have only three New Testament references. Luke in reporting Paul's speeches uses the former twice: 'I ... went to Damascus, to bring them which were there bound unto Jerusalem, for to be *punished*' (Acts 22:5) and in 26:11, '... I *punished* them oft in every synagogue ...'. The third occurs in Hebrews 10:29 '... of how much sorer *punishment* (*timoria*), suppose ye ...'.

Philoxenia, hospitality, has only two New Testament occurrences which are quite parallel. Romans 12:13, 'Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to *hospitality*', and Hebrews 13:2, 'Be not forgetful to *entertain strangers*, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares'.

Phrasso, to stop (the mouth), is another word having only three New Testament references, namely, Romans 3:19; 2 Corinthians 11:10, and Hebrews 11:33. Romans 3:19 deals with the mouths of men being stopped, and Hebrews 11:33, the mouths of lions.

Megas, great, is applied to Christ in Luke 1:32, 7:16; Heb. 4:14, 13:20. In Titus 2:13 R.V., 'Our *great* God and Saviour', and Hebrews, 13.20, '... that *great* Shepherd of the sheep'.

Katargeo occurs twenty-seven times in the New Testament. Luke uses it once in a non-doctrinal and primitive sense (Luke 13:7). Paul's epistles have twenty-five references and Hebrews one. It is peculiarly a Pauline word and the one reference in Hebrews 2:14 is used in the apostle's manner:

'Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might *destroy* him that had the power of death, that is, the devil'.

'The last enemy that shall be *destroyed* is death' (1 Cor. 15:26).

' ... Jesus Christ, Who hath *abolished* death ...' (2 Tim. 1:10).

Perissoteron and *perissoteros*, more abundantly, more exceedingly, with the exception of Mark 7:36 and 15:14, are limited to Paul's epistles and Hebrews; the former in 1 Corinthians 15:10; Hebrews 6:17; 7:15, and the latter ten times in the epistles of Paul and twice in Hebrews. These are peculiarly Pauline words, as is also the word *stauros*, cross. Apart from its occurrences in the Gospels, this word is confined to the apostle's writings, where it occurs ten times and once in the epistle to the Hebrews 'Looking unto Jesus ..., Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the *cross* ... (12:2). Peter, James, John and Jude do not use the word in their epistles, either as a noun or a verb, which may appear surprising.

When we come to the connecting particles we find more links with Hebrews and Paul's epistles. *Te* is of frequent occurrence in Luke's writings, some 143 times in the Acts and seven times in his Gospel. In the epistles its usage is practically confined to Paul and Hebrews. It occurs twice in James 3:7 and once in Jude 6. The apostle uses it 26 times and Hebrews 22 times.

Kathaper, as, even as, is only found in Paul's writings and Hebrews, 11 in the former, and twice in the latter.

Mepo, not yet, has only two New Testament references, namely Romans 9:11, and Hebrews 9:8. Likewise:

Toigaroun, therefore, wherefore, being found only in 1 Thessalonians 4:8 and Hebrews 12:1.

The above are some of the verbal links between the apostle Paul's writings and the epistle to the Hebrews. They are not haphazard occurrences, but, as we have demonstrated, have a similar background or thought, showing the same *mind*, if not the same *hand*. Archdeacon Paley, in his *Horae Paulinae* p. 196, writes:

> 'Whoever writes two letters, or two discourses, nearly upon the same subject, and at no great distance of time, but without any express recollection of what he had written before, will find himself repeating some sentences, in the very order of the words in which he had already used them; but he will more frequently find himself employing some principal terms, with the order inadvertently changed, or with the order disturbed by the intermixture of other words and phrases expressive of ideas rising up at the time; or in many instances repeating not single words, nor yet whole sentences, but parts and fragments of sentences'.

Not only do we find the repetition of words used in a similar way between Hebrews and Paul's epistles, but there are other links between the two which we will now consider.

The Pauline characteristic of digression

Amongst the peculiarities of the apostle Paul's style of writing and argument may be mentioned a species of digression. It is a turning aside from the subject, upon the occurrence of some particular word, which causes him temporarily to forsake the train of thought then in hand, and enter upon a parenthetic sentence in which that word is the prevailing term or idea. An example of this can be seen in Ephesians 4:8-11.

> 'Wherefore He saith, When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that He ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things.) And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers'.

In verse 8, the thought and the importance of the Ascension causes Paul to digress from the gifts of Christ, and the digression is shown in the words contained in brackets. In the eleventh verse he returns again to the gifts of the Ascended Christ, 'And He *gave* some apostles' etc. In chapter 3 we have yet another example. After the great climax of revelation at the end of chapter 2, where the Church changes from the figure of a Body to a holy temple, designed as a permanent dwelling place for God, the apostle is constrained to pray. He started to do this in 3:1 'For this cause I Paul' - he was going to follow with the words 'bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ', which he does in verse 14, but after giving his title, 'the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles', he deviates and devotes verses 2-13 to explain this title and its relationship to the new revelation he had received from Christ, connected with a secret (mystery), hid in God from the ages (verse 9; Col. 1:26) about which he now aims to 'enlighten all'.

We see the same characteristic in Ephesians 5:13-15: 'But all things that are reproved are made manifest by the light: (for whatsoever doth make manifest is light. Wherefore He saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the

dead, and Christ shall give thee light). See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise'. The apostle's immediate context is reproving the works of darkness that are done in secret, walking as children of light (verse 8), and walking circumspectly (verse 15), but he turns aside momentarily to comment on the *revealing* power of light. 2 Corinthians 2:14-17, is a further example, verses 15 and 16 being parenthetical.

We find further examples in the epistle to the Hebrews. In chapter 12:18-24 the writer first states negatively: 'For ye are *not* come unto the mount that might be touched' (i.e. Sinai), and then positively: 'But ye *are* come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem ...'. The awe-inspiring accompaniments of the giving of the law at Sinai, 'the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words' causes the author to digress, 'which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more. For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake'. Not only this, but at the beginning of the chapter we have an emphasis upon discipline (chastening) and the three words used are particularly Pauline, *paideuo* (12:6,7,10), see 1 Corinthians 11:32; 2 Corinthians 6:9; 1 Timothy 1:20; 2 Timothy 2:25, and Titus 2:12; elsewhere it is only used by Luke (Luke 23:16,22; Acts 7:22; 22:3), and once in Revelation 3:19. *Paideutes*, instructor, only found in Romans 2:20 and Hebrews 12:9, *paideia*, instruction, chastening, occurring only in Ephesians 6:4; 2 Timothy 3:16 and Hebrews 12:5,7,8,11.

There is another example of digression in Hebrews 3:3-6, 'For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house. (For every house is builded by some man; but He that built all things is God). And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant ...'. Moreover, in this passage we have three words which are peculiarly Pauline, namely *klesis*, calling, Romans 11:29; 1 Corinthians 1:26; 7:20; Ephesians 1:18; 4:1,4; Philippians 3:14; 2 Thessalonians 1:11; 2 Timothy 1:9. It occurs elsewhere only once (2 Pet. 1:10). *Homologia*, profession, (2 Cor. 9:13; 1 Tim. 6:12,13, and three times in Hebrews 3:1; 4:14; 10:23). *Kauchema*, rejoicing, (Rom. 4:2; 1 Cor. 5:6; 9:15,16; 2 Cor. 1:14; 5:12; 9:3; Gal. 6:4; Phil. 1:26; 2:16 and Heb. 3:6).

When we compare 1 Corinthians 15:26-28 and Hebrews 2:5-14, we have striking evidence of the same mind behind the words. Not only is there the special use of 'destroy' applied to death as we have seen; there is in both the peculiar argument derived from the passage: 'Thou didst put all things under His feet' taken from Psalm 8. This quotation is found nowhere else in the New Testament than in Paul's writings (1 Cor. 15:27; Eph. 1:22, and Heb. 2:8); in other words, they are confined to Paul and the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews. The argument in each case is exactly the same. Adam is referred to by name in 1 Corinthians 15, and clearly implied in Hebrews 2:8. 'It is manifest that He is excepted, which did put all things under Him', is paralleled by the statement: 'He left nothing that is not put under Him'.

Hupotasso, to subject, is another Pauline word. Out of 40 New Testament references Paul uses it 24 times and Hebrews five times *in exactly the same way*. Not only this, but in the same context in Hebrews we have the exclusive Pauline words: *parabasis*, transgression (Heb. 2:2; 9:15; Rom. 2:23; 4:15; 5:14; Gal. 3:19; 1 Tim. 2:14); *parakoe*, disobedience, (Heb. 2:2; Rom. 5:19; 2 Cor. 10:6); *endikos*, just, (Heb. 2:2; Rom. 3:8); *metecho*, to be a partaker (Heb. 2:14; 5:13; 7:13; 1 Cor. 9:10,12; 10:17,21, 30); *douleia*, bondage, (Heb. 2:15; Rom. 8:15,21; Gal. 4:24; 5:1). This is strong evidence indeed that we have the same *mind* behind these contexts in Hebrews and 1 Corinthians.

Quotations from the Old Testament.

When we come to consider quotations from the Old Testament, we find the Pauline habit of accumulating Old Testament passages, (see Rom. 3:10-18; 9:7-33), often joined together by the characteristic *kai palin*, 'and again', (Rom. 15:9-12; 1 Cor. 3:19,20). We find the same characteristic in Hebrews; compare Hebrews 1:5-14; 2:12,13; 4:4,5; 10:30. In Heb. 10:30, the writer quotes from Deuteronomy 32:35, but does not give a literal translation of the Hebrew nor a literal quotation from the LXX. In Romans 12:19, Paul quotes the same passage and uses *exactly the same wording*, which is remarkable. The famous quotation from Habakkuk 2:4, 'The just shall live by faith', gives the keynote of the Gospel of God's grace made known through Paul's ministry. It is absolutely basic to this Gospel, and the epistle to the Romans is written around it. It occurs in Galatians with a slightly different stress (3:11), and is not quoted by any other New Testament writer *except the author of Hebrews*. The emphasis here is on the word

'live', for the great theme of this epistle is the perfecting of the believer through trial and suffering (Heb. 6:1; 10:32-39) with a reward in view. The apostle does not quote the actual words of Habakkuk, but gives his own rendering. It is noteworthy that the words of Romans 1:17 and Hebrews 10:38 *are identical.*

One of the chief objections to the Pauline authorship of Hebrews is the mode of Scriptural citation in this epistle, which, it is alleged, is very different from that of the apostle. Schulz, De Wette, Bleek and others have maintained that the Pauline habit is to name the human author, whereas the writer to the Hebrews represents the various Scriptural passages much more definitely as utterances of God the Holy Spirit, without any reference to the human instrument by whom it was communicated, and leans to the Alexandrian rather than the Palestinian Biblical method, being akin to the mechanical theory of inspiration held by Philo.

But what are the facts? In the Acts of the Apostles we have specimens of the way the apostle Paul addresses the Jews, and how he varies his mode of introducing quotations from the Old Testament. There are six Old Testament quotations in his speech at Antioch in Pisidia (Acts 13), prefixed by 'He (God) gave testimony and said' (22), 'as it is also written in the second Psalm' (33), 'He (God) said on this wise' (34), 'He saith also in another Psalm' (35), 'Beware therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets' (40), 'the Lord commanded us saying' (47). It will be noticed that the human author is not once mentioned. There are only two more occasions in the Acts in which Paul formally quotes Scripture, namely when brought before the Sanhedrin, he reviles the high priest and then repents saying: ... 'for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people' (Acts 23:5), and in the last chapter where he quotes for the last time in the New Testament the solemn words of Isaiah 6 to the Jews at Rome. But he introduces the quotation, saying: 'Well spake the Holy Ghost by Isaiah the prophet'. In neither case is the human writer mentioned by himself.

From an examination of the epistles, it is clear that the apostle had no stereotyped method of quoting Old Testament Scripture. Three times he mentions Moses as the author of his quotation, David twice, Isaiah five times, but all these cases, with two exceptions (Acts 28:25 and 1 Cor. 9:9), occur in one epistle, that to the Romans, and there is no evidence that the apostle attributed any particular doctrinal significance to the human authors. The fact is that Paul often used the impersonal way of introducing Scripture as is done in the epistle to the Hebrews. In at least three cases Paul makes God the speaker of a Scripture (Acts 13:35; 2 Cor. 6:17; Eph. 4:8), not merely quoting a word of God registered in the Scriptures.

Of the supposed Philonic and Alexandrian influence on the writer of Hebrews, Dr. W. Leonard writes:

> '... A fair estimate of his (Philo's) method may be deduced from a personal examination of three books, namely, the first book of *Allegories*, the first book on *Dreams*, and his work on the *Intoxication of Noah*. Such an examination, together with tests made on about two dozen quotations occurring in eight or ten different works of Philo show that the affinity of Hebrews with the Alexandrian method of citing Scripture has been very much exaggerated ... As a matter of fact the Alexandrian writer very frequently indicates the human source of his quotations, sometimes by naming the collection of books, law, prophets or hymns, from which he quotes; sometimes by naming the individual authors, specially Moses ... Philo, it is true, had a certain preference for a particular mode of citation, but that mode of citation is found not only in the epistle to the Hebrews, but in St. Paul and also in the Talmudic and Midrashic literature'.
>
> (*The Authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews*, pp. 281, 282, 284).

We cannot do better than to quote Dr. Leonard's conclusion: 'In regard to the formulae of citation, we have seen once again, how the critics have built on the sand of their own hasty impressions. They have failed to take adequate note of the whole citational formulary of the Pauline epistles; they have neglected the testimony of the Acts, and especially the apostle's synagogal address at Antioch of Pisidia. They have not recognized that the customary Palestinian modes of citation admitted very considerable variety. They have suppressed some of the facts regarding Philo, namely that he not infrequently names the human authors of Scriptural oracles, cites them under passive formulae, and in the quotation of Scripture uses phrases which our author would in all probability have imitated, had he been to any great extent under Philonic influence. The critics also have misrepresented the epistle to the Hebrews itself, because they have failed to note that the purely Scriptural dicta attributed to God do not exceed a half dozen, whereas direct oracles are predominant. They have not taken the intention of the author sufficiently into account. They have merely imagined oppositions to Pauline practice and they have drawn conclusions about the author's notion of inspiration which are wholly unwarranted, because they rest on the double sophism: *non causa pro causa*

and *ab uno ad omnes.* They suppose that Philo's mantic view of inspiration must be the reason why he is so little concerned with the secondary human authors and then suppose that our author's insistence on the uniquely divine authority of Scripture must be due to the same cause.

'On the contrary, the facts which have been adduced above show that, whereas the mode of Scriptural citation in our epistle furnished no positive argument against its Pauline authorship, that mode of citation coincides with Pauline practice more than once, and is by no means Alexandrian rather than Palestinian'.

Parallel passages and doctrine in Hebrews and Paul's epistles.

We have seen that the figure of a race or contest (*agon*) which is characteristic of Paul is found elsewhere only in Hebrews. 'Ye did run well; who did hinder you?' (Gal. 5:7). 'Let us run with patience the race set before us'. (Heb. 12:1. See also 1 Cor. 9:24-27; Phil. 3:13-15). There are remarkable parallels between the doctrine of Galatians and Hebrews. We have seen the emphasis on the old and new covenants:

'And this I say, that the *covenant*, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was 430 years after, cannot disannul ...' (Gal. 3:17).

'For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman ... which things are an allegory: for these are the *two covenants*; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage ... but Jerusalem which is above is free ...' (Gal. 4:22-31).

'But now hath He obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also He is the mediator of *a better covenant* ... for if that *first covenant* had been faultless ...' (Heb. 8:6-13).

'For this cause He is the mediator of the *new testament* (covenant) ...' (Heb. 9:15-20; 12:24).

'This is the *covenant* that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord ...' (Heb. 10:16).

In both Galatians and Hebrews a mediator is stressed (Gal. 3:19,20; Heb. 8:6; 9:15; 12:24) *and such argument is not found elsewhere*. In both, the New Jerusalem figures prominently (Gal. 4:26; Heb. 11:10; 12:22), and apart from the vision of it that John describes in Revelation, this city is not mentioned anywhere else in the New Testament. In both, the characteristic Pauline doctrine of perfecting or going on to maturity is stressed, 'Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made *perfect* (*epiteleo*) by the flesh?' (Gal. 3:3). 'Let us go on unto perfection' (Heb. 6:1). *Teleioo* and its cognates *occur no less than 24 times in Hebrews*. In fact these give its very doctrine, and without this, any exposition goes astray and misses the point. Reaching maturity or the goal, through trial and discipline, or missing it, is the essence of this letter. For the Israel redeemed from Egypt, the goal was Canaan; for the Hebrew believer to whom the Hebrew epistle was addressed, it was the heavenly Jerusalem (Heb. 11:10,14-16; 12:22), which finally finds its location on the new earth (Rev. 21:10). *Telos* occurs five times (Heb. 3:6,14; 6:8,11; 7:3); *teleios* twice (Heb. 5:14; 9:11); *teleioo*, nine times (Heb. 2:10; 5:9; 7:19,28; 9:9 ; 10:1,14; 11:40; 12:23); *teleiosis* once (Heb. 7:11); *teleiotes* once (Heb. 6:1) and *teleiotes* once (Heb. 12:2); *sunteleo* once (Heb. 8:8); *sunteleia* once (Heb. 9:26); *epiteleo* twice (Heb. 8:5; 9:6) and *teleutao* once (Heb. 11:22). The whole discourse revolves around the things which can or cannot perfect or lead to maturity.

Developing from this is the antithesis between babyhood and adulthood, which is likewise peculiarly Pauline and is found elsewhere only in Hebrews.

'And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto *babes* in Christ. I have fed you with *milk*, and not with *meat* ...' (1 Cor. 3:1,2).

'For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of *milk*, and not of strong *meat* ... for he is a *babe*. But *strong meat* belongeth to them that are of full *age* (*teleios*) ...' (Heb. 5:12-14).

Compare also Ephesians 4:13,14, '... till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a *perfect* (full grown) man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more *children* (*babes*)'. Also 1 Corinthians 14:20, 'Brethren, be not *children* in understanding: ... but in understanding be *men* (margin, perfect or of a ripe age)'.

Added to this we must keep in mind that the *goal* of the race or contest is this *perfecting or maturity*, whether in Hebrews or Paul's writings. 'Let us go on to full growth (perfection)' Heb. 6:1. 'Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the Author and Perfecter (*teleiotes*) of our faith' (Heb. 12:1,2). 'Not as though I had already attained, either were already *mature* (*teleioo* perfect): but I follow after (pursue) ... I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be mature (*leleios*), be thus minded' (Phil. 3:12-15). 'None of these things move me ... so that I might *finish* (*teleiosai*) my course (race) with joy' (Acts 20:24). 'I have *finished* (*teleo*) the course (race) ... henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness' (2 Tim. 4:7,8).

Pauline parallels in Hebrews.

In 1 Corinthians 8:6, we have the expression: '... One God, the Father, of (*ex*) Whom are all things ... and one Lord Jesus Christ, by (*dia*) Whom are all things'. This is paralleled by Hebrews 2:10, 'For it became Him, for (*dia*) Whom are all things, and by (*dia*) Whom are all things', and this is found nowhere else in the New Testament. Similarly note also Romans 11:36.

'*The Living God*'. In the epistles this title only occurs in Paul's writings, where it is used seven times: (Rom. 9:26; 2 Cor. 3:3; 6:16; 1 Thess. 1:9; 1 Tim. 3:15; 4:10; 6:17). The writer of Hebrews employs it four times (3:12; 9:14; 10:31 and 12:22).

The Lord Jesus Christ, as the Image of God, is a Pauline conception (2 Cor. 4:4; Col. 1:15). It is found elsewhere only in Hebrews 1:3, 'Who being the brightness of His glory, and the *express Image* of His Person'.

The *Ascension of Christ* is vital to Paul's ministry, especially the doctrine concerning the Body of Christ, so closely identified with the Head that it is looked upon as being seated in the heavenly places where He is now enthroned (Eph. 1:19-23; 2:6); consequently we have the Ascension stressed *first* in Ephesians before the position of the Body is dealt with. In the same way Colossians 3:1-3 emphasizes this, and urges the believer to set his mind upon and seek those things which are above 'where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God'. The doctrine of the Ascension, likewise, is stressed in Hebrews, where it is referred to seven times: (1:3; 4:14; 6:19,20; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2). Used in this manner, it is peculiar to Paul's writings and the Hebrews epistle. Peter makes but one reference to the Ascension, 1 Peter 3:22, and it is not essential to the theme set forth in his epistle.

Related to the Ascension is the present intercession of the Lord Jesus:

'Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, Who is even at the right hand of God, Who also *maketh intercession* for us' (Rom. 8:34).

The only other mention of this in the New Testament is Hebrews 7:25:

'Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to *make intercession* for them'.

The destruction of Satan, death and its power by the Lord Jesus, is characteristic of Paul's ministry:

'... our Saviour Jesus Christ, Who hath *abolished* death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel' (2 Tim. 1:10).

'So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, *Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting*? *O grave, where is thy victory*?' (1 Cor. 15:54,55).

This is another peculiar link with Hebrews:

'Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might *destroy him that had the power of death*, that is, the devil ...' (Heb. 2:14).

So also is the thought that Christ, having died once, will never die again. His one sacrifice for sin is all-sufficient, and never to be repeated:

'Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead *dieth no more*; death hath no more dominion over Him. For in that He died, He died unto sin *once*: but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God' (Rom. 6:9,10).

'... But now *once* in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself ... So Christ was *once* offered to bear the sins of many ...' (Heb. 9:26-28).

'But this man, after He had offered *one sacrifice* for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God' (Heb. 10:12).

Though we must be careful with the 'alls' and 'everys' of Scripture, there is another doctrinal link between 2 Corinthians and Hebrews:

'... because we thus judge, that if one died for *all*, then were all dead: and that He died for *all*, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves ...' (2 Cor. 5:14,15).

'But we see Jesus ... for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that He by the grace of God should taste death for *every* man' (Heb. 2:9).

Both Hebrews and Paul's epistles treat the law of Moses in a special way. The law cannot save, give righteousness, inheritance or life, and has been done away as a means of salvation:

'... for if *righteousness* come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain' (Gal. 2:21).

'For if the *inheritance* be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise' (Gal. 3:18).

'... for if there had been a law given which could have given *life*, verily righteousness should have been by the law' (Gal. 3:21).

'Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace' (Gal. 5:4).

'For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof' (Heb. 7:18).

'For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second' (Heb. 8:7).

'... He *taketh away the first*, that He may establish the second' (Heb. 10:9).

Not only this, but special stress of the law as a *shadow* is peculiar to Hebrews and Paul's writings:

'Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days: which are a *shadow of things to come*' (Col. 2:16,17).

'For the law having a *shadow of good things to come*, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect' (Heb. 10:1).

The trinity of graces: faith, hope and love, are characteristic of the apostle Paul:

'Now abideth faith, hope, charity (love), these three; but the greatest of these is charity (love)' (1 Cor. 13:13).

They also occur in Romans 5:1-8 in pairs; Galatians 5:5,6; Ephesians 1:15-20; Colossians 1:4,5; 1 Thessalonians 5:8, *and twice in Hebrews and nowhere else* (Heb. 6:10-12; 10:22-24, where 'faith' in verse 23 should read 'hope', see the Revised Version).

Paul is the only New Testament writer who requests *prayer for himself*, and this usually comes at the end of his epistles:

'Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit ... *and for me* ... that I may open my mouth boldly ...' (Eph. 6:18,19).

'Withal *praying also for us*, that God would open unto us a door of utterance' (Col. 4:3).

'Brethren, *pray for us*' (1 Thess. 5:25).

'Finally, brethren, *pray for us*, that the Word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified ...' (2 Thess. 3:1).

To which may be added Romans 15:30, Phil. 1:19 and Philemon 22.

Hebrews likewise requests prayer in the same way:

'*Pray for us*: for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly' (Heb. 13:18).

And this feature is not found in Peter, James, Jude or John.

Another point needs to be made. The stress in Romans on Abraham and Sarah's physical incapacity to have a son and heir in their old age, and the quickening power of resurrection is seen also in Hebrews:

'... Abraham; who is the father of us all, (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before Him Whom he believed, even God, Who *quickeneth the dead* ... and being not weak in faith, he *considered not his own body now dead ... neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb*' (Rom. 4:16-19).

'Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age ... Therefore sprang there even of one, and *him as good as dead*, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude ...' (Heb. 11:11,12).

This power operated too in the willingness to sacrifice Isaac, the child of promise (Heb. 11:17-19). No other New Testament writer treats of this matter.

Paul's Sign Manual.

One of the ways the enemy of truth was seeking to hinder the progress of the Gospel was by circulating spurious epistles purporting to come from the apostle:

'Now we beseech you, brethren, ... that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, *neither by spirit*, nor by word, *nor by letter as from us*, as that the day of Christ (the Lord, revised text) is at hand' (2 Thess. 2:1,2.

In order to guard against this, Paul decided to end all his letters in one special way, in his own handwriting:

'The salutation of Paul *with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write*' (2 Thess. 3:17),

and then follows a reference to the *grace* of the Lord Jesus Christ, this, so fitting, coming from one who was predominantly the apostle of grace. This is the way that all the thirteen epistles associated with his name ends. Not one of the other epistles concludes in such a way, and it must surely be obvious that if anyone else used the same formula, its use as a guarantee of genuineness would have been null and void. *But the epistle to the Hebrews ends with it* and this is another definite link with the apostle Paul and his writings.

Not only this, but there are remarkable doctrinal parallels between Philippians and Hebrews, as Charles H. Welch has shown in his *Alphabetical Analysis*, Part Two, page 108. These cannot be ignored by anyone who is studying this subject with an unbiased mind. We now exhibit them: (*see next page*).

From all the foregoing facts, it surely is clear that behind the epistle to the Hebrews is the *mind of Paul*, if not his actual *pen*.

How expositors can deny this passes our comprehension. Some may ask: does it really matter who the human author was? From one standpoint we answer 'no', for, whoever he was, God the Holy Spirit overruled what he wrote, so that it could become part of inspired Scripture, and He is the real Author. From another point of view the answer is 'yes', for if Hebrews cannot be included in the Pauline collection of epistles, then the perfect arrangement and balance is upset.

There are 21 epistles in the New Testament, and with Hebrews included in Paul's writings there is a perfect balance of sevens:

(1) Galatians	(1) Ephesians	(1) 1 Peter
(2) 1 Thessalonians	(2) Colossians	(2) 2 Peter
(3) 2 Thessalonians	(3) Philippians	(3) James
(4) 1 Corinthians	(4) 1 Timothy	(4) 1 John
(5) 2 Corinthians	(5) Titus	(5) 2 John

(6) Hebrews	(6) Philemon	(6) 3 John
(7) Romans	(7) 2 Timothy	(7) Jude

HEBREWS		PHILIPPIANS	
Things accompanying salvation	6:9	Work out salvation	2:12
Heavenly city	11:10; 12:22	Citizenship in heaven	3:20
Reproach	11:26; 13:13	Fellowship of sufferings	3:10
Reward	10:35; 11:26	Prize	3:14
The race set before us	12:1	I press toward the mark	3:14
Leaving ... let us go on	6:1,2	Forgetting things behind	3:13
Obtain a better resurrection (condition attached)	11:35	Attain unto an out-resurrection (condition attached)	3:11
Power of His resurrection	13:20	Power of His resurrection	3:10
Work in ... His will	13:21	Work in ... His will	2:13
Christ the Image	1:3	Christ the Form	2:6
Angels worship Him	1:6	Every knee bow	2:10
Thou, Lord, in beginning	1:10	Jesus Christ is Lord	2:11
A little lower than angels	2:9	No reputation ... He humbled Himself	2:7,8
Cross endured for the joy and used as an example	12:1,2	Cross suffered ... wherefore ... exalted ... Let this mind be in you	2:5,9
Crucify to themselves afresh	6:6	Enemies of the cross of Christ	3:18

PERFECTION (6:1; 10:39)		or	PERDITION (3:12,19)	
Fight of afflictions (*athlesis*)	10:32		Strive together (*sunathleo*)	1:27; 4:3
Discernment	5:14		Discernment ... differ	1:9,10
Look diligently	12:15		Mark them that walk	3:17
Esau ... for one morsel of meat sold his birthright	12:16		Whose God is their belly	3:19
That generation - tempted God in the wilderness	3:7-10		Perverse generation ... without murmurings	2:14,15
Be content with such as ye have	13:5		Whatsoever state ... content	4:11
Communicate	13:16		Communicate	4:14,15
With such sacrifices well-pleased	13:16		Sacrifice ... sweet smell ... well pleasing	4:18
Fruit of righteousness	12:11		Fruit of righteousness	1:11
Compassion in bonds	10:34		Partaker in bonds	1:7
Whose faith follow (*mimsomai*)	13:7		Be followers together of me (*summimetes*)	3:17
Ye took joyfully the spoiling of your goods	10:34		Let your moderation be known unto all men	4:5
You have in heaven an enduring substance (*huparchonta*)	10:34		Our citizenship is in heaven (*huparcho*)	3:20
Salutation from Italy	13:24		Salutation from Caesar's household	4:22
Paul's sign manual	13:25		Paul's sign manual	4:23

While we do not wish to imagine or invent sevens in the Scriptures, the employment of this number by God from the very beginning of creation (seven days), its reiteration in the economy of Israel (the Sabbath; seven weeks (Pentecost); seven years, (Sabbath of the land); (7 x 7 years to the Jubilee; 70 x 7 years of Daniel 9 and the seven times of Leviticus), and in addition the accumulation of sevens in the book of the Revelation and elsewhere show us that the purpose of the ages in Christ is divinely designed in sevens, and we therefore are not surprised to find the same feature in the epistles of the New Testament and we should not lightly set this aside.

If Hebrews is not linked with Paul, then we have *thirteen* epistles from him (an ominous number, and linked with Satan in the Scriptures), the balance of epistles during and after the Acts is upset, and moreover we have no epistle during the Acts which gives the doctrine of the practical outworking and perfecting of faith with reward in view. Hebrews stands to the Pentecostal church much in the same way as Philippians and 2 Timothy do to the prison ministry of the apostle Paul, through which ministry the joint-Body, i.e. the Body of Christ, is unfolded.

If we were asked whose pen wrote the epistle to the Hebrews, we should hazard the opinion, for what it is worth, that Luke was the amanuensis or editor, or possibly Silas. Luke was the close companion of Paul right to the end (2 Tim. 4:11). We have not only his own writings (The Gospel and Acts) with which to compare, but also his reporting of Paul's speeches in the Acts period. We have before remarked on the likeness of Luke's Greek style to the Hebrews epistle, a feature which has been noticed by many scholars, and the Lucan tradition goes back, as we have seen, to the beginning of Christianity.

As regards Silas as the possible pen-man, we know for a fact that he was closely linked with Paul during the Acts. His name appears for the first time in Acts 15, where he is described as belonging to the 'chief men among the brethren' (Acts 15:22). He was commissioned together with Barnabas by the apostles and elders to write the Jerusalem Council's decisions and to take and explain the letter at Antioch.

He then became attached to Paul and accompanied him on his second missionary journey and both were imprisoned at Philippi. He was with Paul at Corinth where the Thessalonian epistles were probably written in the joint names of Paul and *Silvanus* and Timothy. *Silas* is probably the Jewish and *Silvanus* the Latin form of his name. There are two other references to him, in 2 Corinthians 1:19 and 1 Peter 5:12, where he seems to be associated with the writing of 1 Peter.

Thus there are four passages leading one to think that he had a part in the production of some document. This assumes that the Silas of the Acts and the Silvanus of 1 Peter are the same person. Although Silas was a common name and therefore one cannot be dogmatic on this point, this seems most probable, as Lightfoot suggests in his *Notes on the Epistles of St. Paul*. One would have expected some distinguishing remark if this were not so.

Some scholars look on Silvanus as only the *bearer* of 1 Peter, but as E.G. Selwyn points out, if he were the bearer only, *epempsa*, 'sent', not *egrapsa*, 'have written', would have been the more natural word. Selwyn looks on Silas as Peter's pen-man and maintains there are striking affinities between this epistle and that to the Hebrews. Among them are the following. *Geuesthai*, 'Taste', in 6:4,5 may, in view of its context, be derived, as in 1 Peter 2:3, from Psalm 34:8; and *eulogian* with *kleronomein* in Hebrews 12:17 and 1 Peter 3:9 may have a similar connection.

The command to 'pursue peace', in Hebrews 12:14 has also, as in 1 Peter 3:11, the same source. The classical word *komizesthai* occurs in Hebrews 10:36; 11:39 and 1 Peter 1:9; 5:4 in contexts which are strikingly similar to other words and phrases which reflect similarities, as 'the word of God is living' (Heb. 4:12; 1 Peter 1:23). The Lord Jesus is the Shepherd (Heb. 13:20; 1 Pet. 2:25); the 'last time' and the 'last days' and the 'little while' before the Lord's Second Coming are parallels. There is a close affinity in the doctrine of redemption and atonement, as expressed in Hebrews 9 and 1 Peter 2 and 3. Christ was *amomos*, 'without spot' (Heb. 9:14; 1 Pet. 1:19); He suffered for sins 'once', *hapax* (Heb. 9:28; 1 Pet. 3:18); He 'bore our sins' (Heb. 9:28; 1 Pet. 2:24); His blood was the 'blood of sprinkling' (Heb. 12:24; 1 Pet. 1:2).

The Pauline idea of the imitation of Christ is reflected in Hebrews 12:1,2. Both epistles were written with a background of persecution. Both deal with the 'reproach' that believers suffer (Heb. 10:29-33,37; 1 Pet. 4:14, 17-19) and in such circumstances, believers are 'strangers and pilgrims on the earth' (Heb. 11:13; 1 Pet. 1:1; 2:11).

E. G. Selwyn comments:

> 'I cannot get away from the impression of a relationship between Hebrews 13 and 1 Peter, which goes beyond what common sources or common doctrinal tradition, or even common circumstances, will explain. There seem to be the same problems of church life, the same attitude to them behind both, the same need of hospitality, or sympathy, of active well-doing, of inner cohesion, and subjection towards the Church's leaders; the same sense of reproach and of being without an earthly home; the same necessity to imitate Jesus in His suffering; the same

> hope of an inheritance awaiting believers at the last. And the great chapter of Hebrews reaches its climax in the words redolent of 1 Peter, and of 1 Peter when most near to 1 and 2 Thessalonians'.
>
> (*The First Epistle of Peter*, 1946, p. 241).

The possibility therefore exists, that Silas may have had a part in writing Hebrews, if he fulfils the other conditions. We know that the writer and readers were known to each other (6:9; 13:18,19,23,24). Now whether the readers were Hellenistic Jewish Christians at Jerusalem or Rome, they would be known to Silas who had connections with both places.

Hebrews 13:23 shows that Timothy was known to both the writer and readers. 1 Thessalonian 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1 and 2 Corinthians 1:19 make clear that Silas was known to Timothy, and it would appear that Timothy was with Paul at Rome and would therefore be known to the church there.

The writer of Hebrews was familiar with the hieratic ritual. Before Silas joined Paul in his missionary journeys, he was attached to the Jerusalem church and would be well acquainted with the ritual of the Temple.

The author of Hebrews was a classicist who constantly made use of the LXX. The writer of 1 Peter has a wealth of vocabulary and is deeply steeped in the Old Testament Scriptures, as he shows by direct quotation and frequent indirect allusions, and he knows them in the LXX form.

Thus, the background and personality of Silas, his circumstances, divine knowledge, style and vocabulary are not against the theory that he was the author of Hebrews.

However, no one can *dogmatically* say who the amanuensis was, and we feel a little modesty may not be amiss here. If early Christian scholars were not sure, how can we be, living more than 1900 years later? We believe Origen summed up the position well when he stated that he believed that 'the *thoughts* are the thoughts of the apostle, but the *language* and the composition that of one who recalled from memory and, as it were, made notes of what was said by his master ... it was not without reason that *men of old time* (Origen was born A.D. 185) have handed it down as Paul's ... But who wrote the epistle (i.e., as the amanuensis) God only knows certainly'. There must have been an ancient and genuine tradition concerning the Pauline authorship of Hebrews for the Eastern church to give such a united testimony in this way.

From the foregoing Scriptural facts we have brought forward, we unhesitatingly take the same standpoint as Origen of old, although it may not be the fashion in theological circles at the moment to ascribe this magnificent and important epistle to Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles.

STUART ALLEN

CHAPTER 1

THE SUPERIORITY OF THE SON

The scope of the Epistle decided by the structure.

We have satisfied ourselves as to the Pauline authorship of the epistle to the Hebrews, and believe there is every reason to think that when Paul was dealing with the Galatian problem of the place of the *law* in the economy of *grace*, he took the opportunity of using the epistle to the Galatians as a covering letter, dealing with the same problems not from the point of view of the believing Gentile, but from the point of view of the believing Hebrew.

Our next consideration must be to discover the scope of the epistle, 'what it is all about', and this is indicated best by the structure. Now while we must not invent a structure, for that would stultify our very object, we must admit that the features that constitute the structure of a book or epistle do not always appear on the surface. We look at chapter 1, and note its contents, and let our eye glance on to the opening verses of chapter 2. As we do so, something seems to 'click'; we are conscious of the pressure of a theme that may be the beginning of our quest.

Hebrews 1:1,2. God hath spoken.

Hebrews 2:2,3. If the word spoken ... first began to be spoken by the Lord.

The intervening subject matter stresses the superiority of the 'Son' to prophets, of the 'Lord' to angels. We read of others who 'spoke' in the chapters that follow, but we are arrested at the reference in Hebrews 12:25 because it is a most evident allusion to chapter 2:

> 'See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh. For if they **ESCAPED NOT** who refused Him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from Him that speaketh from heaven'.

Here the apostle is most evidently resuming the theme of chapter 2:

> 'How shall we **ESCAPE**, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord' (Heb. 2:3).

So far so good, but we remind ourselves that 'one swallow does not make a summer' and prosecute our investigation. In chapter 13 the apostle seems to sum up Christian ministry under the heading,

> 'Who have spoken unto you the word of God' (Heb. 13:7).

We can tentatively record our first findings thus:

A Heb. 1,2. The word spoken, the prophets, the Son.

* * * *

A Heb. 12,13. Him, and they, that speak the word.

If these are indeed the opening and closing members of the underlying structure, there will be confirmation in the context. This soon emerges:

'Thou remainest. Thou art the same' (Heb. 1 and 2).

'Things that remain. Jesus Christ the same' (Heb. 1 and 13).

'How escape if neglect. Not escape if refuse' (Heb. 2 and 12).

'Bring in again the first begotten'.

'Brought again from the dead' (Heb. 1 and 13).

The matter now passes from the possible to the certain. We have the opening and closing members of the structure confirmed to us. We seek further and are struck with the alternations that are brought forward in chapters 6 and 10:

'Let us **GO ON** *unto perfection*' (Heb. 6:1).

'We are not of them who **DRAW BACK** unto *perdition*' (Heb. 10:39).

These two headings commend themselves at once, and we soon discover that they are supported 'up to the hilt' by their contexts. 'Let us come boldly' is answered by 'let us draw near' (Heb. 4:16; 10:22). The examples of unbelief of chapter 3 are gloriously answered by the examples of faith in Hebrews 11. In chapter 5 we have 'babes' set over against 'full grown', but in chapter 12 we have 'sons' over against 'firstborn'. That dreadful passage which has caused so much anxiety to sensitive souls, 'no renewal unto repentance' finds its explanation in the corresponding section of the epistle in Esau who 'found no place for repentance', and which shows us that the fear in chapter 6 was not the loss of salvation but of birthright and the firstborn's position.

Let us now assemble our material.

Hebrews as a Whole

A	1:2.	THE WORD SPOKEN	Thou *remainest*. Thou art the *same.*	
			How escape? Bring the First-begotten.	
B	3-6.	ON TO PERFECTION	Let us come boldly.	
			Examples of unbelief.	
			Perfect v. Babes.	
			No renewal unto repentance.	
			Senses exercised.	
			Crucify afresh the Son of God.	
C	7-10:18.	PERFECTION WHERE FOUND	*But this Man.*	
			No perfection in priesthood, law, ordinances, sacrifices.	
			But this Man.	
B	10:19 to 12:24.	BACK TO PERDITION	Let us draw near.	
			Examples of faith.	
			Sons v. Firstborn.	
			No place for repentance.	
			Discipline exercised.	
			Tread under foot the Son of God.	
A	12:25 to 13.	HIM THAT SPEAKETH	Things that *remain.* The *same.*	
			Not escape. Brought from the dead.	

In chapter 5, adults are manifested by the presence, not only of 'senses' but 'senses exercised', which is balanced in chapter 12 with 'discipline exercised'. In chapter 6 some are said to crucify afresh the Son of God and in chapter 10 we read of those who have trodden under foot the Son of God. There is therefore no possible doubt but that here we have the material for the two flanking members of the central section. Chapters 7 to 10:18 therefore are left in the centre of the structure. This central section develops the flanking slogans 'on to perfection' and 'back to perdition' by devoting itself to the place where perfection can be found. It opens and closes with a reference to 'This Man', the Man Christ Jesus.

The earnest student will 'search and see' and make this structure his own. We are now mercifully granted an infallible guide in our researches in this epistle, though we ourselves may be very slow to avail ourselves of its help.

Throughout the series of studies now commencing we shall seek to honour this God-given structure by continually aligning our comments and discoveries with its general bearing. Let no one accuse us of bombast; we no more invented this structure than Christopher Columbus invented America. We simply discovered what is there already, and give God thanks.

An examination of the alternatives of Hebrews 6:1 and 10:39

The two foci 'Perfection' and 'Perdition' must now be given attention, for if we are wrong in our apprehension of their respective meanings, we shall necessarily miss the argument of the whole epistle. The English word 'perfect' is made up of *per* 'through' and *facio* 'to do', and from this same *facio* comes our word 'fact'. So, the English word suggests the salutary idea of 'making a doctrinal truth an experimental fact'. The Greek word 'perfection' is *teleiotes*, one of a number of words derived from telos 'the end'. The fundamental conception in all

the variants of this word, *teleios, teleioo, teleiotes, teleiosis,* to say nothing of compounds made with *apo, ana, en, epi, dia* and *sun,* is that of taking whatever is in hand or in view to a finish or conclusion. This feature can be demonstrated in several ways:

(1) 'Perfecting holiness' (2 Cor. 7:1).

Of all subjects, the one that cannot conceivably be 'improved' must be holiness, and without the context such an expression as 'to perfect holiness' seems to be more senseless and impossible than it would be 'to gild the lily or to paint the rose'. If however we observe the context of this exhortation, we shall see that *practical* sanctification is in view. Not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers is to 'perfect holiness'; to remember that, if we are looked upon as the temple of the living God, there can be no possible agreement with idols and with the promise attached to the separation from any unclean thing, the apostle says 'Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us CLEANSE OURSELVES from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, PERFECTING HOLINESS in the fear of God' (2 Cor. 7:1). Perfecting, making what is yours by gift, grace and reckoning 'a fact', perfect. In other words taking sanctification to its logical conclusion.

(2) Perfection is sometimes placed over against 'the beginning'. Hebrews 6:1 urges the believer to leave the *arche* 'the word of the BEGINNING of Christ, and to go on unto the goal, the end, the conclusion, 'perfection'. So, in Hebrews 12:2 the 'Author', the Greek *archegos*, is placed over against the 'Finisher' or 'Perfecter', *teleiotes*. This emphasizes the presence in all words dealing with perfection of the root *telos* 'the end'.

(3) 'The perfect' is sometimes used to indicate an adult, as over against the immature or the babe:

t one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness; for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age (*teleios*)'. (Heb. 5:12-14). The connection between this passage and the opening exhortation of Hebrews 6 is plain. In Ephesians 4:13,14 we have the perfect man placed over against children, and 1 Corinthians 2 and 3 with its use of 'perfect' and its 'babes', its 'milk' and its 'meat', is another evidence that the writer of Corinthians wrote the epistle to the Hebrews.

(4) The figure of a race or contest uses these words. Hebrews 12:2 just quoted associates the 'finisher' with 'running the race', and Paul, who in Philippians was running with the prize of the high calling in view and confessed that he was not at that time 'perfect', is permitted in his last epistle to realize that he had touched the tape, saying:

'I have fought a good fight (*agona* "race" Heb. 12:1),
I have finished (*teleo*) my course,
I have kept the faith; henceforth ... a crown'. (2 Tim. 4:7,8).

It is utterly impossible to believe that the Saviour could be 'improved' morally or spiritually, and where it says 'He learned obedience by the things which He suffered, and being made perfect' (Heb. 5:8,9) it indicates that He went through 'to the end', and as a consequence He became 'the author' of eternal salvation; in Hebrews 2:10 'The Captain of our salvation' was made 'perfect' through sufferings, and in Hebrews 12:1,2 He became 'the author' and 'the finisher', and for the joy set before Him endured the cross.

We shall meet with these words, these derivatives of *telos* 'the finish' or 'the end' in about thirty passages in Hebrews, and when we meet with them in the ordinary course of exposition, we can deal with their immediate bearing on the passage in hand, our comprehension being already enriched and illumined by the present survey.

Turning from Perfection, we face the dread alternative, Perdition. In view of the many statements of Scripture that the redeemed shall 'never perish', 'shall not come into condemnation' and the like assurances, the idea of any child of God drawing back unto perdition sounds untrue. If we mean by 'perdition' the orthodox theological view given by the Oxford Dictionary, for example 'the condition of final damnation; the fate of those in hell, eternal death', then our objections are valid, but if we are resting our arguments upon the usage of the English term, we are unwise. We must be guided by the usage of the original word. *Apoleia* and *apollumi* are both compounds of *luo* 'to loose' and in the majority of cases the meaning of the word *apollumi* is expressed by the words 'perish' or 'be destroyed'. In some places, this 'perishing' is modified as in the expression 'the *lost* sheep of the house of Israel', and a further suggestive aspect of the term is seen in the translation 'lose his ward' or 'lose his life for My sake' (Matt. 10:39,42). In Luke 15 *apollumi* is used of the 'lost' piece of money, the 'lost sheep' and the 'lost' son, who

himself said 'I perish with hunger'. Coming to Hebrews, we find the word in chapter 1:11 'they shall perish' used of creation. *Apoleia* 'perdition' occurs twenty times in the New Testament and is used of the broad way that leadeth to 'destruction', of 'damnable' heresies, of 'pernicious ways' and eight times of 'perdition'. John 17:12 uses this term of Judas, who is called the son of perdition, and 2 Thessalonians 2:3 uses the same title for 'the man of sin'.

We must not omit to consider the bearing of context when attempting to interpret any word in Scripture, and we find that the word 'perdition' in Hebrews is set in a context of persecution, long endurance, with the prospect of a 'great recompense of reward', but that owing to the wearing down of patience and the frailty of the strongest under trial, there was a need to urge these tempted souls to cast not away their confidence, to remember that a little while and He that shall come will come and will not tarry and that during this hour of testing 'the just shall live by faith'; the alternative being the drawing back unto perdition. In Philippians 3 we find the apostle using the same words 'perfect' and 'perdition' in close connection with the attaining to the *prize* of the high calling:

> 'Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but *I* follow after ... I press ... for the prize' (Phil. 3:12-14).

Then follows the warning concerning those whose example is evil, who by their attitude make themselves enemies of the cross,

> 'whose end is destruction (perdition)' (Phil. 3:17-19).

It is not conceivable that believers who had reached so high a standard as these Philippians should need to be exhorted not to follow the ungodly *pagans* among whom their lot was cast. The warning is uttered about the example of *Christians*, whose God is their belly, who glory in their shame, who mind earthly things, who by their self-indulgence antagonize all that the 'cross' stands for, in contrast with those whose conversation is in heaven. We observe that in Hebrews 10, the loss of a 'reward' is in view; in Philippians 3, the loss of the 'prize' is in view. Further light upon the intention of the apostle in Hebrews 10, may be gathered from the use of *apoleia* in Matthew 26:8, where it is used in a non-doctrinal sense:

> 'But when His disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this WASTE?'.

In 1 Corinthians we have those who are 'perfect' (1 Cor. 2:6) placed over against those who were 'babes', who were fed with 'milk' and not with 'meat', just as we have in Hebrews 5. In Hebrews 6, the apostle introduces the figure of husbandry, even as he does in 1 Corinthians 3:9 and says:

> 'That which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is NIGH UNTO cursing; *whose end is to be burned*'. (Heb. 6:8),

and these thus figured lacked those things that 'accompany salvation' not salvation itself. So in 1 Corinthians 3:

> 'If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; *yet so as by fire*' (1 Cor. 3:15).

Again observe, the alternative to suffering loss, is receiving a REWARD (1 Cor. 3:14). The alternatives in Hebrews are 'going on unto perfection' or 'drawing back unto perdition' and we must not so interpret 'perdition' as to leave in the mind that the alternatives are 'going on unto *salvation*' or 'drawing back to *eternal punishment*'. The former word 'perfection', with its associated meanings, influences the application of the latter word 'perdition' with its associated warnings.

We have seen the scope of this epistle set out in the structure and have some idea of the meaning of the alternatives set before the reader. We must now return to the opening chapter to learn what encouragements are offered and what warnings given to accomplish the twofold purpose of these exhortations.

Need we repeat that Hebrews does not *directly* minister to the church which is the Body of Christ? What we have learned is that there is a parallel in the ways of God with His redeemed people, whether they are members of the Bride or the Body, the earthly Kingdom or the Church.

'In Son'

'God, Who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son' (Heb. 1:1,2).

Many pages have been written in the attempt to express accurately the meaning of 'sundry times' and 'divers manners', but so far as we are concerned, all we need to remember is that the Old Testament Scriptures wherein God spake to the fathers were given over a long period of time through the ministry of many prophets, and that a variety of means was adopted, law, prophecy and type bulking large. Let it suffice, with Moffatt, that 'many were the forms and fashions' that God employed, or with Weymouth 'in many distinct messages and by various methods' or even with Theodoret (A.D. 386) 'in various dispensations, *pantodapas oikonomias*', God has spoken. What is important is that in Hebrews 1:2 we are compelled to face a wondrous change and focus our attention on one glorious Person:

'Hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son',

the transition being easily visualized as follows:

A In sundry times (i.e. in earlier dispensations).
  B Unto the fathers.
    C By the prophets.
A In these last days (i.e. in the opening of the New Testament).
  B Unto us (The Hebrews).
    C By His Son.

It is interesting to see that Theodoret uses the word 'dispensation' and the reader may be further interested to know that Clement of Alexandria (A.D. 192) uses the word at least fifty times in his writings. The way many believers speak today of 'Dispensationalism' one would think that it was some newly invented catch-word of modernism.

'In these last days'. When Paul refers to the last days in his epistles to Timothy, he is looking down the centuries to the closing days of the present dispensation; here in Hebrew 1:2 the closing days of the Jewish dispensation are intended. The true reading of Hebrews 1:2 suggests the translation 'at the end of these days' (see note in *The Companion Bible*). The Rabbis divided time into 'this age' or 'the coming age'. Peter uses the expression in Acts 2 in this sense, 'for to take his words in any other sense (as some do for the last days of the world) is to make an allegation utterly impertinent and monstrous' (Dr. J. Lightfoot). Some see in 'these last days' the commencement of the new dispensation which goes right on unto the Second Coming of Christ. Alford's comment on this is, 'It is not of a beginning, but of an *expiring* period, the writer is speaking'. The Gospel according to Matthew is most obviously a continuation of the Old Testament; the new dispensation of the grace of God awaited the resurrection of the Saviour and the commission of the apostle Paul. The parable puts it like this:

'But last of all (not first of all) He sent unto them His Son, saying, They will reverence My Son' (Matt. 21:37).

The sending of the Son represents therefore a climax. It is evident from the reading of the A.V. that 'the Son' is placed in antithesis with 'the prophets', but the reader may wonder why the word *his* is printed in italics in the A.V. Usually the italicized words in the A.V. are added by the translators, but when we remove the word 'His' it leaves an unreadable phrase, 'by Son'. We discover that the preposition translated '*by*' is *en* 'in', but still we may feel 'in Son' to be a strange way of speaking. God did not speak *through* the Son as He had spoken *through* the prophets or even as He had spoken *in* the prophets; at last *God became incarnate*, no longer using the mouth of an Isaiah, or a Jeremiah, but partaking of human flesh and blood, God spake 'IN SON'. Moses, the greatest of the prophets, we learn, was after all but a *servant*, Christ is the *Son* (Heb. 3:5,6).

God is invisible; Christ is the image of the invisible God. No one hath seen God at any time; in Old Testament days the Word revealed Him, and in the last of the days, the Word made flesh revealed Him. Theology often mystifies, and by such unscriptural expressions as 'the eternal generation of the Son' has made the Word of God of none effect. We sometimes read or hear, 'The Old Testament reveals the Father. The Gospels the Son, and the Epistles the Spirit'. This is untrue. Shut up to the Old Testament, what should we know of God as *Father*? The

allusions to God as a Father may be counted upon the fingers; this is true also of the Son. Sonship and Fatherhood commence together; a man is not a father until his child is born. This in no wise touches either the Deity or the pre-existence of Christ, for as the Word He was in the beginning, and was God.

When the Word *became flesh*, then His glory, as the *only begotten* of the Father, could be seen. Christ was not man when 'in the form of God', but when He took upon Him 'the form of a servant' He was 'made in the likeness of men' (Phil. 2:6,7). There is need for more care than has been used among us with regard to the titles of God; how many have used the argument to belittle Christ that the Father is greater than the Son. This has power only upon the mind if the word Father and God are considered synonymous. What we need to realize more is that the invisible God has manifested Himself to us in the Person of the Father as well as in the Person of the Son, and that while, for the purpose of His grace, one manifestation may be spoken of as greater than another, this in no wise touches the question of essential Deity.

When Scripture itself urges us to consider the fact that the Word when made flesh came down, laid aside His glory, humbled Himself, was made subject even to earthly parents, we are led to expect that the Father would be greater than He. The Son continually speaks of Himself as 'the sent One' (*see* John's Gospel), and that the words He spake, the works He wrought were not His but the Father's Who had sent Him; and this, and so much more, is brought to notice by the omission of the articles in Hebrews 1:2; if we could but appreciate the un-English expression, 'God spake in Son', understanding it as we should, 'God spake in flesh', or 'was manifest in flesh', as 'in English' or 'in Greek'. The Hebrew *beth*, translated mostly 'in', must be studied before the full meaning of 'in Son' can be realized. Take for example Exodus 6:3, 'I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, B'EL SHADDAI', literally in God Almighty; again, in Exodus 18:4, the words 'the God of my father ... was mine help', are literally 'was in my help'.

Psalm 39:6 gives an example where the translators have sought to retain the 'in' by changing the words that follow, 'in a vain shew'; this is literally 'in image'. Another confessed instance of this *beth essential* is found in A.V. of Proverbs 3:26, 'for the LORD shall be thy confidence', literally, 'in thy confidence'.

In the Person of the Son, God has not merely added another name to the long list of prophets, He has provided a Theophany, He has spoken 'in Son', and 'in flesh'.

When we consider the glorious titles that are given the Son in the very next verses, we shall have the Scripture's own comment upon the meaning of the passage before us. May the grace of God herein manifested to us be thankfully acknowledged, and may the fact that He has sent His Son be to us the greatest thing in the world. The apostle has evidently led up to this extraordinary statement that characterized the last of the days, and apparently intended to develop at once the superiority of 'Him that speaketh' over all the prophets and priests, but the wonder of this Person held his ravished attention. He could not go on until he had established Him as the altogether lovely One in the eyes of his readers. It is the very focus and centre of Hebrews that all else may perish and will perish; law, priest, sacrifice, yea creation itself, but the apostle exultantly teaches that so long as He 'remaineth', all is well. Consequently we gladly bide, while this lover of Christ brings some of the glories of the Son before the eyes of the Hebrews to whom he writes. We must devote ourselves later on to the Person of the Son, but before doing so, let us follow the apostle as he begins to enlarge upon the glories and the wonders of the Saviour.

The first of His glories is that God hath appointed Him HEIR OF ALL THINGS.

> 'The Son, as God, hath a natural dominion over all. To this He can be no more appointed, than He can be to God' (John Owen).

Did the passage stand alone, we might feel that the 'appointing' here as Heir of all things took place at the Incarnation, the Baptism or some other period of the Saviour's earthly life, but the statement that follows 'by Whom also He made the worlds' takes us back to the beginning, and so forbids such an interpretation. It should be noted that God as the 'Father' has not yet been mentioned by name. It is 'God' (*Elohim*) Who spoke to the fathers by the prophets, it is 'God' that ultimately spake 'in Son', as it is 'God' that appointed this One Who in fulness of time became flesh and Whose glory as of the Only Begotten was seen; but we are anticipating our study of the sonship of Christ. As 'The Word' (John 1:1) and as 'The Image' (Col. 1:15) He created heaven and earth, visible and invisible, or as John puts it 'all things were made by Him'. 'All things' were made by Him and 'all things' constitute His inheritance. Not only so, but we shall read soon that He upholds all things by the word of His power (1:3); that all

things are put under His feet (2:8); that all things are for Him and by Him (2:10). These give some idea of the extent of His inheritance. Colossians adds more 'He is before all things, and by Him all things consist' and 'In all things He has the preeminence' (Col. 1:16-18). His title 'The Firstborn of every creature' is but another way of saying that He is the Heir of all things. He is not only the Firstborn of every creature, He has now become the Firstborn from the dead that *in all things* He might have the pre-eminence, and so we see that 'all things' embraces not only the visible and invisible universe, its sun, moon and stars, its men, angels and principalities, but the new creation of the redeemed who will one day be presented to the Father, that God may be all in all.

In Romans 4:17 we read that when God said to Abraham 'I have made thee a father of many nations', Abraham and Sarah were 'dead' so far as parenthood was concerned; the child Isaac was not born for some years after Abraham had been *made* a father of many nations. Again, even when Isaac was born, the 'many nations' were in the distant future. Now the words 'l have made' of Romans 4:17 and the words 'He hath appointed' of Hebrews 1:2 are both translations of the Greek *tithemi*. The only other occurrences of *tithemi* in Hebrews are in 1:13 and 10:13 where we read of enemies being *made* a footstool. This event also is future, the Son of God sits at the right hand of God 'from henceforth *expecting* till His enemies be made His footstool'. The Saviour had a glory 'before the world was', a glory which He shares with none, not even the redeemed. He also has a glory which has been given to Him in His capacity as Kinsman Redeemer. This He shares with His own:

> 'And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one, even as We are one' (John 17:22).

The inherent glory of the Son of God is defined in 1 Timothy 6:16 as being unapproachable, and a glory that 'no man hath seen, nor can see'. As Creator, He most obviously *possessed* by right 'all things' but as Redeemer He was *appointed* to be Heir of all things. This is the glory that was given to Him, an inheritance to be shared by the many sons He brings to glory. So in Hebrews 1:4 He is said to have 'by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than the angels'. But who needs to be told that He Who created all things visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, dominions, principalities or powers, has a more excellent name than His creatures? It is as the Son, the only begotten, the Man Christ Jesus, the one Mediator, that Christ was appointed to be heir of all things, and in *that* inheritance the redeemed find their portion, even as the two typical 'heads', Noah and Abraham, are called in this epistle 'heir of righteousness' and 'heir of the world'. In addition to this, Hebrews 1:2 says 'By Whom also He made the worlds'. At first reading this added statement seems to conflict with what we have already seen. The order seems to be:

(1) Creation. (2) Appointment as Heir of all things.

But in this verse the making of the worlds *follows* this appointment. When John revealed the fact of creation and said 'the world was made by Him', he used the Greek word *kosmos*, 'world'. When writing Hebrews 1:2 the word 'worlds' is not the Greek *kosmos* but *aion*. Moses Strut says 'The classical use of *aion* is (1) age, period of time. (2) age of man, time of life. *Aionas* (plural) then is used here for world, worlds, universe. Theodoret explains it as meaning ages; and so others have since done'. This is strange reasoning. *Aion* means age, yet the plural means world or worlds, Theodoret and others have maintained that *aion* means 'age', therefore it means 'world'! Creation is ascribed to the Lord in Hebrews 1:10, but the purpose of Hebrews 1:2 is to show that the same Lord is Jehovah, the God of Redemption, Whose name is His memorial for the age and unto all generations, Who is the same, yesterday, and today, and unto the ages.

In like manner, we shall see that the 'ages' are in view, and not the material creation, when we come to examine Hebrews 11:3. There is a majestic sound in such phrases as 'eternal salvation' and 'everlasting covenant', but we may be sacrificing precious truth by adopting this high sounding and traditional translation. One objection to the translation 'He made the ages' might be that the word 'made' is more suggestive of the material creation, than of ages or dispensations. It may be useful therefore to note that in Hebrews we have the verb *poieo* 'to make' used many times with the sense 'appoint'. 'Who maketh His angels spirits', i.e. appointed them; they were already created, the sequel being 'His ministers a flame of fire'. Christ is said to have been 'faithful to Him that appointed Him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house'. The margin turns us back to a parallel usage in 1 Samuel 12:6, where the phrase 'advanced Moses and Aaron' employs the Hebrew word 'made' (*asah*) in like manner. The 'covenant *made* with the fathers' does not mean 'made' in the sense of creating. 'Through faith he *kept* the

Passover', means 'to celebrate', the word used in the Old Testament for keeping the Passover being *asah*. Hebrews 1:2 can therefore be translated:

'By Whom also He appointed the ages'.

As to the employment of the word *aion* in Hebrews, see what light is thrown upon the Mediatorial office of the Son if we translate Hebrews 1:8:

'But unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is unto the age of the age',

pointing on to the consummation, when God shall be all in all, the Mediatoral kingdom being at last rid of all enemies (1 Corinthians 15:28). In like manner 'Thou art a priest unto the age', for the office of a priest indicates the necessity for mediation, suggests that the redeemed are still at some distance, that reconciliation, in its full experimental sense is not yet complete. It is the glory of the age purpose of God, that *at last* sacrifice and priesthood will have so completed their appointed work that they will be ended and be no longer necessary.

'The powers of the age to come' is more to the point here (6:5). When the apostle wished to speak of the 'world' to come he uses an entirely different word *oikoumene* 'the habitable world' (Heb. 2:5). Again, instead of reading 'eternal salvation', 'eternal redemption' and the like, read:

'He became the author of age abiding salvation'
'Having obtained age abiding redemption'
'The promise of age abiding inheritance'
'The blood of the age abiding covenant'

(5:9; 9:12,15; 13:20),

or better still, accustom ourselves to the use of *aeonian*, a word in the English dictionary that has the merit of leaving the precise meaning of the term to be settled by the usage and context. Readers may remember Tennyson's use of the word in his poem 'In Memoriam'.

'The sounds of streams that swift or slow
Draw down -onian hills, and sow
The dust of continents to be'.

We rejoice to know that 'The child born' or 'The Son given' was seen in prophetic vision by Isaiah not only as 'The mighty God' but as 'The Father of the age', 'Father of futurity' (Rotherham), where there is no confusion of the Persons of the Father and the Son, the title here being one of pre-eminence in relation to the ages, as 'Firstborn' gives Him pre-eminence both in Creation and in the Church.

'The Brightness of His Glory'

One verse in the opening of this epistle to the Hebrews speaks of times past and of the prophets to whom *God* spake, and then the SON dominates the rest of the book:

'Hath in these last days spoken unto us IN SON, Whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by Whom also He made, or appointed, the *eons*'.

From now on 'The Son' is supreme, and is purposely contrasted not only with the prophets of 'times past', but with all other agents until time shall be no more.

The Son is contrasted with angels (Hebrews 1:5-13).

'For unto which of the angels said He *at any time*, Thou art My Son ... let all the angels of God *worship* Him ... He maketh His ministers a flame of fire. BUT unto the SON He saith, Thy throne, O GOD, is unto the *eon* of the *eon* ... BUT to which of the angels said He *at any time*, Sit on My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool?' (not AV JP).

The Son is contrasted with Moses (Hebrews 3:1-6).

'Consider ... Christ Jesus; Who was faithful to Him that appointed Him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house ... Moses verily was faithful ... *as a servant* ... But Christ *as a Son* over His OWN HOUSE'.

The Son is contrasted with Aaron (Hebrews 4:14; 5:4,5; 7:1,3,28).

'Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God ... And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not Himself to be made a High Priest; but He that said unto Him, Thou art My Son, to day have I begotten Thee'.

'Melchisedec ... made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually ... For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, Who is consecrated for evermore'.

This superiority of the Son is further seen by the way in which the apostle uses the comparative 'better'. As a result of His Mediatorial work, which made Him for a little lower than the angels, He is now 'so much better than the angels'. He is the 'Surety of a better covenant (testament)' which is established on 'better promises'. The Sacrifice offered by the Son of God is 'better' than all that were offered under the law, and His blood speaks 'better' things than that of Abel. These wondrous words as they are found in Hebrews 1, range themselves under different dispensational categories, which it may help us to observe.

A Heb. 1:2. The Son. Better than the prophets.
  B Heb. 1:2. Heir of all things - The Lord of time.
    Ages appointed -
    C Heb. 1:3. Brightness of glory - Before the world began.
      Image of Person -
  B Heb. 1:3. Upholding all things - The Lord of Creation.
    Purged our sins - and Redemption.
A Heb. 1:4,5. The Son. Better than the angels.

But we have no need to go further than verse 3 of chapter 1 to be faced with some of the most stupendous qualities ever ascribed to any one since time began. Continuing from the fact that God has spoken 'in Son' and so commencing an entirely new and wondrous phase of Divine dealing, we learn that not only was this Son appointed Heir of all things, and the One by Whom the ages were appointed, we go on to learn more of His personal attributes.

'Who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the Word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high' (verse 3).

The matter awaiting our immediate study is in the first half of verse 3, the glory that was His before the world began, in contrast with that glory which was given to Him as a consequence of His Mediatorial work making Him 'better than the angels'. There is an evident distinction to be noted between the words 'Who being' of verse 3 and 'being made' of verse 4. 'Being' is part of the verb *eimi* 'to be', 'being made' is part of the verb *ginomai* 'to become'. This is no mere academic distinction, it is vital to the true understanding of these momentous verses. This distinction is observed in John 1:1 and 3:

'In the beginning *was* (*eimi* to be) the Word'.
'All things *were made* (*ginomai* to become) by Him'.

Or in John 8:58:

'Before Abraham was (*ginomai*), I am (*eimi*)'.

The glory of Hebrews 1:3 is the glory which the Saviour had as The Word, The Image, the Form of God, before the creation of the world, before the beginning. The glory of Hebrews 1:4 is the glory which has been given to the Saviour as a consequence of His work of Redeeming Love. In the one glory none can share, it is 'unapproachable' (1 Tim. 6:16); in the other glory, the redeemed *will* share (John 17:22).

We must not translate the word 'brightness' as though it were a reflection:

> 'The Son of God is, in this His essential majesty, the expression and the sole expression of the Divine light - not, as in His incarnation, its reflection' (Alford).

Apaugasma, 'brightness', does not occur elsewhere in the New Testament *Augazo* the lesser form of the word occurs in 2 Corinthians 4:4 where it is translated 'shine'. Other variants found in the New Testament are *auge* 'break of day' (Acts 20:11); *diaugazo* 'dawn' (2 Pet. 1:19) and where the Received Text reads *diaphanes* 'transparent', some critical texts read *diauges* in Revelation 21:21. Both Paul, and the Hebrews to whom he wrote, were familiar with the writings of the Apocrypha, and so would be reminded by his words of the passage in the Wisdom of Solomon, where speaking of Wisdom it says:

> 'She is the breath of the power of God ... she is the brightness of the everlasting light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God and the image of His goodness'.

Here, the word 'brightness' is the Greek *apaugasma*, and standing alone in the Apocrypha, cannot but have some bearing upon the apostle's intention in Hebrews. Most readers have a passing acquaintance with the findings of science, even though none of us would venture to express opinions in a domain so far removed from our personal experiences. But most, if not all of our readers, will know that light is itself INVISIBLE. Should any doubt this, a few experiments would help. For example, I see the paper on which these words are being written, because the light which is coming through the window, and which falls upon the sheet of white paper before me, is reflected by the surface of the paper to my eye, but I do not see the light that is reflected as a visible beam. Again, when I see a beam of sunlight tracing its gleaming path along a passage, it would be excusable perhaps to say 'that shows that light is visible, you can see the beam'. Strictly speaking, you see thousands of gleaming motes of dust floating in the path of the light. If a red hot wire be introduced into the beam of light, a dark patch will surround the wire, simply because the dust reflectors are destroyed but the *light* itself goes on. Again, we are all familiar with the term 'infra red' and 'ultra violet' rays. These are rays of light that lie on either side of the spectrum (the rainbow colours); they are powerful in their action, but invisible to the eye. One can therefore assume that God Who created light and knows its nature would use it as a figure with full intention, and we can demonstrate the apostle's use of the word 'brightness' by appealing to the threefold disposition of light.

The Father.	Invisible.	Likened to the infra red rays.
The Son.	God Manifest.	Likened to the central rays of the spectrum, the only part of light by which we 'see'.
The Holy Spirit.	Invisible.	Likened to the ultra violet rays.

The only way in which we can 'see' the glory of God, is 'in the face of Jesus Christ', and the passage in 2 Corinthians 4, which makes this statement, contains the only occurrence of *augazo* in the New Testament, namely in 2 Corinthians 4:4.

As the epistle to the Hebrews naturally speaks of the Tabernacle, its furniture, its priesthood and its offerings, it is a thing to be expected that, if Christ is set forth as 'better' than all these types and shadows, then even in this initial setting forth of His office as 'the brightness of His glory' we shall have a link with the typical teaching of the Old Testament. The cherubim are called 'the cherubims of glory' in association with the mercy seat (Heb. 9:5), and Psalm 78:61 uses the word 'glory' as a name for the ark, and Phinehas' wife said 'the glory is departed from Israel: for the ark of God is taken' (1 Sam. 4:22). The Son of God is therefore comparable to the Shekinah glory of the tabernacle. John 1:14 tells us that He 'tabernacled' among us, and Colossians 2:9 that 'in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily'. Moses, it will be remembered, said 'I beseech Thee, show me Thy glory', but the Lord told him 'Thou canst not see My face ... and live ... I will take away Mine hand, and thou shalt see My back parts: but My face shall not be seen' (Exod. 33:18-23). This request apparently arose out of the promise 'My presence shall go with thee' (Exod. 33:14). Although it was made clear to Moses here that he could not see the face of God and live, yet in the same chapter we read 'And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend' (Exod. 33:11). These words seem to involve a contradiction. Verse 11 says that the Lord spake face to face with Moses, yet verse 20 says 'Thou canst not see My face and live'. The reader will readily call to mind other apparent contradictions. Jacob said:

> 'I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved' (Gen. 32:30),

yet John 1:18 categorically denies that anyone at any time has ever seen God. In Numbers 12:8 the Lord said concerning Moses:

> 'With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold'.

'Apparently' is the translation of the Hebrew *mareh* 'pattern' (Num. 8:4); 'appearance' (Num. 9:15); 'countenance' (Jud. 13:6) and Ezekiel 1:26 'the appearance of' a man. The pattern was shown to Moses in the mount, and the comment in Hebrews 8:5 shows that all these 'serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things'. The 'appearance' of Numbers 9:15 is the presence of the Lord rendered terrible by the 'appearance of fire'. When the parents of Samson realized that 'the man of God, whose countenance was like the countenance of an angel of God' was indeed 'The angel of the Lord' they said 'we shall surely die, because we have seen God'. We remember how that at Peniel, where Jacob saw God 'face to face', we are told 'a man' wrestled with him, which Hosea 12:4 interprets as an 'angel'. The word 'appearance' comes over and over again in the opening visions of Ezekiel's prophecy. Describing the 'likeness' of the four living creatures, Ezekiel said 'And this was their appearance; they had the likeness of a man' (Ezek. 1:5), and throughout the wondrous and perplexing imagery of these chapters that 'likeness of a man' persists, and at the close of chapter 1 the prophet said:

> 'And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne ... and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of A MAN above upon it ... this was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD' Ezek. 1:26-28).

Let it be noted, Ezekiel saw the 'likeness' of the firmament, the 'likeness' of the throne, the 'likeness' of the glory of the Lord. He even says:

'Upon the LIKENESS of the throne was the LIKENESS as the APPEARANCE of a man above upon it'.

Not merely 'likeness', but 'likeness of appearance' stressing the interposition of type, shadow and similitude. The description of this man is striking:

> 'And I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire ... And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of One that spake' (Ezek. 1:27,28).

Note again, Ezekiel is careful to say that what he saw was 'as' the colour of amber, it was 'as' the appearance of fire. He does not say he saw the 'loins' of this man but 'the appearance' of his loins. There can be no possible doubt that the vision granted to Ezekiel and the vision granted to John are of the same blessed Person.

> 'In the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of Man ... His eyes were as a flame of fire; and His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace ... and when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead' (Rev. 1:13-17).
>
> 'The similitude of the LORD shall he behold' (Numb. 12:8).

Just as Colossians 2:2,3 declares that the mystery of God is solved in the person of Christ, so the apparent contradictions cited above of the experience of Moses, of Jacob, of Manoah and of Ezekiel, are all resolved into harmony by the revelation of Hebrews 1:3, that He, Who in fulness of time was made flesh, was from the creation of the world, 'God Manifest' even as later He stooped to become 'God manifest in the flesh'. The brightness of His glory is followed by 'the express image of His person', an equally mighty theme that must occupy our worshipping attention.

The Express Image

We have seen that 'the brightness of His glory' is illustrated by the Shekinah glory of the Tabernacle, the Presence rendered visible in the pillar of fire, and anticipated in the prophecy of Ezekiel. We now must ponder the words that follow:

'The express image of His Person'.

In Colossians 1:15 Christ is said to be 'the Image of the invisible God', and it is evident that the word 'image' is placed over against the word 'invisible' with intention. The A.V. translators apparently intended us to understand that a different word was employed in the original of Hebrews 1:3, for there we read not 'image' but 'express image'. The R.V. margin reads 'impress'. However figurative the usage of such expressions as 'express', 'impress', 'oppress', 'depress' and the like may be, the fundamental idea of 'pressure' remains, and when we note that the word employed in Hebrews 1:3 is the Greek *charakter*, we realize the reason for the translation given.

The Greek word *charakter* of course supplies us with the English 'character'. The idea of 'one's character', i.e. one's personal qualities, is a secondary one, the primary meaning being a stamp, mark or sign engraved or stamped, the 'mark' of Revelation 13:16, according to Wycliffe's translation. The letters of the alphabet are called 'characters' as also the handwriting of a person.

'I found the letter ... You know the character to be your brother's?' (*King Lear*).

We no longer use the verb 'to character' but in Shakespeare's day this was so:

> 'O Rosalind! these trees shall be my book
> And in their barks my thoughts I'll *character*'
>
> (*As You Like It*).

The Greek verb *charatto* means 'to engrave' and is similar in sound to the Hebrew *cheret* 'graving tool' (Exod. 32:4), and *charath* 'to engrave' (Exod. 32:16). *Charagma* is used by Paul in Acts 17:29, when he said 'we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device'. Classical usage of *charakter* shows that Plutarch employed it for letters engraved or inscribed on waxed tablets; Sextus Empericus for the impressions or impressed images made by seals; Aristotle for stamping and coining money, literally 'putting the impress on it', giving a coin its 'image and superscription'.

Philo, a learned Jewish philosopher of Alexandria, born a few years before Christ, and who in A.D. 40 petitioned the Emperor Caligula, wrote very fully regarding the Logos, who is variously named The Image of God, the Firstborn Son, His Shadow. He says in one place that the *Logos* is designated 'the impressed seal of God'. We found that the 'brightness of His glory' looked back to the Tabernacle and its Shekinah, and we shall therefore not be surprised to find that the figure of something engraven takes us back also to Old Testament imagery. The apostle refers to the tables of the law as being 'written and engraven in stones', while Exodus 28:11 and 36 speaks of the engraving of the stones of the High Priest's ephod, and of his mitre, engraved with the words 'Holiness to the Lord'.

In Hebrews 1:3 Christ is set forth as 'The character of His Person'. The introduction of the word 'Person' here is somewhat of an anachronism; the theological term 'person' was not in use until after the first four centuries of the Christian era, after the Arian controversy. The Greek word thus translated is *hupostasis*, and in none of its occurrences elsewhere can the translation 'person' be tolerated. Could we possibly say 'Now faith is *the person* of things hoped for'? (Heb. 11:1). Could we imagine the apostle saying 'If we hold the beginning of our *person* steadfast unto the end' (Heb. 3:14)? Yet the same Greek word is so translated in 1:3.

The English word 'substance' is an exact equivalent of the Greek, but is derived from the Latin. Both *hupo* and *sub* mean under; *histanai* and the Latin *stare* have similar meanings, both being capable of the meaning 'to stand'. The first meaning of the English word 'substance' is *not* something physically solid as, for example, a brick, and the statement that faith is anything but a 'substance' is only true if this lower meaning of the word is intended.

A dictionary gives the undermentioned meanings to the word substance in the following order:

> 'Being; something that exists, something real, not imaginary; something solid, not empty; that which underlies all outward manifestation; substratum; that which constitutes anything what it is; nature: real or existing essence; the most important element in any existence; the characteristics of anything; anything that has a material form; body; matter; estate, property. We call a noun a substantive because it designates something that exists, or some object of thought, either material or immaterial'.

We have gone to this length of definition because if we merely say that *hupostasis* means substance, we use a word of varied meanings. What we mean by substance here is 'that which underlies all outward manifestations'.

The hidden unknown characteristics of God are the *hupostasis* (substance) of which the Son, God manifest in the flesh, is the Express Image. It is well to remember that the Greek of the New Testament is a language used by men who thought in Hebrew, or at least had been trained in the Jewish school. The LXX therefore becomes of great service to us, showing us the Hebrew equivalents for these Greek words. In Psalm 139:15 (A.V. numbering) we read:

> '*My substance* was not hid from Thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth'.

Verse 13 speaks of the period of birth, but this verse speaks of something far more mysterious. This secret thing, wrought in the lower parts of the earth, the LXX calls 'my *hupostasis*', and this *hupostasis* is to birth (13) what the Substance of Hebrews 1:3 is to the Express Image. While the verse which follows does not contain the same word in the LXX, it is nevertheless an expansion of the meaning of *hupostasis.*

> 'Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in Thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them'.

In the earlier verses of the Psalm there is found this same thought of something hidden and unseen except by God (See verses 2 and 4). Another passage where the word occurs in the LXX, is Psalm 39:5 'Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreath; and mine age (*hupostasis*) is as nothing'. Here the word 'age' is in Hebrew *cheled*, something that creeps imperceptibly, and so not manifest. 'Time slips our notice and unheeded flies'. The Syriac version used *cheled* to translate, 'to creep in' in 2 Timothy 3:6.

Psalm 69:2 gives us an example of the simpler concept of 'standing'. Our own word 'understanding' is a faculty of the mind, a meaning we can very well imagine a would-be expositor ridiculing, who simply used the dissecting knife and limited himself to the etymology 'stand' 'under'. In the New Testament we find *hupostasis* used in the sense of 'confidence', a most natural development of the idea of underlying reality, 2 Corinthians 9:4; 11:17; Hebrews 3:14.

Hebrews 11:1 reads, 'Now faith is the *substance* of things hoped for', something real, though not seen. The unseen faith of the worthies that occupy Hebrews 11 was manifested in their lives. Their *hupostasis* had its express image in their lives and conduct. One thing was common to them all. They lived, suffered, and died for something 'unseen', or 'seen afar off'; they endured as seeing Him Who is invisible. If faith is the substance of things hoped for, we can use either term with good sense. Instead of the words, 'By faith Abel ... Noah, Abraham', we can say, By the conviction produced by the substance (the deep hidden reality) of things hoped for, Abel, Noah, Abraham did this or that.

Christ is the *charakter* of God's *hupostasis.* No law or set of laws, no fasts, feasts, or sacrifices, no series of typical men could ever be the Express Image; Christ alone is that. It is this thought that permeates the epistle to the Hebrews. It is because of this that the title occurs *here*. It is essential to its true understanding that we remember that it would not have been employed if the theme of the epistle had not demanded it. Because Christ, and Christ alone, is the Express Image, He is above angels (Heb. 1), above Moses (Heb. 3), and Joshua (Heb. 4), above the high priesthood of the order of Aaron (5-8), above all typical sacrifices and offerings (9-10), and above all examples and patterns (12:1,2). None but Christ in every phase of His *charakter* can express the glorious *hupostasis* of the invisible God.

No prophet, however closely he walked with God, could ever be 'The Express Image of the Divine Substance'. This is the prerogative of Him Who is the Image of the invisible God, originally the Form of God and called in John's gospel the *Logos*. As such He must set aside all types and shadows. They were not 'the very image' (Heb. 10:1), even as John 1:17 tells us that the law, with its types was given by Moses, but REAL GRACE, the true antitypical reality, came by Jesus Christ.

Writing to the Corinthians, Paul had spoken of the passing glory that shone in the face of Moses, as contrasted with the abiding glory seen in the face of Jesus Christ, and in the epistle to the Hebrews in which the writer seeks to wean these believers from the 'Word of the BEGINNING of Christ' and to lead them on to 'perfection', he brings them, in the opening verses of his exhortation, into the presence of Him in Whom dwells 'all the fulness of the Godhead bodily'.

The final attribute given to the Son, before His mediatorial work is introduced, is that He upholds all things by the word of His power, and this wondrous theme we now consider.

The Word of His Power

God has spoken to us 'in Son'. We reiterate this unique expression, that the marvellous truth contained therein may enable us to realize the glory of the One we call Saviour and Lord. He is the appointed Heir of all things; by Him the ages were made. He is the Effulgence of the glory of God; He, the Express Image of His substance.

The glories of the Son are not yet exhausted, for the passage proceeds, 'and upholding all things by the word of His power'. While the Greek word *phero* occurs over sixty times in the New Testament, it is only translated 'uphold' once. It is rendered 'bring' over thirty times, but the primary meaning of the word ('to bear') seems to be the one intended in the passage before us. Outside the epistle to the Hebrews the word occurs but twice in Paul's epistles:

'*Endured* with much long-suffering' (Rom. 9:22).
'The cloak that I left at Troas ... *bring* with thee' (2 Tim. 4:13).

The word is used five times in Hebrews:

'Upholding all things' (Heb. 1:3).
'Let us *go on* unto perfection' (6:1).
'There must ... be (*brought in*, marg.) the death of the testator
(or covenant victim)' (9:16).
'They could not *endure* that which was commanded' (12:20).
'*Bearing* His reproach' (13:13).

It will be seen that the word is one which has many usages. The primary idea of bearing as a burden, supporting and sustaining, seems to be the meaning in Hebrews 1. Moses, when speaking of the responsibility he felt, in Numbers 11:11,12 says, 'Thou layest the burden of all this people upon me', and that God had said, 'carry them in thy bosom'. In Hebrews we see 'all things' (not merely the burden of one people) upheld by the word of Christ.

When considering the words, 'the express image of His substance' we noted a parallel in Colossians 1:15-17. We must turn to that passage again:

> 'Who is the Image of the invisible God, the Firstborn of every creature: for by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist'.

We note that there are several parallels here with Hebrews 1. The Image of the invisible God, and the Express Image of His substance; the creation of all things, and the making of the ages; the statement that by Him all things consist, and that by His word all things are upheld; in both passages He is spoken of as the *prototokos*, the Firstborn. In Colossians the titles are introductory to revealing Christ as the Head of the Body, the church, and the Firstborn from the dead. In Hebrews the titles are introductory to His office as Mediator of the New Covenant, and the Firstborn in the habitable world whereof the apostle speaks in this epistle. The creation in its universal sense is intended in Colossians 1; the ages and their burden occupy the thought in Hebrews 1. The former is held together by the hand that created them, the latter is upheld and carried by the word of His power. Something must be accomplished during the course of the ages, and the word of His power is pledged to bring it to pass. Concerning the Son it is written in Hebrews that He is the upholder of *all things*, appointed heir of *all things*, that *all things* are to be placed in subjection under His feet. It is a comforting as well as a majestic thought to realize that the burden of 'all things' pertaining to the purpose of God is resting upon the Son of God. With matchless wisdom, with infinite grace, with mighty power, and with Divine foreknowledge, the whole of God's marvellous plan is brought to its goal by that One Who died, rose again, ascended and is now seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

What is the means whereby the Son beareth or upholdeth all things? His hands made the heavens; His feet shall have all things placed beneath them; His body bore our sins. It is His Word, however, that upholds all things.

Rhema (word) differs from *logos* (word) in that it indicates a spoken word or command, e.g., 'by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God'. We find *rhema* in Hebrews as follows:

'The word of His power' (1:3).

'Tasted the good word of God' (6:5).

'The worlds (ages) were framed by the word of God' (11:3).

'The voice of words' (12:19).

The Word that framed the ages is the Word that upholds all things, the Word that called them into being will surely prevail over all opposition and bring all to perfection. It is 'the word of His *power*'. In the Greek this is usually *exousia* or *dunamis*. He was crucified in weakness, but He liveth by the power of God (2 Cor. 13:4). He was marked off the Son of God with power, by the resurrection (Rom. 1:4). As the risen One He said, 'all power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth' (Matt. 28:18). This word 'power' is rendered by 'miracle' in Hebrews 2:4, and is linked with *rhema* in 6:5, 'the good Word of God, and the powers of the coming age'. The HighPriesthood of Christ differs from that of Aaron in that it is 'according to the power of an endless life' (7:16); and in 11:11,34 it again occurs. It is the power of the risen Christ that makes His Word effective; He will destroy him that has the power of death, that is the devil. As the risen One He holds the keys of Hades and of death. He is the Son of God with almighty power.

Let us turn for a moment to the records of His life on earth, for there we shall find, even in His humiliation, that His word was with power. When He said to the two fishers, 'Follow Me', there was no hesitation, 'they straightway left their nets, and followed him' (Matt. 4:19,20); when the Lord had finished the 'Sermon on the Mount' we are told, 'the people were astonished at His doctrine, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the Scribes' (7:28,29). A leper came and worshipped Him, saying, 'Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth His hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed' (8:2,3). This miracle is followed by one that even more clearly testifies to the power of His spoken word. A centurion who sought the Lord on behalf of his sick servant said, '*Speak the word only*, and my servant shall be healed ... and his servant was healed in the self-same hour' (8:5-13). Shortly after this the Lord and His disciples are found in a ship, and upon a great tempest arising, the disciples call upon the Lord to save them; He rebuked the waves and a great calm followed, 'but the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?' (8:24-27).

The miracle of the healing of the man sick of the palsy is a definite demonstration of the power of the Lord's Word. He had said, 'son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee', and, answering the thought of those who heard these words, said, 'for whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk ? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith He to the sick of the palsy), Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house' (9:1-8). So the record continues, His word then was most certainly with power.

If this is the character of His Word while in the form of a Servant, what shall be the character of His word as the risen Son of God with power? So Hebrews 12:25,26 admonishes:

> 'See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused Him that spake *on earth*, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from Him that speaketh *from heaven*: Whose voice then shook the earth: but now He hath promised, saying, yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven'.

Although primarily this passage goes back to the giving of the law at Sinai, the Old Testament furnishes illustration of the Lord's Word of power, 'and God said, Light be, and light was' (Gen. 1:3); 'By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth'; 'For He spake, and it was done, He commanded, and it stood fast' (Psa. 33: 6,9). Shall we not say that Psalm 29, the Psalm of the 'Voice', looks forward to that happy day when the Son of God shall have brought or carried all things on to the reign of peace?

'The LORD will bless His people with peace' (Psa. 29:11).

The reader will remember the insistence that the structure of the epistle places upon the word 'spoken'. The Hebrews naturally clung to the Law, and the record of the majestic accompaniment on Sinai would intensify their attachment to that law introduced by the words:

'And God spake all these words' (Exod. 20:1).

Here in Christ they would or should perceive One whose Voice could not only shake the earth, but the heavens also, and be led to trust in Him whose Word is so powerful that it upholds all things. Creation is wonderful, but surely it is equally a wonder how the creation with its multifarious activities, combinations and possibilities, 'consists'. Colossians 1:17 and Hebrews 1:3 give the only answer possible. He Whose hands laid the foundation of the earth, and Whose fingers made the heavens (Psa. 102:25-27; Psa. 8:3) is the only possible upholder. The discovery of atomic fission, the consciousness of the terrific force that resides in the smallest piece of matter, only intensifies our appreciation of the Power that can and does hold these destructive forces in leash.

The Purification of sins

The glories of the Son are not introduced into the opening verses of this epistle without intention; they are now to be focused upon the great work for which He left the glory, became a Man, and died upon the cross. The R.V. omits the words 'our' and 'by Himself' reading:

'When He had made purification of sins' (Heb. 1:3 R.V.).

We should, however, be aware that not only are these words found in several ancient manuscripts, but are confirmed by some ancient versions. Tischendorf restored them in his edition of 1858.

'In this verse the Apostle affirms the union of the human nature with the Divine, in the one Person of Christ, and then proceeds in a natural order to speak of His exaltation and session in glory in that nature' (Bishop Wordsworth).

'The Son of God being God Most High, *humbled Himself* and became Man; and as *Man* He *received* that glory which He *ever possessed as God*' (Theodoret).

'This purification was "by Himself" *di'heautou* (Heb. 1:3), "through death" *dia tou thanatou* (Heb. 2:14) "through His blood" *dia tou idiou haimatos* (Heb. 9:12) and "through the sacrifice of Himself" *dia tes thusias autou*' (Heb. 9:26).

'This last expression I regard as the *full* form, expressing what is elliptically expressed in our text by *di'heautou* "by Himself" (Moses Strut).

The word *katharizo* is used for the cleansing of a leper (Matt. 8:3), and the ceremonial cleansing of the outside of the cup (23:25). It is used in the epistle to the Hebrews, as indeed are the other forms of the word, and it will enlighten us as to the meaning if we consider all the other references in this epistle:

'How much more shall the blood of Christ, Who through the *aionian* Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge (*katharizo*) your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?' (Heb. 9:14).

'For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying (*katharotes*) of the flesh' (Heb. 9:13).

'And almost all things are by the law purged (*katharizo*) with blood' (Heb. 9:22).

'It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified (*katharizo*) with these' (Heb. 9:23).

'Our bodies washed with pure (*katharos*) water' (Heb. 10:22).

As we examine these passages we shall observe that they do not speak primarily of the forgiveness of sins, or the justification of the sinner; they do not speak of redemption, but of one only of its effects, viz., purification. The type which will indicate fairly clearly the object of the work of Christ in Hebrews 1:3 is that of the 'ashes of the heifer'.

The nineteenth chapter of Numbers gives a detailed statement of this institution. Let us briefly analyse the record:

(1) The red heifer had to be without spot or blemish, and one upon which had never come a yoke.

(2) It was slain 'without the camp' (see Heb. 13:12).

(3) The whole heifer, together with cedar wood, hyssop and scarlet, was burned to ashes; these ashes were used for the purpose of purification.

(4) Uncleanness was contracted by touching a dead body, or by being in a tent wherein a man died, or by touching a bone, or a grave.

(5) Purification was effected by mixing the ashes with living water and by sprinkling with a bunch of hyssop on the third and seventh days.

(6) An unclean person who refused to be purified was cut off from the congregation; he had defiled the sanctuary.

It will be noticed that the whole question is one of defilement and its resulting exclusion from the service of the Lord. Some of the causes of uncleanness were quite outside the volition of the person involved, the touching of one slain in the field, or the death occurring in one's own home were shadows of the defiling contact of the world. Had the water of purifying not been at hand, many would perforce have been absent from the Lord's house. The great Antitype of the ashes of the heifer is 'the blood of Christ'; this 'purges the conscience from 'DEAD works'. The reference to the defilement of Numbers 19 is obvious; the dead man, the bone, and the grave are here exchanged for 'dead works'; the privilege of access to the Tabernacle being exchanged for 'service to the living God'. The running water was a type of the '*aionian* Spirit'.

The next passage refers to the fact that almost all things by the law are purified with blood, and that the Tabernacle, the book and the people were thus purified.

> 'For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood' (Heb. 9:19-22).

Here we have the other type of purifying, not the ashes of an heifer this time, but the blood of calves and goats. The effect, however, is the same; the result is purifying, and also a solemn dedication; the covenant, the Tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry, all had to be CLEAN. The parallelism of Hebrews 10:22 will perhaps now be more obvious, as also the way in which the type merges into the antitype, 'hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience' is the New Covenant equivalent of 'bodies washed with *pure* water', as also the words, 'let us draw near', which is impossible without purifying. It will be evident that we must include 'the blood of sprinkling' (Heb. 12:24), and indeed all the references to blood in Hebrews.

Speaking without the book, and from a superficial acquaintance with its theme, one would feel certain that in the epistle to the Hebrews a full statement concerning redemption by the blood of Christ would be found. Redemption is not conspicuous in the first reference (Heb. 1:3) to the work of Christ, the whole imagery and teaching has to do with a people *already saved*, who *have* access to God, who *are pressing on* to Canaan, and who *need* the continual ministrations of the priest and offering for their sanctification. But let us see for ourselves; here are the references to *blood* in this epistle:

> 'The children are partakers of flesh and blood' (2:14).
>
> 'Into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people' (9:7).
>
> 'Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained *aionian* redemption for us'. (9:12).
>
> 'For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh' (9:13).
>
> 'How much more shall the blood of Christ, Who through the *aionian* Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?' (9:14).
>
> 'Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood' (9:18).
>
> 'He took the blood ... and sprinkled both the book, and all the people' (9:19).

'Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you' (9:20).

'Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry' (9:21).

'And almost all things are by the law purged with blood' (9:22).

'And without shedding of blood is no remission' (9:22).

'Nor yet that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place ... with blood of others' (9:25).

'For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins' (10:4).

'Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus' (10:19).

'Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing' (10:29).

'Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest He that destroyed the firstborn should touch them' (11:28).

'Ye have not yet resisted unto blood' (12:4).

'To Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel' (12:24).

'The bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp.' (13:11).

'Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate' (13:12).

'Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the *aionian* covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will' (13:20,21).

Those that refer to redemption are 9:12,22, 10:4, and 11:28; of these 9:12 speaks of redemption as having been obtained already, and is not the result of the offering there, as verses 13, 14 prove; 9:22, speaking of remission, may at first seem to be a direct statement, yet it is in the midst of a context dealing with the Covenant and Tabernacle, and rather indicates that the remission which is a part of the new covenant (Heb. 10:16-18), cannot be enjoyed without this blood of sprinkling that links the people and the book together; 11:28 refers to the passover, the true type of redemption, which offering is outside the scope of the epistle, for Hebrews has no place for redemption from Egypt, its setting being the wilderness and its centre the Tabernacle. *Salvation in the evangelical and gospel sense is not the theme of Hebrews; it deals with a saved people, and their sanctification.* Redemption, in the evangelical sense, is presupposed.

The teaching of the epistle as to sanctification is directly bearing on the 'purifying for sins', which Hebrews 1:3 brings so prominently forward. It figures again in 2:11 and 10:10,14, 'we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all ... for by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified'. The context speaks of the New Covenant, of access into the holiest, and of despising the blood of the Covenant whereunto one is sanctified; it is not *the salvation* of the sinner, but the *perfecting* of those who are sanctified that is here in view; so we come back to Hebrews 1:3. Of all the phases of the sacrificial work of Christ this one is selected; selected by reason of the fact that it is vitally connected with the purpose of the epistle. The greatness of the One Who thus provided the purifying, the Son of God, makes wilful defilement a terrible thing. It does despite to the spirit of grace.

Hebrews 10:12 tells us that after the Lord had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, He sat down; this is the testimony also of Hebrews 1:3, 'When He had made a purifying for sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high'. This has reference to His high priesthood, 'we have such an High Priest, Who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens' (8:1), and to Himself as the Pattern, 'looking unto Jesus the author and perfecter of faith, Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God' (12:2). Both the High Priest and the Pattern are for *believers*; so also this one phase of the work of Calvary, 'the purifying of or for sins'.

The Right Hand of the Majesty on High

The writer now passes at one step from the death of the Cross to the seating of the Saviour at the right hand of the Majesty on high. He knew, and has clearly taught, that Christ not only died, but 'was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures' (1 Cor. 15:4). A little acquaintance with the Scriptures will reveal an economy in the choice of subject at all times. Paul does not mention either the Cross, the shedding of blood or the sufferings of Christ in 1 Corinthians 15, because his chief object was to answer those who said that there was no resurrection of the dead (1 Cor. 15:12). The apostle gives a most wonderful exposition of what is involved in the Gospel as the power of God unto salvation in Romans 1 to 5, yet never does he mention the Cross, the reason being that his theme was 'justification by faith' which is linked with the 'death' of Christ, and not the ignominy associated with the Cross. When dealing with the same theme in Galatians, the Cross is introduced, largely because of the 'persecution' that is associated with it. The fact that the apostle overleaps so much of the redemptive work of Christ, and links the purifying of sins with the sitting at the right hand of God, is, among other reasons, because he has the High Priestly office of Christ so much in view.

It is seldom we find one type that is sufficient to set forth the great work of Christ. Often it needs a pair. For example the passover lamb most blessedly sets forth redemption, but it takes the goat on the Day of Atonement to complete the story, for He Who delivered His people out from Egypt, gave them access *into* the Divine Presence, and it is *this* second aspect of the work of Christ that is uppermost in Hebrews. Abel needs Seth to complete the typical foreshadowing of Christ, David needs Solomon to foreshadow Christ as King, for David was a man of war, while Solomon was a prince of peace. The story of Joseph, which so miraculously sets forth the story of the Redeemer's life and work, seems at first sight complete, needing no other to finish the story. Yet his mother gave him the name 'Joseph' saying 'The Lord shall add (Heb. *yasaph*) to me another son' (Gen. 30:24), and that son was named by the mother *Ben-oni*, 'son of my sorrow', but the father called him *Benjamin*, 'son of my right hand'. In history Joseph goes through the suffering and eventually ascends the throne, but in the type Benjamin has a place, and the type is incomplete without 'The son of the right hand'. In the redemptive records of other epistles, we have the Joseph aspect worked out in blessed reality, but in Hebrews, Christ is seen pre-eminently as the Benjamin of the Father. Psalm 110 is quoted in the New Testament more than any other of the Psalms; it is the Psalm of the 'Right Hand', and awaits us in Hebrews 1:13. When the Saviour at His illegal trial was challenged by the high priest, He claimed to be the Messiah, the Son of God, by quoting the language of Daniel 7 as of Himself.

> 'Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven'" (Matt. 26:64).

The glorious doctrine of the epistle to the Romans leads us steadily on from chapter to chapter until we are able exultantly to answer the challenge 'Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?' by replying:

> 'Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, Who is EVEN AT THE RIGHT HAND of God, Who also maketh intercession for us' (Rom. 8:34).

Neither Ephesians nor Colossians could have even commenced the revelation of the Mystery, if Christ had not been revealed as seated at the right hand of God far above all. There are five references in Hebrews itself to the seating of the Saviour at His right hand, and they are used to enforce certain aspects of truth that are of first importance to the teaching of this epistle.

(1) The first occurrence is in Hebrews 1:3, where it is placed as the climax of the work of the Mediator, and by its association with what follows in verse 4 it is used in the nature of a reward for the redemptive work now done.

(2) The second occurrence is in Hebrews 1:13, where it is used to set forth the essential contrast that exists between 'The Son' and 'the angels'.

> 'But to which of the angels said He at any time, Sit on My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool?'

(3) The third and central reference occurs in Hebrews 8:1,2. Paul 'sums up' the teaching of the previous chapters.

> 'Now of the things which we have spoken this is the SUM: We have such an High Priest, Who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man'.

In this summing up the apostle adds the 'heavenly sanctuary' which we must never omit.

(4) The fourth occurrence is in Hebrews 10:12, where it is placed in vivid contrast with the Levitical priests who 'stood' offering oftentimes the same sacrifices which can never take away sins, whereas, the apostle continued, 'This Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God'.

(5) The last occurrence is in Hebrews 12:2 where the race is run, the shame endured for the joy that was set before, and the Lord is once again expressed as being 'set down at the right hand *of* the throne *of* 'God'.

We therefore have the references to the Right Hand of God distributed thus:

A 1:3. As a reward, the Glory given, the work done.
  B 1:13. As a contrast with angels who are ministering spirits.
    C 8:1,2. THE SUM.
  B 10:12. As a contrast with the priests who Ministered daily.
A 12:2. As a reward, the joy set before Him, the race run.

This is the glory that was *given* Him, and which the Saviour said 'I have given them' (John 17:22). It is NOT the glory which was His by right 'before the world was'; in *that* the redeemed can never share. To sit at the right hand of Majesty is not the same as absolute Monarchy. Even some of the redeemed are told that:

> 'To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, EVEN AS I ALSO overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne' (Rev. 3:21).

There can be no possible thought of sharing Deity! The elements of the reward or recognition of faithfulness are still uppermost. Even that majestic passage, Philippians 2:5-12, is introduced with the words:

> 'Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus',

and concludes with the words:

> 'Wherefore, my beloved ... work out your own salvation'.

Again, some, through not recognizing that the seat at the Right Hand is not a claim to essential Deity, have strongly objected to the words of Ephesians 2:6 as though it invaded the Divine prerogative. To return to the type in Genesis, as Pharaoh said to Joseph, or as Joseph himself acknowledged:

> 'Only in the throne will I be greater than thou'.
>
> 'He made him ruler over all'.
>
> 'Thou art even as Pharaoh'.
>
> 'He hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt'.
>
> 'God hath made me lord of all Egypt'.
>
> 'Tell my father all my glory in Egypt' (Gen. 41 to 45).

When the Mediatorial kingdom is finished and the last enemy is destroyed, then the Son vacates the seat at the Right Hand to enter the glory that was His before the world was (see 1 Tim. 6:16). The association in Hebrews with this session at the right hand of God is related particularly with the office of High Priest, and the office of High Priest will not be retained for ever. The blessed fact is that just as His sacrifice for sins will never be repeated, just as the glory of the New Jerusalem will not consist in a more magnificent temple than ever, but that rather there will be *no need* for a temple any more, so the perfection of Christ's priesthood is that it will *not need* to be perpetuated beyond the confines of the ages.

> 'In the Sanhedrin, the highest court of judicature among the Jews, he who presided in it was called *Ab din* or *Ab beth din*, the father of judgment, or the father of the House of judgment, and sat at the right hand of the prince of

the Sanhedrin ... Of this *Ab din* mention is made in the Targum, Cant. 7:4, The Father of the house of judgment, who judgeth the judgments agreeably to that. The Father judgeth no man but hath committed all judgment unto the Son' (Dr. John Owen).

The fullest description in Hebrews of the place where the ascended Lord is now seated is in chapter 8:1, where it is said to be not only at the right hand of God, or at the right hand of His throne, but

'On the right hand of the throne of the *Majesty* in the heavens'.

The only other reference in Hebrews that uses the word *majesty* is Hebrews 1:3. This word *megalosune* is used by David in the LXX of 1 Chronicles 22:5. 'The house that is to be builded for the Lord must be exceeding magnifical', and Hebrews 3:3-6 shows that Christ is building a house 'whose house are we', and Solomon recognized that, however 'magnifical' the house he had built might be, God could not be contained even in the 'heaven of heavens'. Yet within a few lines, he prayed that the Lord would 'hear from thy dwelling place, even heaven' (2 Chron. 6:18,21), and it is there 'in heaven itself', in the true Tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man, that Christ has entered 'now to appear in the presence of God for us' (Heb. 8:1,2; 9:24).

Megalosune 'majesty' is ascribed to God by Moses in 'The Song of Jehovah's Name' (Deut. 32:3), and in the prophecy of Nathan to David concerning the building of God's house by Solomon (2 Sam. 7:21,23). The only other king who has the term 'majesty' applied to him in Scripture is Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 4:22; 5:18,19), and this is doubly significant when we learn that the last and only other reference in Daniel is to the glorious kingdom of the Messiah, with which it was so great a contrast:

'And the kingdom and the authority and the majesty of the kings that are under the whole heaven were given to the saints of the Most High; and His kingdom is an aeonion kingdom, and all principalities shall serve and obey Him' (Dan. 7:27 LXX).

The reader will observe in this last reference 'the principalities and powers' (*arches kai exousias*) of Ephesians 1:21. Here we have Moses, David, Solomon, Nebuchadnezzar and finally and completely, the Coming of the Son of Man.

The Ascension and session of the Saviour at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty on high is a sign that these prophecies of His glory shall be as surely fulfilled as were all those of His humiliation.

'He came where he was'

The revelation given in Hebrews 1:2,3 is comparable with Colossians 1:15-19, Philippians 2:5-11 and John 1:1-18 in the majesty of its theme - the Person of 'The Son', Who in the beginning was 'The Word', 'The Form' and the 'Image' of the Invisible God. It comes somewhat as an anticlimax after reading that this Son of God was the Express Image of the substance of God, and upholding all things by the word of His power, to read:

'Being made so much better than the angels' (Heb. 1:4).

What angel is ever spoken of as 'The Form or the Image of the Invisible God'? What angel could be 'The Express Image of His substance'? We have purposely omitted the closing words, the words that form the link and contain the explanation of this strange conclusion. After the attributes of Deity already quoted, we come to terms that refer not to Deity, but to the mediatorial work and reward of the Son of God Who had taken upon Himself the form or status of a slave. These links and explanatory claims are:

(1) He purged our sins; (2) As a *consequence* He sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high.

We have already examined the exaltation of the Lord and what is implied by this session at the Right Hand, and can readily see that inasmuch as for our redemption the Son of God was made a little LOWER than the angels (as we shall discover by reading chapter 2), so as the triumphant Conqueror of sin and death, and still in the capacity of the One Mediator, He can be spoken of as 'being made' better than angels, and 'obtaining by inheritance' a more excellent name than they.

The reader is aware of the important difference that is intended by the two words 'being' and 'becoming'. 'Being made' is the translation of the Greek *ginonlai*, 'to become', and the distinction is well observed in John 1:1-3.

'Being'. The verb *eimi*. 'In the beginning WAS the Word ... WAS with ... WAS God'

'Becoming'. The verb *ginomai*. 'All things WERE MADE by Him'.

He 'was'. They 'became'.

Or again in John 8:58, 'Before Abraham CAME INTO BEING, I AM' The same sequences that are found in Hebrews 1:2-4 are found in Philippians 2:5-11. First we have 'original being', *huparchon*, 'Who being, existing all along, in the form of God', then the sevenfold descent in flesh and blood to the death of the cross. This is followed by the sevenfold exaltation, and, 'The Name' that is above every name, a 'more excellent name' indeed than angels ever bore. Hebrews 1:4 is entirely concerned with the mediatorial work of Christ, and not with His essential Deity. The exaltation of the Saviour followed the purging of our sins and so speaks of the resurrection. Acts 13:32,33 gives the identical Old Testament reference that is used in Hebrews,

'Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee',

and declares that this promise was fulfilled when He raised up Jesus again. Alford very pointedly says of Christ that:

'The Son of God, *before* His incarnation was Head OVER creation, but *after* His work in the flesh He had become the Head OF Creation'.

Colossians reveals that He Who was the Firstborn of every creature became the Firstborn from the dead, because 'in the body of His flesh through death' He had stooped to conquer. This we shall see more clearly as our study opens up the Scriptures that are related to Hebrews 1:4. To us Gentiles, the insistence upon angels which is so marked in Hebrews 1 and 2 may seem a trifle strange, but to a Hebrew it would be both understandable and necessary.

The use of 'angel' in Hebrews

In chapter 1 Christ in His exaltation to the right hand of the Majesty on high is said to be made 'so much better than the angels' (Heb. 1:4).

'Unto which of the angels said He at any time, Thou art My Son ... ?' (1:5).

'Let all the angels of God worship Him' (1:6).

'Who maketh His angels spirits' (1:7).

'To which of the angels said He at any time, Sit on My right hand' (1:13).

In chapter 2, angels are associated with the giving of the law and we are told that the age to come has not been put in subjection to angels. By the testimony of the prophetic eighth Psalm, Adam and Christ are seen 'for a little while' lower than the angels, and, at the incarnation, Christ 'took not on Him the nature of angels' (Heb. 2:2,5,7,9,16). In chapter 12:22 the heavenly Jerusalem is associated with 'an innumerable company of angels' and in 13:2 the believer is reminded that, in Old Testament times, the ministry of angels was no uncommon experience. When writing to the Romans, Paul mentioned angels, together with 'principalities' (Rom. 8:38) and asked the Corinthians, 'Know ye not that we shall judge angels?' (1 Cor. 6:3), but neither angelic ministry among men, nor the presence of angels at the exaltation of Christ, is mentioned in Ephesians. There, we read that when Christ was raised from the dead, He was set at the right hand of God 'in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come' (Eph. 1:20,21). These 'principalities' are mentioned again in Ephesians 3:10 and 6:12, each time in connection with 'heavenly places', but the epistle to the Hebrews knows nothing of them.

In Scripture, angels have special reference to the people of Israel. The whole course of Israel's history is accompanied by angelic ministry. Nor does it cease with Malachi (which means 'My messenger' or 'My angel'); it is prominent in the Gospels, being associated with the Birth, the Sufferings, the Resurrection and the prophecies of the Second Coming of Christ. It is prominent in the Acts from Acts 1 to 12, but, after the ministry of Paul, which

commences with Acts 13, there are but two references in the Acts to angelic ministry, namely at Acts 23:9 and 27:23. This must be considered in contrast with the seventeen references that are found in Acts 1 to 12. In the prison ministry of Paul, that is in the five 'prison' epistles, angels are only mentioned to be set aside, i.e., 'the worshipping of angels' (Col. 2:18). In 1 Timothy 3:16 angels are mentioned in connection with the Mystery of godliness, namely 'God manifest in the flesh', and also in the charge of 1 Timothy 5:21, where 'elect angels' are mentioned.

'Being made *so much* better than the angels' This passage contains the first of several comparisons that are made as the theme of the epistle is unfolded.

(1) 'SO MUCH better than the angels ... obtained a more excellent name' (Heb. 1:4).

(2) 'This Man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, INASMUCH as He Who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house' (Heb. 3:3).

(3) 'AND INASMUCH as not without an oath ... by so MUCH was Jesus made a surety of a better testament (covenant)' (Heb. 7:20,22).

(4) 'For SUCH an high priest became us' (Heb. 7:26).

(5) 'We have SUCH an high priest ... in the heavens' (Heb. 8:1).

(6) 'But NOW hath He obtained a more excellent ministry, by HOW MUCH also He is the Mediator of a better covenant' (Heb. 8:6).

(7) 'He that despised Moses' law died without mercy ... of HOW MUCH sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God' (Heb. 10:28,29).

(8) 'They that say SUCH things declare plainly that they seek a country' (Heb. 11:14).

These comparisons of angel and mediator, of better covenants and better country are integral links in the chain of Divine unfolding. They are buried deep, perhaps, but nevertheless there, and visible to the eye of the humble seeker after truth. The following analysis may be of service.

A 1:4. The more excellent name (*diaphoros*).
(Angels, mediators of the old covenant).
B 3:3. Counted worthy (*axioo*) Above Moses.
C 8:1. We have such an High 7:20,22 Better covenant.
Priest in the heavens.
The Tabernacle pitched 7:26 Higher than.
by the Lord and not man. heavens.
A 8:6. A more excellent ministry (*diaphoros*)
(Mediator of the New Covenant).
B 10:29. Thought worthy (*axioo*) Beneath feet.
C 11:10-16. Such things.
The better and heavenly country.
The city whose builder and maker is God.

For our immediate purpose we need all the light we can get on Hebrews 1:4, and the parallel of Hebrews 8:6 therefore is welcome. For the time being we make no further comment on this set of comparisons except perhaps to note how the pilgrim attitude of faith (Heb. 11:10-16) is apparently the echo of 'such an high priest' (Heb. 8:1), as it ever should be. In both passages there is a 'more excellent' name, or ministry. In the second reference, this ministry is the mediation of the New Covenant. In what way does this fact illuminate the insistence of the apostle in Hebrews 1 and 2 upon the superiority of Christ to angels? The answer is that *angels* were themselves *mediators* of the Old Covenant. This is a matter of importance and must now be set forth.

While it is a Scriptural truth that 'The law was given by Moses' (John 1:17), it is also a Scriptural truth that Israel 'received the law by the disposition of angels' (Acts 7:53). To this testimony of Stephen, Paul adds his in Galatians:

'The law ... was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator' (Gal. 3:19).

To this twofold testimony may be added that of the Psalmist:

> 'The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in SINAI, in the holy place' (Psa. 68:17),

which is an echo of the words of Moses when he said:

> 'He came with ten thousands of saints (His holy ones): from His right hand went a fiery law for them' (Deut. 33:2).

Yet further, Stephen had earlier spoken of Moses at Sinai saying:

> 'This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina' (Acts 7:38).

In Hebrews, chapter 2, the ministry of angels and their relation with the law is further developed.

> 'For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; how shall we escape?' (2:2,3).

With this passage, Hebrews 12:25 should be read:

> 'See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused Him that spake on earth ...'.

Chapter 2 deals with 'the Lord' speaking, in contrast with angels, and chapter 12 follows by contrasting Sinai with heaven. Let us finish the record of these verses then. Here is both question and answer.

> 'How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord?' (Heb. 2:3).
> 'Much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from Him that speaketh from heaven' (Heb. 12:25).

Resuming the references to angels in chapter 2 the apostle says:

> 'For unto the angels hath He not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak' (Heb. 2:5).

This assumes that 'the world' was at some time under angelic surveillance. The word 'world' here is not *aion* or *kosmos*, but *oikoumene*, 'the habitable world', particularly the world as known and visualized in Old Testament times, the prophetic earth. The first occurrence of *oikoumene* in the LXX is in Exodus 16:35:'Until they came to a land inhabited', i.e., the land of Canaan. In Psalm 72 which speaks prophetically of the dominion ruled over by David's greater Son, we read:

> 'He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the *oikoumene*' (Psa. 72:8).

The kingdoms of the world (*oikoumene*) were shown in the temptation in the wilderness (Luke 4:5). In contrast with the wide extent of 'heaven and earth', Psalm 89:11 says, 'Thou hast founded them' (heaven and the *oikoumene*), and it is in this Psalm that we have another prophetic anticipation:

> 'I will make Him My Firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth' (Psa. 89:27).

When the day comes when man shall 'sing a new song' the psalmist says:

> 'Say among the heathen that the LORD reigneth: the *oikoumene* also shall be established that it shall not be moved' (Psa. 96:10).

This verse gives us a positive link with the theme of Hebrews, for there, in chapter 12, following *the shaking* of the earth at Sinai, we read:

> 'Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved' (Heb. 12:28),

where the Greek word, *saleuo* (move or shake) is employed. It is a very wonderful comment on the meaning attached to the *oikoumene* of the future, that where the Hebrew reads:'Thou shalt be called Hephzi-bah (i.e. My delight is in her), and thy land Beulah (i.e. married)', the LXX of Isaiah 62:4 reads, 'Thou shalt be called My Pleasure (*thelema*), and thy land *oikoumene*'. This is the 'world to come' whereof Paul was speaking in Hebrews 2.

This 'world to come' will include more than the kingdom of Israel in the days of their restoration, for the Tempter showed the Lord 'all the kingdoms of the *oikoumene*' (Luke 4:5), and so revealed that more kingdoms than one occupied the territory specified, and this word was used by Roman and Greek historians as well as the LXX to refer to the lands ruled over by Nebuchadnezzar and his successors. Had the Devil known the Scriptures a little better he might have hesitated to tempt the Lord to make stones into bread, for Psalm 50:12 says:'If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the *oikoumene* is Mine, and the fulness thereof'. Satan offered the kingdoms of the *oikoumene* to One Who was their rightful owner.

The Scriptures give abundant evidence of the fact that angels were given some form of control over the world in Old Testament times. The first chapter of the book of Job shows the 'sons of God' in conference with the Lord and Satan joining them, the Lord deigning to discuss His servant Job even with Satan, the 'sons of God' necessarily being aware of this. Angels, or 'the sons of God', rejoiced at the creation (Job 38:7). Two angels accompanied Jehovah when Abraham was visited, and angels intervene throughout the Old Testament Scriptures. This council recorded in Job, the joyous fellowship of the sons of God at the Creation, the visit of the 'three men' to Abraham, the words of Genesis 18:17, 'Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?' and the fact that God spoke to Moses as a man speaks with his friend, make it highly probable that the Lord did stoop at the creation of man to explain to the wondering angels something of the plan of the ages and their part in it. Genesis 1:2 indicates that there had been an overthrow, and the creation of the six days that followed with Adam as its climax was the first of a series of movements that had 1 Corinthians 15:24-28 as its goal. 'Let us make man in our image,' said the Lord, and 'a little lower than the angels'.

While we learn from Psalm 8 of this relation made with angels, we should note that no angel is mentioned in Genesis until the call of Abraham. Then an angel intervenes on the behalf of Hagar, of Ishmael, of Lot in Sodom, of Isaac on Mount Moriah. The guidance of an angel was promised the servant of Abraham in his quest for a wife for Isaac; angels met Jacob on his journey to Padan-aram; an angel gave Jacob advice as to how to circumvent the dishonesty of Laban over his hire and met him at the place he afterward called *Mahanaim*, saying, 'This is God's host', and finally, so far as Genesis is concerned, Jacob in blessing the sons of Joseph said, 'The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads'. The naming by Jacob of *Mahanaim* in Genesis 32:2 is the last of several places named after the intervention of an angel. Beer-lahai-roi was named by Hagar, Jehovah-Jireh was the name given to the mount at the offering of Isaac, and Bethel received its name after Jacob's vision of the ladder that reached to heaven. The ministry of angels in the second half of Genesis is as marked as its absence is from the first half. When God placed Adam on the earth, he was left without angelic guidance, but Satan did not observe this rule. He not only in the guise of the serpent brought about man's fall, but by the inroad of the 'sons of God' (LXX Alex. *angeloi*) brought about well-nigh universal corruption and destruction (Gen. 6).

The first lesson of the ages had been given. There are therefore *two periods* in the ages during which angelic rule was withheld. The first, the period from Adam to Abraham; the second, the present dispensation of the Mystery. It is an inference on our part that 'angels' were learning something of the purpose of God from Adam to Abraham and this may be questioned, but it is clearly stated that during the dispensation of the Mystery, 'principalities and powers' are learning through the church 'the manifold wisdom of God' (Eph. 3:10). With the call of Abraham, unassisted endeavour was replaced by angelic mediation. Not only in Genesis, as we have seen, but at the call of Moses, the travelling through the wilderness, the giving of the law at Sinai, attest this new economy. Yet Stephen had to tell Israel that in spite of the disposition of angels, Israel miserably failed. The transfer of kingship from Israel to the Gentile under Nebuchadnezzar carried with it the ministry of angels, for 'the son of God' seen by Nebuchadnezzar in the fire with the faithful three is interpreted for us as 'God ... hath sent His angel'. The 'Watcher and holy One' of Daniel 4, and the 'fingers of a man's hand' of Daniel 5, in the light of Exodus 31:18, show angelic ministry. The angel Gabriel is mentioned in Daniel 9, and Michael, 'your prince', together with Satanic angels of Persia and Greece are mentioned in Daniel 10. Man could not stand when left alone. Man could not stand even when hedged about by angel ministry whether the people be Israel, or Nebuchadnezzar or the Gentile dynasty. Angels *looked down* from heaven, in pity, but Christ *came down* Himself. Angels, if they do weep, may have *shed tears* at the fatal folly of man, but Christ not only wept, He *shed his blood*. Angels visited man in the guise of men, but Christ became man, was actually born of a woman. Herein lies the key to open the revelation given in the early chapters of Hebrews. Like the Good Samaritan, Christ 'came where he was' saying, 'Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of Me)'.

Angels may still be ministering spirits sent forth to minister to those who are heirs of salvation, but 'angels and authorities and powers' are subject unto the ascended Lord. When we come to the dispensation of the Mystery, angelic ministry is entirely absent; instead of saying, 'angels to beckon me', we sing in the language of one of the hymns used at the Chapel of the Opened Book, London:

'Angels will stand aside,
No one, but Christ beside
Can be our heavenly Guide,
Father, to Thee'

'This day have I begotten Thee'

While angels are called 'sons of God', a title endorsed by the translation of Psalm 97:7 'Worship Him, all ye gods', by 'let all the angels of God worship Him' (Heb. 1:6) and other places, no angel has or ever could be called 'The Only Begotten Son of God'.

'For unto which of the angels said He at any time, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee?' (Heb. 1:5).

A number of commentators see in this passage a reference to 'the eternal generation of the Son', a term that defies explanation, and such are also obliged to interpret 'this day' as of eternity. Such an interpretation savours too much of an attempt to bolster up a creed rather than to give an honest exposition of the terms, and arises mainly out of the disastrous error of taking the title 'Son' back into eternity instead of using the title 'Word' as John does in John 1:1, and reserving the title 'Son' for the incarnation when 'the Word was made flesh'. In Hebrews 11:17 Isaac too is called 'the only begotten son' of Abraham, and it would be strange if this title could be used in so essentially different ways. The verb *gennao* is used in Matthew in such passages as 'Abraham *begat* Isaac', 'Of whom was *born* Jesus', 'That which is *conceived* in her', 'When Jesus *was born* in Bethlehem'. In the epistle to the Hebrews itself it occurs four times, thus:

'This day have I *begotten* Thee'.

'To day have I *begotten* Thee'.

'Therefore *sprang* there even of one'.

'By faith Moses, when he was born' (Heb. 1:5; 5:5; 11:12,23).

John, in his first epistle, has no hesitation in intertwining references to those who have been 'born' or 'begotten' of God, and the Saviour Who was 'born' or 'begotten' of God (1 John 2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1,4,18). While therefore we can discover no warrant from Scripture usage to project this 'begetting' back before time begum, we are warned by the selfsame usage of Scripture not to limit this term to the Incarnation. 'This day' have I begotten Thee, cannot refer to the birth at Bethlehem for this is a quotation from Psalm 2:

'Yet have I set My King upon My holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto Me, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee' (Psa. 2:6,7).

On either side of this quotation from Psalm 2, Paul, in Acts 13:33-37, stresses the resurrection of Christ:

'He hath raised up Jesus again' (Quotation follows from Psalm 2:7).
'And as concerning that He raised Him up from the dead' (Quotation follows from Isaiah 55:3).

This begetting at the Resurrection differed from that at the Incarnation, the one being the entrance into a life of flesh and blood through the overshadowing of the Virgin by the Spirit of God; the other being the quickening power of the selfsame Spirit of that body which was laid in the sepulchre, yet which saw no corruption. This second 'birth' was by 'decree'. The reader should have no difficulty in believing this twofold 'begetting', for that is also true, in its limited way, of every believer. All men are 'born' by natural processes *gennao*, and the believer is 'born again', *gennao* and *anothen* (John 3:3) and *anagennao* (1 Pet. 1:23). If the believer therefore can be said to have been begotten at his natural birth, and to have been begotten again at conversion, there should be no difficulty in believing the double references to the Saviour. In Colossians the title given the Lord in this connection is *prototokos* 'Firstborn of all creation', 'Firstborn from the dead' (Col. 1:15,18). Again a double use of the same title. This word *prototokos* is found in Hebrews 1:6:

'And again, when He bringeth in *the firstborn* into the world, He saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him'

'And again'. Readers will remember the repetition of this phrase in Romans 15:9-12, but in this passage the words 'He saith' are either actually written or implied. The R.V. reads, however, 'And when He again bringeth', attaching the word 'again' to the act of 'bringing' and not with the words 'He saith'. Weymouth reads 'But speaking of the time when He once more brings His Firstborn into the world, He says' There is by no means unanimity among translators, but the grammar of the passage seems to demand the translation given in the R.V. Alford says 'The word can only refer to the great entering of the Messiah into His kingdom'. The 'world' here is *oikoumene*, as it is in Hebrews 2:5, and about which we have before written at some length.

The word translated 'to bring' here is *eisago*, and in classical Greek its first usage seems to be that of leading a person into his home. It is used in Acts 7:45, where we read concerning the Tabernacle that was made 'according to the fashion' that Moses had seen, that the 'fathers' 'brought (it) in with Jesus' into the land which God had given them for a possession. This leader, however, was Joshua, a shadow only of the true Captain of salvation even as the Tabernacle was a shadow also. But when the Father Himself bringeth in the true Joshua into the land of His possession, the true *oikoumene* (a word first used in the LXX of the land of Canaan in Exodus 16;35), He will minister in the Tabernacle which God pitched and not man, and fulfil in Himself all that Joshua the captain, Aaron the priest and David the king foreshadow. When He is brought into the world at the Second Advent, one thing will be said that is said of no other:

'And let all the angels of God worship Him'.

Angels rightly repudiate worship and affirm that worship is due to God alone (Rev. 22:8,9). Here, at the command of the Father, not merely men but angels are called upon to worship the Only Begotten. The margin of the A.V. tells us that the words 'And let all the angels of God worship Him' are quoted from Deuteronomy 32:43, but if we turn to that reference in the A.V., no such words are to be found. It also refers us to Psalm 97:7 which reads 'Worship Him, all ye gods'. The LXX translates this 'Worship Him, all ye His angels' and so brings the passage nearer to the words of Hebrews 1:6. If we, in quoting a passage of Scripture, varied that quotation by even one word, our manuscripts would be marked and sent back to us for rectification. In the case of an inspired apostle we can well admit that should he feel the subject demanded it, a variation would be justified. Yet, we cannot feel quite happy over this. We note that Paul goes so far as to quote even the word 'And', which looks as though he had a definite passage before him. The words of the LXX version of Deuteronomy 32:43 are quoted word for word in Hebrews 1:6. Here is the reading of Hebrews 1:6:

Kai proskunesatosan auto pantes aggeloi theou.

and the reading of the LXX version of Deuteronomy 32:43:

Kai proskunesatosan auto pantes aggeloi theou.

The reader will see that these two lines are identical. Turpie says of this:

'A passage corresponding to this quotation is found in the Septuagint at Deuteronomy 32:43. But, that *that* reading is spurious, there is cause to believe from the following reasons. First, there is nothing corresponding to it in the Hebrew text, at the same place. Second, none of the other ancient versions exhibits that clause. Third, nor is it found in all copies of the Septuagint, the Codex Alex, reading *huioi theou* 'sons of God' for *aggeloi theou* 'angels of God'; and one MSS. at least, viz. the Oxford, wholly omitting the clause. Fourthly and conclusively, the Messiah is not spoken of nor alluded to in that song. We must look, then, for its original in no other place than Psalm 97:7'.

To this comment we reply: The Septuagint version is quoted by Paul as *authoritative Scripture*, and forms part of an argument that would be destroyed, could the Scriptural authority for it be challenged. Notice the way in which the *undoubted* texts of Old Testament Scriptures are introduced in this chapter. 'He saith', and with these words the quotation from Deuteronomy 32 is introduced. The fact which stares us in the face is this, that *the Hebrew of Deuteronomy 32:43 has been tampered with*, and we owe it to the despised and neglected Greek version that this most important text has been preserved to us.

A Heb. 1:5-7. Unto which of the angels ... My Son ...
Angels are 'spirits' and 'ministers'.
B Heb. 1:8,9. Christ is addressed as God. 'Throne'
'Sceptre'
B Heb. 1:10-12. Christ is addressed as Lord. 'Earth'
'Heavens'
A Heb. 1:13,14. To which of the angels ... Sit on My right hand.
'ministering spirits'.

Angels are 'ministering spirits'

Before proceeding we must make sure that every reader will be able to follow the references we must make to the presence of 'conjunctions of antithesis'. Conjunctions are particles which denote:

(1) Annexation, like *kai* 'and';
(2) Comparison, like *hos* 'as';
(3) Disjunction, like *etoi ... e* 'either' ... 'or';
(4) Antithesis, like *alla* 'but';
(5) Condition, like *ei* 'if';
(6) Cause, like *gar* 'for';
(7) Inference, like *oun* 'therefore' and
(8) Result, like *hina* 'in order that'.

For the moment we are concerned with the conjunctions of antithesis - the Greek *men ... de*. These words often occur in distribution, *men* occurring in one sentence, *de* in the sentence that follows, and may be rendered 'on the one hand' and 'on the other hand'. In Hebrews 1:7 we read 'And regarding (*men*) on the one hand, the angels He saith' and in Hebrews 1:8 we read 'Regarding (*de*) on the other hand the Son He saith'. A similar antithesis and with the same object is found in Hebrews 3:5,6, where Moses on the one hand was faithful as a servant, but Christ on the other hand was Son over His own house. There are about twenty instances of this antithetical conjunction in Hebrews, which we may note as we reach them. An intended contrast therefore with the angels is found in verse 8.

> 'But unto (*pros* regarding) the Son (*He saith*), Thy throne, O God, is unto the age of the age (*eis ton aiona tou aionos*)' (Heb. 1:8).

This text has been put on the rack, like Romans 9:5, by those who cannot tolerate the Deity of Christ. It has been put as a parenthetical exclamation 'O God'; it has been rendered 'Thy God-like throne' and 'Thy throne of God', but all such are obviously forced and without justification. A 'throne', Greek *thronos*, is described as 'a free open seat with a footstool', and the footstool is seen to be an integral part of this throne 'Until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool' (Heb. 1:13; 10:13). 'Heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool' (Isa. 66:1). It must be remembered that of the nine occurrences of the word 'footstool' in the New Testament six speak of enemies, and that not one speaks of worship. It is also an interesting fact that Psalm 110:1 is quoted in the New Testament more than any other Psalm.

> 'Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool'.

While the verse before us in Hebrews stresses a throne, a sceptre and a kingdom, we are aware that 'the principal thing' according to Paul's own summing up is that Christ is an High Priest. In Psalm 110:4 we read 'Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec', and we learn from Hebrews that Melchisedec was also a king. Several items need careful examination in order to enable us to perceive the Divine intention in these related passages. For clearness sake let us tabulate them here.

(1) The 'sceptre' of Psalm 45:6 is in the Hebrew *shebet.*
(2) The 'rod' in Psalm 110:2 is in the Hebrew *matteh.*
(3) But both words are translated *rhabdos* in the Septuagint.

(4) The ‘rod’ of iron of Psalm 2:9 is the Hebrew *shebet.*
(5) The ‘rod’ of iron of Revelation 2:27; 12:5, 19:15 is the Greek *rhabdos.*
(6) The priesthood of Melchisedec is ‘for the age’.
(7) The throne of the Son is ‘for the age of the age’.
(8) Psalm 110:1 is quoted in six places in the New Testament.
(9) Three of these quotations are in the Gospels, and record the Saviour’s challenge ‘Whose Son is He?’
(10) One is in the Acts, to prove that Christ ascended.
(11) One is in Hebrews 1:13 and
(12) One in 1 Corinthians 15:25 which takes us beyond the ‘age’ of Psalm 110, or the ‘age of the age’ of Hebrews 1:13 to the ‘End’ when God shall be all in all.

‘The oil of gladness’

The sceptre of Psalm 45:6 is *shebet* in the Hebrew. It is this verse that is quoted in Hebrews 1:8 and the apostle declares that these words were addressed to ‘The Son’. Kingship is indicated by the sceptre, as in the prophecy:

‘The sceptre shall not depart from Judah’ (Gen. 49:10).

‘Of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood’ (Heb. 7:14).

To those readers who can appreciate suggestions without having them worked out for them here, we draw attention to the fact that the first occurrence of the word ‘sceptre’ says that it shall *not depart* from Judah, and that the last occurrence says that it *shall depart* from Egypt (Zech. 10:11). We have enough however before us, not to stop at every interesting aside. We have noted in our list printed above, that the word ‘rod’ is the translation of the Hebrew *mattell*. Now Ezekiel speaking in a parable likens Israel to a vine that had strong ‘rods’ or ‘sceptres’, but that this vine was cast to the ground, her rods broken, ‘so that she hath no strong rod to be a sceptre to rule’, referring presumably to Zedekiah (Ezek. 19:14). The point of interest to us at the moment is that a ‘rod’ *matteh* can become a ‘sceptre’ *shebet.*

Now Aaron’s ‘rod’ was a symbol, not of kingship but of priesthood (Num. 17:9,10). The rod of strength that is to be sent out of Zion (Psa. 110:2) is *the rod of a priest*. We are therefore prepared to discover that ‘king’ (Psa. 45:1) and ‘priest’ (Psa. 11 0:4) unite in Him Who is a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. Nowhere else in the New Testament than in the epistle to the Hebrews do we read of Melchisedec, but there he is spoken of nine times, where he is set forth both as King of Righteousness, and King of Peace, Priest of the Most High God, and made like unto the Son of God. The Melchisedec priesthood is shown to be infinitely superior to the priesthood of Aaron, and Melchisedec himself is shown to have been greater even than Abraham.

‘Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils’ (Heb. 7:4),

and the point of this discrimination is reached when we learn that ‘perfection’, the goal of this epistle, can never be attained under the Levitical priesthood (Heb. 7:11).

Christ, therefore, must not be thought of simply as a king, neither must He be thought of simply as a priest, He is a KingPriest, and so differs essentially from every king and every priest of Israel. The prophet saw Him from afar under the title ‘The BRANCH’ saying ‘He shall sit and rule upon His throne; and He shall be *a priest* upon His *throne*; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both’ (Zech. 6:13). The ‘both’ referring to the combined office of King and Priest that Messiah alone can bear. Psalm 45:6 tells us that ‘the King’ with His ‘sword’, His ‘arrows’, His ‘terrible things’ has a ‘right sceptre’. Hebrews 1:8 says that it is a sceptre of ‘righteousness’. Neither the word ‘right’ nor the word ‘righteousness’ is the one usually employed. In Psalm 45:6 the word is *mishor*, from *yashar*, and in Hebrews 1:8 the word used is *euthutes.* There is evidently something distinctive about this ‘sceptre’ and the rule it denotes that we should seek to understand.

First let us observe that this was the original state of man at his creation, not ‘righteous’ for that involves positive deeds, but ‘upright’ (Eccles. 7:29). It is the character given to Job at the opening of that book; he is described as being ‘perfect and upright’, although later he was convinced that he had no valid ‘righteousness’. A number of the

kings are said to have done that which was right in the sight of the Lord (1 Kings 15:5,11 etc.). The verb is used of paths and ways being 'made straight', or the users of these paths being 'directed' (Isa. 45:2; Prov. 3:6). The Greek word used in Hebrews 1:8, *euthutes*, is one of a group, all of which emphasize either physical straightness or moral equity; 'fit' (Luke 9:62), 'meet' (Heb. 6:7), 'make straight' (John 1:23), the street called 'Straight' (Acts 9:11). Some, reading Esther 4:11, see in the holding out of the golden sceptre a suggestion that mercy is blended with righteousness in the sceptre of the King of kings.

The throne of the Son of God is to be 'for the age of the age'; the priesthood of Melchisedec is 'for the age'. In the Hebrew of Psalm 45:7,8 the time period is expressed by the words *olam va ed* 'unto the age of undefined limits and yet further'; the priesthood of Melchisedec is 'unto the age of undefined limits' *I'olam* (Psa. 110:4). *The office of king is to be in operation longer than that of priest*. By the time the New Jerusalem is seen, one of the glories of that heavenly city is that *there is no temple there*. But right up to the 'end', enemies are dealt with, and not until such are subdued under Him will the Son relinquish the Throne, bringing both kingship and priesthood to an end, that 'God' may be all in all.

Psalm 110 is quoted in Matthew, Mark and Luke in connection with the Saviour's unique Sonship. It occurs once in the Acts, once in Hebrews and once in 1 Corinthians. The references in the Gospels are Matthew 22:44; Mark 12:36 and Luke 20:42. These three references differ only in their fulness. Mark's account concludes with the comment 'The common people heard Him gladly'. Luke's account makes no such comment, but leads straight on to the Lord's warning concerning the hypocrisy and greed of the scribes. Matthew's account is the fullest record, and for our present purpose covers the three quotations of Psalm 110. The Pharisees had previously taken counsel together how they might entangle Him in His talk, and perceiving their hypocrisy, He put the question concerning the image and superscription of Caesar. The Sadducees followed by posing a problem concerning the resurrection, and lastly a lawyer asked the question as to the great commandment of the law. Before these disgruntled and defeated antagonists could withdraw, the Saviour using their own methods completely silenced them, saying:

'What think ye of Christ? whose Son is He?' (Matt. 22:42).

The Lord did not here specifically refer to Himself. Leaving Himself for the moment out of the question, He asked them what they thought the Scriptures taught concerning the Messiah and His Sonship. They replied immediately, 'The son of David'. With that answer they were apparently satisfied, but the Saviour's next question revealed the gulf that yawned between their conception of the Person of the Messiah and the teaching of the Scriptures. 'How then doth David in spirit call Him Lord', and then the Lord Jesus proceeds to quote Psalm 110:1, continuing 'If David then calls Him Lord, how is He his son?' 'And no man was able to answer Him a word'. Christ is not only man, Christ is not only God, He is the God-Man gloriously and blessedly unique in time and eternity. The quotation in Acts 2:34 still refers to the relationship of the Messiah with David, but this time not so much with His sonship, but His resurrection and ascension.

> 'Let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day ... For David is not ascended into the heavens ...' (Acts 2:29-34).

But even though David must await the resurrection of the redeemed, his Son and Lord was raised from the dead, ascended into heaven, sat down on the right hand of God, and is made 'both Lord and Christ'. The passage which takes us beyond the limits set in Hebrews 1:13 is 1 Corinthians 15:24-28:

'Then cometh the end ... that God may be all in all'

This end is reached by a series of steps and stages.

(1) 'When He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father'

(2) 'When He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power'

(3) 'When all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all'

The sequence of events is broken at the end of verse 24 and again in verse 27. After telling us that all authority and power shall be put down, the apostle breaks in to give an expansion of the subject, saying:

'For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet'.

The Companion Bible at Psalm 110:1 has this note:

'Make Thine enemies Thy footstool - set Thine enemies (as) a footstool for Thy feet. In New Testament Gr. - *tithemi* (2 aor. subj.) - 'shall have placed'. 1 Cor. 15:25 is the exception, where it is not 'set as a footstool', but put 'under', because Christ's session on His own throne (Matt. 25:31; Rev. 3:21) is there referred to, instead of His session on His Father's throne, as in all the other quotations'.

These considerations are by no means exhaustive, they are rather but indications of what lines of study are necessary to begin to appreciate the apostle's line of argument in Hebrews chapter 1. We can only leave it with the reader, and pray that each may be so desirous of attaining to the 'knowledge of the Son of God' (Eph. 4:13), that no weariness of the flesh shall be permitted to prevent the exercise of the Berean spirit that it is the purpose of this study to encourage.

We pass now to the conclusion of this section of Hebrews 1, namely verse 9:

'Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows'.

Knowing the nature of our hearts when bereft of grace, we are somewhat timid in the use of 'hate', leaning rather and exclusively to the emphasis on 'love'. We should remember that unholy love may be as harmful as unholy hate, and that true hate and true love go together:

'He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal' (John 12:25).

'Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated' (Rom. 9:13).

Some things are stated to be the objects of true hatred without the alternative that is loved being stated, 'Hating even the garment spotted by the flesh' (Jude 23); 'Thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate'; 'which thing I hate' (Rev. 2:6,15). In the Old Testament we read of 'men of truth, hating covetousness', and the Psalmist says 'Ye that love the Lord, hate evil', so others 'hate every false way'; 'hate and abhor lying', the climax being reached in Psalm 139, 'Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate Thee? ... I hate them with perfect hatred' (Psa. 139:21,22). Perfect hate can only be achieved where there is also perfect love. In the Son of God there is perfect harmony, and because He had loved righteousness and hated iniquity, the good pleasure of the Lord was manifestly expressed. The anointing here is not the anointing of the Saviour at the commencement of His ministry (Luke 4:18), for that anointing but led along the path of sorrows to the shame of the Cross. This is an anointing with the 'oil of gladness', it is the 'exceeding joy,' of the presentation of the believer faultless before the throne (Jude 24). This 'exceeding joy' is reserved for the believer until the moment 'When His glory shall be revealed' (1 Pet. 4:13).

'That the *elaion agalliaseos* here does not mean the *oil of consecration to office*, is plain from the consideration that the administration of the kingly office is described in the preceding context as having already existed' (Moses Strut).

'We must distinguish this anointing from that of Acts 10:38 and Isaiah 61:1. For it is consequent upon the righteous course of the Son of God in His humanity, and therefore belongs to His triumph' (Alford).

Two further terms used here show that Christ as the Mediator, and not as He was before the world began, is intended. These terms are 'Thy God' and 'Thy fellows'. As the Lord, He is God, and God can have no fellows, but one of His most important yet most misunderstood relationships is expressed in the words 'The God of our Lord Jesus Christ' (Eph. 1:17). Who is at the selfsame time 'The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ' (Eph. 3:14); indeed 'The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ' (Eph. 1:3). This relation to His office as 'The Son' also relates to His Mediation and His Headship. Throughout the Old Testament from the call of Abraham and on unto the speech of Stephen in Acts 7, the Lord has borne the name of 'The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob', the covenant-keeping God of Israel. Those who are addressed in the epistle of the Mystery, Ephesians, *had no such God*. They were aliens, strangers, Christless, hopeless and Godless. By the very nature of their natural condition, and by the very nature of the new revelation made known in Ephesians, the believing Gentile could no more approach the Lord as the God of Abraham than the Syro-phoenician woman could approach Him as the Son of David (Matt. 15). But

instead of this being a loss or a disadvantage, we discover it to be but another opportunity for grace to triumph. Who would cling to the God of Abraham, when the Son of God became the Head of his calling? It is for this reason that in the ministry of Paul both before Acts 28, and in the ministry also of Peter, Jesus Christ is set forth as 'The One Mediator between God and men' and we gladly relinquish all hope of using the title 'the God of Abraham' because we can instead call upon 'The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ'.

We come back therefore to Hebrews 1:9 and rejoice that here also we read 'Therefore God, even Thy God', realizing that this special anointing is entirely related to His Mediatorial office, and can have no relation to His own intrinsic Deity. The same epistle that says 'Thy God' can without contradiction or confusion equally say 'Thy throne, O God', for Christ is both God and Man.

Again, who can be God's 'fellow'? Yet here, the Son of God is anointed with the oil of gladness 'above His fellows'. This phrase contains the first of five occurrences of the Greek word *metochos* 'partakers' in Hebrews.

'Anointed ... above *thy fellows*' (Heb. 1:9).

'*Partakers* of the heavenly calling' (Heb. 3:1).

'We are made *partakers* ... if ...' (Heb. 3:14).

'The heavenly gift ... *partakers* of the Holy Ghost ... if' (Heb. 6:4,6).

'Chastisement, whereof all are *partakers*' (Heb. 12:8).

Who are these 'fellows', these 'partakers'? Some say angels, some say kings, some say believers. In Hebrews 2:14 Christ 'took part' or 'became a partaker' *metecho* of flesh and blood, and because He came down and united Himself with our low estate, it becomes gloriously possible for sinful men, redeemed by His precious blood, to contemplate the possibility of sharing the glory that has been given Him. Should one object and say 'surely the believer cannot be ranged along with the Lord like that', we read 'He is not ashamed to call them brethren' (Heb. 2:11), and elsewhere the believer is spoken of as being a 'joint-heir with Christ', so united with Him as to make it possible for him to sit on His throne, even as He has sat down with His Father on His Throne; and to crown all, we remember His words, 'The glory which Thou *gavest Me I have given* them; that they may be one, EVEN AS WE ARE ONE (John 17:22). In some of His offices, the Saviour was and must be 'alone'. None can intrude into the suffering and death that constitute the 'one Offering'. The glory that was His by right and enjoyed 'before the world was', is His alone and can be shared by none; but as the One Mediator, He is not alone; He is exalted, but exalted among His redeemed people.

Jesus Christ the Same (1:12)

When we read the words 'Thy throne, O God' and then go on to read 'Therefore God, even Thy God', we feel that we are facing a mystery, and indeed we are, 'the mystery of godliness', which is nothing less than God manifest in the flesh. If Christ be God and Man, we must be sure at every step whether His Divine or Human nature is in view. The same Person could use the extraordinary words in prayer, 'Father, I WILL', yet ever acknowledge that He came not to do His own will, but the will of the Father that sent Him. So, with nothing to mark the transition, Hebrews 1:9,10 passes from One Who can have 'fellows', to One Who shares an aspect of glory with none, the glory of the Creator.

> '... I am the LORD, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things ... Thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God Himself that formed the earth and made it ... I am the LORD; and there is none else' (Isa. 45:6,7,18).

Here there can be no 'fellows'. Here we listen to the unchallengeable claim of God, 'There is none else'. In the presence of Isaiah 45, we must believe that 'the Lord' Who is addressed in Hebrews 1:10 as having laid the foundation of the earth 'in the beginning' must be God, even as in the presence of Isaiah 45:23, we must believe that 'the Lord' of Philippians 2:6-11 must be God, to Whom every knee shall bow.

> 'And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of Thine hands' (Heb. 1:10).

The Scripture quoted is Psalm 102, a Psalm concerning 'The King, in His humiliation' (*The Companion Bible*). Much in this is reminiscent of Psalm 22, which opens with the words of the cross 'My God, My God, Why hast Thou forsaken Me?' The point of the Psalm is the cry of the afflicted and suffering Messiah, Who says:

'My days are consumed like smoke' (Psa. 102:3).
'My days are like a shadow that declineth' (Psa. 102:11).

In contrast with which He says:

'But Thou, O LORD, shalt endure for ever' (Psa. 102:12).

Later, the Sufferer returns to the theme of shortened days:

'He shortened My days' (102:23).
'I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days' (102:24).

In contrast He says:

'Thy years are throughout all generations' (102:24).

Then follows the passage quoted in Hebrews 1:10, which concludes with the words:

'But Thou art the same, and Thy years shall have no end' (102:27).

The words 'In the beginning', *kat'archas*, are the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew *le-phanim* 'previously', and take us back to Genesis 1:1.

He, Who is yet to 'appear in His glory' and build up Zion (Psa. 102:16), He, Who as the Mediator and suffering Redeemer mingled His drink with weeping, nevertheless before His humiliation was the great Creator. This is embedded in Psalm 102 and in Hebrews 1.

The structure of the Psalm, reduced to a minimum, seems to be as follows:

Psalm 102

A Complaint poured out *before the Lord.*
  B Days consumed like smoke.
    Days like a shadow that declineth.
      C Contrast BUT THOU shalt endure *(Heb.* sit).
        Thy remembrance unto all generations.
        D When the Lord shall build up Zion.
        D He shall appear in His glory.
  B Days shortened.
  Days Take me not away in the midst of.
      C Contrast Thy years are throughout all generations.
        BUT THOU shalt endure (*Heb.* stand).
        Thou art the same.
        Thy years shall have no end.
A Seed established *before Thee.*

Another Psalm belonging to the same group, namely Psalm 104, is quoted in Hebrews 1:7 'Who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire' (Psalm 104:4). It immediately continues:

'Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever (to the age and yet further, *Hebrew* to the age of the age, Gk.). Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a garment ... at Thy rebuke they fled ... Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over' (Psa. 104:5-9).

Earlier we read, 'Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: Who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain' (Psa. 104:2). These, the heavens and the earth, are to wax old as a garment, be folded up, and put away.

We remember the majestic interposition of the Lord in the book of Job, when He broke through all the arguments of the three comforters, and even of Elihu, and answered Job out of the whirlwind.

'Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?

Who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth?

When I made the cloud the garment thereof ....

Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed' (Job 38:4-11).

He Who challenged Job, and Who is seen as the Creator in Psalm 104 and Psalm 102, is He Who, when the fulness of time had come, humbled Himself and took upon Him the form of a servant. He Who created man is the One Who redeemed him. 'They shall perish; but Thou remainest' We know from 2 Peter 3:10, from Revelation 20:11 and from Isaiah 34:4 that 'The host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll', but the purpose for the introduction of this catastrophic event in Hebrews was not for its own sake, but to further the real object of the epistle. Paul knew, for he had been a Pharisee and a zealous upholder of the traditions of the fathers, that what he was about to say concerning the law, the priesthood, the sacrifices, and the covenants, would come as a great shock to his readers. Here he prepares them by looking further than the confines of Israel. Even creation itself is to 'wax old', yet the believer need have no fear while it is true concerning the Son of God that 'He remaineth'. This is the 'end' of the conversation of those whose faith they were enjoined to follow:

'Jesus Christ the SAME yesterday, and to day, and for ever' (Heb. 13:8).

Angels are set aside, Moses is superseded, Joshua only gave a typical rest, Aaron needed an atonement for his own sins, priests died and had to have successors, the covenant made at Sinai had been broken, and a New Covenant had been brought in:

'In that He saith, A new covenant, He hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away' (Heb. 8:13).

The words 'wax old', 'made ... old' and 'decayeth' are all translations of the same Greek word *palaioo*. To this relationship between the law of Moses, the old Covenant and the New, Paul devotes chapter 3 of 2 Corinthians. There, the old Covenant 'had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. For if that which is *done away* was glorious, much more that which *remaineth* is glorious' (2 Cor. 3:10,11). *Diameno*, the word translated 'remainest' in Hebrews 1:11, means 'to remain right through' as in 2 Peter 3:4 'all things continue as they were'. The believing Hebrew, with the unchanging Christ before him, could read Psalm 46 afresh with growing appreciation. Psalm 45:6 is already quoted in Hebrews 1; Psalm 46 might well continue:

'God is our refuge and strength ... therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea'.

'We', they can say, 'receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear' (Heb. 12:28). After this reference to creation and its dissolution, the apostle returns to his comparison between the angels and the Son of God.

'But to which of the angels said He at any time, Sit on My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool?' (Heb. 1:13).

Christ made the worlds and upholds all things by the word of His power, yet He was crucified in weakness. He Who was the Express Image of the substance of God, was made a little lower than the angels. He Who thus came so low on our account was raised from the dead, declared to be the Son of God with power, and so made much higher than the angels. He is the Son, and angels are called upon to worship Him. He is addressed as God and as Lord; all things may pass away, whether the physical world, or the old covenant, but while it is written 'Thou remainest' we may boldly say:

'The Lord is my Helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me' (Heb. 13:6).

He, the Beloved Son of God, cried out from the cross for our sakes 'My God, My God, Why hast Thou forsaken Me?', but He has promised:

'I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee' (Heb. 13:5).

Hebrews 1:14 speaks of an 'inherited salvation'. What is meant by this term? In the same chapter Christ is said to have obtained by *inheritance* a more excellent name than the angels, and this has a bearing on the subsequent use of the term.

All who are saved receive salvation by faith, but some of the saved will, in addition, receive salvation by inheritance. Christ suffered and learned obedience by His sufferings, was perfected, and became the Author of *aionian* salvation to all them that obey Him. Christ is set before the Hebrews as the Author and Perfecter of faith, 'Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God' (12:2).

Those who 'inherit' salvation suffer, endure, run the race set before them, and like Moses and Abraham, have respect unto the recompence of the reward. To be an heir presupposes sonship: 'If children, then heirs'; (Rom. 8:17), but before salvation no man is a child of God.

Does the word 'salvation' in Hebrews point to something other than salvation from sin? Let us see. We shall not be at all surprised to find that such a word occurs *seven times*, viz:

***Soteria* (salvation)**

Inherited salvation (1:14).
Neglecting so great salvation (2:3).
The Captain of salvation (2:10).
The Author of aionian salvation (5:9).
Things that accompany salvation (6:9).
Without sin unto salvation (9:28).
Unto the salvation of his house (11:7).

Passing by for a moment the first reference, let us briefly notice the others. Hebrews 2:3. - -This salvation is called the 'so great' salvation, which title indeed, we gladly agree, justly describes the redemption of the sinner. Those who were in danger of neglecting this so great salvation, however, are those who have had its testimony confirmed to them, which hardly applies to unbelievers. Much also depends upon the meaning of the word 'neglect', which must be considered in its place. We hope to show that this salvation does not refer to salvation from sin.

Hebrews 2:10. The underlying idea in this reference is contained in the words 'bringing many sons to glory'. This is accomplished by One called 'The Captain', Who, like Joshua, *leads on* to the promised possession, unlike Moses, who *led out* of the land of bondage.

Hebrews 5:9. This passage is almost parallel with 2:10, but gives fuller detail. It is concerned with obedience and the perfecting effect of suffering.

We believe we shall be able to demonstrate that the *aionian* salvation of this passage, the *so great* salvation of 2:3, the *inherited* salvation of 1:14, and the glory of 2:10, all point to the one thing.

Hebrews 6:9. 'Things that accompany salvation' certainly link us with our first deliverance from sin; yet remembering the purifying and stimulating character of hope, we cannot exclude future salvation and inherited glory from this passage. One has only to read on in the near context to hear of showing 'full assurance of hope unto the end', of 'inheriting the promises', through 'faith and patience', and of 'the hope set before us'. These all have a bearing upon the salvation of verse 9 and influence its interpretation.

Hebrews 9:28. This passage not only puts salvation into the future and speaks of believers waiting for it, but it also definitely rules out the idea of salvation from sin, that having taken place once for all. This salvation is connected, not with the first but with the Second Appearing of Christ, and is expressly spoken of as 'apart from sin' altogether.

Hebrews 11:7. The salvation of Noah's house in the Ark is the nearest approach to the salvation of the sinner that these seven references provide. Yet the deliverance from the future day of wrath is clearly foreshadowed, Noah himself being already a saved and justified believer, and the record is part of a series illustrating faith as the substance of things hoped for, rather than faith that saves from sin, the 'saving of the soul' of Hebrews 10:39 notwithstanding.

Whatever the exact meaning of the word 'salvation' may be, as used in this epistle, it is evident that no reference gives a clear *evangelical* statement of the way of salvation. On the other hand, the type of the wilderness journey, its Tabernacle, its Camp, and the rest that remaineth, its temptations and its perils, is so fully applied in this epistle, that we cannot dismiss them without losing great light upon this subject.

The title 'Saviour' never occurs in Hebrews. In Acts 5:31 Christ is called both a 'Prince and a Saviour'. In Hebrews the title of Prince is retained (2:10, 12:2 Gk.), but the title Saviour is omitted. The contexts of both occurrences speak of suffering in view of glory, rather than suffering to expiate sin. Other epistles speak of Christ as Saviour, this one speaks of Him as Captain and Leader. Other epistles tell of salvation from sin, this one speaks of the salvation that is to be inherited at the Second Appearing of the Lord.

The literal rendering of Hebrews 1:14 is those who are 'about to be heirs', and this is an expression frequently used in Scripture. In Hebrews it is found ten times, and often connected with the future kingdom, 'The habitable world about to be', 'The city about to be' (Heb. 2:5; 9:11; 10:1; 13:14). This inherited salvation is something future, related to the world which will be subjected to the Lord Jesus Christ and closely associated with that city Whose builder and maker is God.

CHAPTER 2

CONFIRMED COVENANTS AND THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES (Heb. 2:1-4)

If we look at Hebrews 1 and 2 as a whole, we shall see that chapter 2 goes back beyond the intervening revelation and argument to the one outstanding fact -

'God ... hath in these last days spoken unto us IN SON ... therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed ...'.

and immediately we are involved in an argument that revolves around the superiority of the Saviour to angels.

Hebrews 1,2

A	1:1,2. God once spoke by prophets.	Now by His Son.
B	1:2-14.The Son. His Glories.	God and Lord, better than angels.
A	2:1-4. God once spoke by angels.	Now by the Lord.
B	2:5-18.The Son. His humiliation.	Man and Abraham's seed. Lower than angels.

The 'therefore' of 2:1 is *dia touto*, 'on this account', or 'for this reason'. We must not look for the prime reason in the preceding verse which speaks of the ministry of angels, but to the preceding clause which speaks of the superior testimony of the Son (1:1,2). 'On this account it behoves us to give more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let slip' We differ from the A.V. in the rendering of this verse, agreeing more with the R.V. which reads, 'drift *away from them*'. *Rotherham* renders the word, 'drift away'; *J.N. Darby* renders it 'we should slip away'. A great deal of controversy has arisen over this word, one set of interpreters taking the passage to mean 'lest we should fall or stumble', the other taking it to mean 'lest we forget'. The one makes the passage teach that we should give earnest heed lest WE slip away; the other that we should give earnest heed so that we do not let the WORDS slip away. Both sides refer to Proverbs 3:21 to prove their point. J.N. Darby says:

> 'Proverbs is a free translation, for the Hebrew is plural "let them not slip away from thine eyes", that is, what is spoken of in the end of the verse; but it shows the sense of the word'.

Moses Strut says:

'This is the very proverb to which Chrysostom and Theophylact appeal as an illustration of the word in question: but the true sense of this word in Proverbs 3:21 they do not seem to have apprehended. *Pararrheo* here plainly does not mean to *perish, to fall*, but is in the antithesis to *tereson*, keep, attend to, practise, and consequently means, to pass by, to neglect, to transgress'.

Dr. E.W. Bullinger in his *Lexicon and Concordance* says:

'*Pararrheo,* to flow near, flow by, glide away; here the 2nd Aorist passive carried away, beside, or with, referring, not like the active, to the act of floating away, but to being carried beside, or floating away past anything with the stream (the marginal reading is quite wrong and follows the Vulgate *pereffluamus*)'.

The reader may wonder how it can be possible to arrive at a settled understanding where so many learned writers have so differently expressed themselves; yet it is possible to perceive truth in both sets of interpretations. It is certain that if earnest heed be not given we are apt to let the words slip; it is equally Scripturally true that, if we do not give earnest heed, we ourselves shall slip. It appears, therefore, that the true meaning of the passage is a combination of both thoughts; we cannot let slip the words of truth without sliding away ourselves. An extension of the argument comes in chapters 3 and 4:

'And to whom sware He that they should not enter into His rest, but to them that believed not? ... Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem *to come short of it*' (Heb. 3:18; 4:1).

The two sides of the question appear in chapters 5 and 6. In both the 'dull' of hearing or the 'slothful' are mentioned (same word in each case). Hebrews 5:11,12:'Ye are dull of hearing ... ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again'; here is the parallel with the A.V. 'let *them* slip'. Hebrews 6:12-19: 'That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises'. These are 'anchored', and this passage parallels the R.V. rendering, 'drift *away from them*'.

On the whole the grammatical form and the general teaching of the epistle inclines to the second meaning, that the lack of diligence was fraught with the danger of slipping away. The argument of the verses which follow is to the effect that, if Israel had to give earnest heed to the message sent by prophets or angels lest they should fail of entering into the rest that remained for them, those who have had the word spoken to them, not merely by prophets or even angels, but by the Son Himself, must even more diligently heed the words spoken. For it is impossible, we shall learn, to renew such unto repentance if they should 'fall away', or, in the words of the verse before us, 'how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation'.

The apostle leads to this question by reverting to an argument parallel with that of the opening of the first chapter. God spoke in the past by many agencies, now He has spoken in the Son. Here the form of the argument is repeated, the details being altered:

'For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him?' (2:2,3).

The apostle does not say 'the law', but 'the word', a term which is wider and embraces the whole of the old Covenant. It will be found that the two Covenants came with new laws. There can be no difficulty in connection with the law being given by the mediation of angels, even though the Scripture definitely declares that 'God spake all these words'. The problem would meet us in Hebrews 1:1 where God speaks, yet uses the mouth of a prophet. Stephen, speaking of Israel, said, 'ye received the law by the disposition of angels' (Acts 7:53). The apostle teaches that the law was 'ordained by angels in the hand of a Mediator' (Gal. 3:19). The awful accompaniments of the giving of the law at Sinai are presently to be compared with the wonderful miracles that were wrought to confirm the testimony of the Lord and the apostles. The word spoken by angels was 'stedfast' (*bebaios*). It is the word used for establishing a promise (Rom. 4:16); for the hope of the believer which rests upon 'an oath for confirmation' (Heb. 6:16-19); for the establishing of a covenant over the dead body of the appointed victim (Heb. 9:17); and for the confirmation of the prophetic promise (2 Pet. 1:19).

In the verbal form *bebaioo*, the word occurs again in Hebrews 2:3, 'was confirmed'. This fact helps us to see the force of the word 'stedfast' better. Both the old and the new Covenants have been miraculously confirmed, and this confirmation added to the guilt of those who broke the former covenant's terms. This is brought out in Hebrews 6, and again, from another standpoint, in Hebrews 10:28-29. 'Every transgression and disobedience': the words are nearly synonymous, they indicate a transgression accompanied by stubbornness and rebellion. Let us remember the many examples of those under the old Covenant who transgressed or rebelled against the terms of the Covenant confirmed by God. Let Moses himself bear witness that his act of transgression caused him to forfeit the land of promise; let all Israel who wandered forty years in the wilderness enforce the same principle, and let Caleb and Joshua also declare that the recompence of reward' took into account good as well as evil. It is the transgression, however, that is in view for the time being.

'The recompence of reward' (*misthapodosia*), and 'the rewarder' (*misthapodotes*) are both peculiar to Hebrews. They indicate the central idea of the epistle upon which we have again and again insisted, namely, that Hebrews is parallel with Philippians, which speaks of the prize, and of working out our own salvation. 'The recompence of the reward' comes as follows, 2:2; 10:35; 11:26, where the two sides, the good and the evil, are illustrated. The parenthetical way in which verse 6 comes in chapter 11 indicates that all those witnesses whose overcoming faith is instanced in that remarkable chapter believed that God is the *Rewarder* of them that diligently seek Him.

Without suggesting that the following is verbally accurate, it will nevertheless set out the argument of the apostle sufficiently for the general reader:

Hebrews 2:1-4

A a Warning, lest let slip.
b Things spoken by angels.
c Confirmed (*bebaios*).
B No escape from just recompence.
B How escape from similar recompence?
A a Warning, if neglect so great salvation.
b Spoken by the Lord.
c Confirmed (*bebaioo*) in special manner by God.

The argument is resumed in Hebrews 12:25-26, after a vast ground has been covered:

'See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh. For if they ESCAPED not who refused Him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from Him that speaketh from heaven: Whose voice then shook the earth' (i.e. at Sinai, when the law was given by the disposition of angels).

That there was a tendency on the part of the Jews to think they would escape is indicated by the question in Romans 2:3:

'And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, *that thou shalt escape* the judgment of God?'

Covenant relationship and privilege notwithstanding, the Jew was in error. There are believers today who so emphasize free grace that it may do good to draw attention to the balance of privilege and responsibility which characterizes the teaching of all Scripture. There are some who, ignoring Colossians 3:22-25, maintain that the judgment seat of Christ has no place in the epistles of the Mystery. This can only lead to imbalance.

The So Great Salvation (Heb. 2:1-4)

'How shall we escape, if we neglect so GREAT SALVATION?'. What is this salvation which is so great? None would be found to demur at the designation if it thereby indicated the salvation of the sinner by the blood of Christ. How great that is none can tell; salvation, as used in Hebrews, however, does not carry with it the evangelical

meaning (as stated before). Shall we allow the Hebrew usage to help us? Granting that the word often means individual salvation as in Romans 1:16, there are other usages which show that the word has a wider meaning.

Psalm 14:7. 'Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! when the LORD bringeth back the captivity of His people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad'.

The national restoration of Israel is here called their salvation.

Psalm 98:2,3. 'The LORD hath made known His salvation: His righteousness hath He openly shewed in the sight of the heathen'.

What is this salvation which has been 'made known'?

'He hath remembered His mercy and His truth toward the house of Israel: all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God'.

Isaiah 11:11; 12:1,2. 'And it shall come to pass *in that day*, that the LORD shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people ... and *in that day* thou shalt say, O LORD, I will praise Thee: though Thou wast angry with me, Thine anger is turned away, and Thou comfortedst me. Behold, God is my salvation'.

Isaiah 52:9,10. 'The LORD hath comforted His people, He hath redeemed Jerusalem. The LORD hath made bare His holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God'.

The close connection between 'salvation' and the restoration of Israel makes comment unnecessary.

Revelation 19:1,2. 'Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are His judgments'

Here the overthrow of Babylon ushers in the full redemption of Israel.

There is something beyond the initial salvation from sin, so those who are under the New Covenant have to learn that there is an aspect of salvation which is beyond the testimony of the Scriptures just quoted. The 'so great salvation' is something that could be 'neglected'; the salvation of the Psalms and Isaiah referred to above is unrelated to human faith or faithfulness.

Now we know that Abraham, while dwelling in tents in the land of promise, looked for the city which hath foundations, *but we do not learn that from the Old Testament*. There is no hint there of anything of the kind. This special aspect of salvation had its commencement in being spoken by the Lord. Literally the passage reads, 'which having received a commencement to be spoken by the Lord'. The idea is that the Lord Jesus was the first One to give shape and expression to this new aspect of salvation. It may be asked, why? In the first case, He was born King and came preaching the Kingdom, and until it became manifest that He would be rejected by His people the 'so great salvation' was not stressed. When, however, signs began to multiply showing that His ministry would end in rejection, then He spoke more openly of the *added glory* that should be shared by those who in His day of humiliation shared His reproach.

A hint is given in the parables of these two aspects in the distinction made between the Treasure which, having been found in the field, was hidden again, and the One Pearl (Matt. 13). When the Lord 'began' to speak of His own death, He also began to speak of the qualifications of those who should attain the 'so great salvation'. He speaks of self-denial, of losing one's soul, and of finding it when the Lord comes with His angels (Matt. 16:21-28). To the young man the Lord said:

'If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow Me ... he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions ... Peter ... said unto Him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed Thee; what shall we have THEREFORE? And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel' (Matt. 19:21-28).

The parable which comes later in the Gospel, that of the marriage of the King's Son, is a warning to those who 'neglect so great salvation', the very word translated 'neglect' in Hebrews being here rendered 'to make light of'. The unwise and the unready virgins of Matthew 25 speak again of the folly of neglect; they neglect the word spoken by the Lord, 'Watch therefore'. The Hebrews on the contrary were commended in that they had taken joyfully the

spoiling of their goods, and were urged not to cast away their confidence which had great recompense of reward. Parallel with the 'so great salvation' of Hebrews is the 'saving of the soul' of Peter, a term misapplied in some evangelical circles. The link is found in Hebrews 10:39, where the true rendering is, 'believe unto the acquiring of the soul'. Acquiring is the rendering of *peripoiesis* which, occurring but five times in the New Testament, will not take long to consult:

Eph. 1:14. 'Until the redemption of the PURCHASED POSSESSION'.
1 Thess. 5:9. 'To OBTAIN salvation'.
2 Thess. 2:14. 'To the obtaining of the glory'.
Heb. 10:39. 'to the OBTAINING OR THE PURCHASING of the soul'.
1 Pet. 2:9. 'A PURCHASED people' (*margin*).

The passage in Hebrews 10 is parallel with Matthew 16:24-27. Peter's expression, 'the saving of the soul', contains a very different idea from that which is intended in present day gospel teaching. Paul never taught the saving of the soul when writing to *the churches*. He uses the expression only when addressing *the Hebrews*. Peter uses it when writing to the dispersion. Those to whom Peter addresses his epistle were redeemed (1 Pet. 1:18), yet the salvation of their souls was something they could receive as 'the end of their faith' (9). This salvation is ready to be revealed in the last time. Concerning this salvation the prophets spoke and searched what the Spirit testified beforehand, 'the sufferings FOR Christ (see R.V.) and the glories that should follow ... the grace to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ' (1 Pet. 1:11-13). 'Rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy' (4:13). 'The God of all grace, Who hath called us unto His *aionian* glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you' (5:10).

This *aionian* glory, this share of the glory of the regeneration, this entry into the Marriage Feast, is all related to suffering, vigilance, not neglecting, or as it is in the Revelation, overcoming. The *aionian* glory is similar to the *aionian* salvation of Hebrews 5:8,9, which is closely connected with obedience and suffering. Those who attain this salvation are the church of the firstborn (Heb. 12:23). To this salvation the apostle addresses himself here. He brings the wilderness wandering in to illustrate the failure to attain the promise; he exhorts to endurance; he gives a list of overcomers and cites the Lord Jesus Himself in chapters 5 and 12 as an example to the overcomer. It is in view of this that the miraculous testimony of Hebrews 6 is written, and to this end the solemn conclusion of Hebrews 12 is addressed.

The difficulty that many have with regard to Hebrews 6 will be solved as we realize the nature of the subject and the character of the confirmation. The miracles which were wrought by the apostles are called the 'powers of the age to come', and to refuse their testimony was fraught with special danger. In this same context comes the nearest hint of the so great salvation in Abraham's history. Let it be observed what portion of Abraham's history is brought forward. Romans bases its teaching upon the testimony of Genesis 15 'Abram believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness'. The whole argument excludes works. James bases his argument upon the twofold testimony of Genesis 15 and 22 . Hebrews goes at once to Genesis 22. The epistle to the Hebrews does not speak of imputing righteousness without works. Its special theme demands such statements as 'they wrought righteousness', and 'the righteous shall LIVE by faith', 'he obtained witness that he WAS righteous', 'he became the *heir* of the righteousness which is by faith'.

The passage in Genesis 22 referred to in Hebrews 6 goes beyond justification by faith; as James 2:22 declares, 'seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith *perfected*?' After Abraham had passed the supreme trial of faith come the words:

> 'Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, *after he had patiently endured*, he obtained the promise' (Heb. 6:14,15).

It was here when Abraham had reached this stage of 'perfecting', the master key of 'Hebrews', that it would seem God revealed to him the 'so great salvation', the City which hath foundations.

Gifts for Confirmation (Heb. 2:3,4)

The great salvation which began to be spoken by the Lord was as surely *confirmed* as was the first covenant. It will be remembered that the word 'stedfast' in verse 2 is but another grammatical form of the word 'confirm'. The first Covenant was confirmed in many ways, both Moses and those who followed after receiving abundant testimony from God that their ministry was from Him. The second confirmation spoken of is 'unto us by them that heard Him'. The nature of this confirmation must now be considered.

First we observe that in giving the special blessing to Abraham, as related in Hebrews 6, God 'interposed with an oath'. This is spoken of as 'an oath of confirmation' (*bebaiosis*).

The confirmation of the Lord's words by the apostle is explained in 2:4; 'God also co-attesting, both with signs and wonders and with divers miracles and distributions of holy spirit, according to His will'. 'God hath spoken' (1:1) and whoever the mouthpiece may have been, responsibility to hear follows. Yet an increased responsibility comes with the fact that God hath at last spoken unto us in the person of the Son. God 'co-attesting' must make each miracle something more than a mere 'wonder'. As a translation of *sunepimartureo*, Dr. E.W. Bullinger's concordance gives:'To bear conjoint additional decided witness, to bear further or emphatic witness with'

It may be remembered how repeatedly the apostles are called witnesses' during the Acts:'ye shall be witnesses unto Me' (Acts 1:8), but notice well what goes before, 'but *ye shall receive* power, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto Me'. 'Ye shall receive' must come before 'Ye shall be'. Acts 1:22; 2:32; 3:15; 5:32; 13:31, and 26:16 should be consulted. Notice 5:32, 'and we are His witnesses of these things; *and so is also the Holy Ghost*, Whom God hath given to them that obey Him'.

This is a Scriptural exposition of the word 'co-attesting'. So also Acts 14:3, 'Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, Who testified unto the word of His grace, and granted *signs and wonders* to be done by their hands. ' So again Acts 15:8:

'And God ... bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost'. Looking at the epistle to the Hebrews we see that God testified to Christ (1) that He liveth (2) that He is a Priest for the age after the order of Melchisedec (Heb. 7:8,17). The elders were attested; Abel obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying over his gifts. Enoch received this testimony that he pleased God; and so it was with Noah, Abraham and the rest, 'these all, having been attested by means of faith' (Heb. 11:2,4,5,39). In a special manner God co-attested the word of the Lord through the apostles. The closing verses of Mark's Gospel seem to refer to Hebrews 2:3,4:

> 'And these signs shall follow them that believe; In MY name shall they cast out devils (demons); they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them (co-operating), and CONFIRMING the word with SIGNS following' (Mark 16:17-20).

The parallel with Hebrews 2 is too obvious to justify any detailed comparison, but a word with regard to the character of these confirmatory miracles may be of service.

(1) They were 'signs following', not mere prodigies, or marvels, but signs, mighty acts that signified something.

(2) They were 'the powers of the coming age' (Heb. 6). Into this present evil age of demonic control comes the power of that age when such influences will be cast out.

Into this veritable Babel comes the power of that age with its new tongues; in that age the serpent will no longer tempt and destroy; in that age deadly things shall do no hurt; in that age sickness shall flee away.

As an illustration of the miracle being a 'sign', see the healing of the lame man by Peter, and his own application of it to the salvation of the nation (Acts 3 and 4). To the Corinthians, among whom miraculous gifts abounded, the apostle wrote:

> 'In every thing ye are enriched by Him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; even as the testimony (*marlurion*) of Christ was confirmed (*bebaioo*) in you: so that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming (revelation) of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall also confirm (*bebaioo*) you unto the end' (1 Cor. 1:5-8).

Here again Hebrews 2:3,4 is seen, the testimony, the confirmation, the miraculous gifts, all coming together. In 2 Corinthians 1:21 Paul writes:

'Now He that *conforms* us with you with a view to Christ, and hath *anointed us*, is God' (not AV JP).

Once more confirmation and anointing come together, the anointing referring to the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The three words, 'signs, wonders, and miracles' of Hebrews 2:4 are found written of the Lord's own personal work.

'Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved (publicly attested) of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you' (Acts 2:22).

It will be remembered that His ministry was a confirmatory one, 'to confirm the promises made unto the fathers' (Rom. 15:8). So the subsequent signs, wonders, and miracles were confirmatory also. Many wonders and signs were done by the apostles (Acts 2:43); 'a notable sign' is what the rulers called the healing of the lame man (Acts 4:16).

Other passages are Acts 4:30; 5:12; 6:8; 8:6,13, and 15:12. It will be observed that 'signs and wonders' usually go together. The 'wonder' was indeed a 'sign', not some prodigy to cause men open-mouthed astonishment. Even the terrible things which usher in the Day of the Lord will be of similar character, 'I will show WONDERS in heaven above, and SIGNS in the earth beneath' (2:19). The word rendered 'miracle' in Hebrews 2 is as often translated simply 'power', e.g., 'ye shall receive power' (Acts 1:8), 'as though by our own power' (Acts 3:12; 4:7,33; 6:8; 10:38), the last reference ('how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: Who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him. And we are witnesses of these things') being a commentary upon the meaning of the anointing already noticed in 2 Corinthians, the enduement of the apostles in Acts 1:8, and the close connection between this 'power' and the 'miracle' which was its outflowing.

The scientific mind defines a miracle as the suspension of the laws of nature at the introduction of a higher law. The Scriptural definition seems rather to be that a miracle was the power of the coming age, brought forward as a pledge and a sign of good things to come. What will be normal in that age of glory appears abnormal and supernatural in this. Added to the signs, wonders and miracles for this special confirmation are 'the distributions of holy spirit'.

This is described as a *taste* of the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, and those who tasted are described as having become partakers of the Holy Spirit (Heb. 6:4,5). Not until the Lord was about to leave His disciples did He say, 'Receive ye the Holy Spirit' (John 20:22). With this read John 7:39, 'this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified'. 1 Corinthians 12:8-11 gives a full comment upon the 'distributions of holy spirit'. These gifts, however diverse, are the working of that one and selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will. These distributions of holy spirit covered the ministry of apostles, prophets, teachers, as well as miracles, gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues (1 Cor. 12:28).

Let us notice the explanation of the Scripture as to how the gift of tongues was a sign. In the law it is written:

'With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear Me, saith the Lord. Wherefore tongues are for a sign' (1 Cor. 14:21,22).

What the law prophesied is foreshadowed in the possession and exercise of the distributions of holy spirit. When the people to whom the signs applied were removed from the scene, the signs went too. It is often stated, but with no Scriptural proof, that the miraculous gifts possessed by the early Church have been lost because of the worldliness and carnality of the Church. The most carnal Church in Scripture is that of the Corinthians, yet they are described as the most richly endowed with supernatural gifts. 1 Corinthians 13:9-12 indicates that a dispensational change would be associated with the passing of the gifts, and this is the testimony of the whole of the New Testament.

It is necessary to make another point. The same words that are used of the mighty works of Christ and His apostles are used of the wicked one, 'whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders' (2 Thess. 2:9), the only added word being 'lying'. This reveals the awful deception which shall be thrust

upon the earth in the last days. These miracles constitute the 'strong delusion' which will lead men to believe the lie. The fact that the false prophet will work actual miracles, and the three frog-like spirits of demons seen in the Revelation will work miracles, should cause us most carefully to pause before we conclude that the possession of a supernatural power today is necessarily an evidence of Divine origin or approval. Before we commence the section 2:5-18, we ask the question:

What is meant by 'tasting' death?

In Revelation 5:12 we have a seven-fold ascription of praise which can be grouped as follows:

Power.	
Riches Wisdom	Solomon - King.
Strength.	
Honour Glory	Aaron - Priest.
Blessing.	

When these kingly and priestly functions are united we have no longer Solomon and Aaron, but the King-Priest of the Apocalypse, the Priest after the order of Melchisedec. The crowning with glory and honour (Heb. 2:9) is the consecration of Christ as the Priest after the order of Melchisedec. 'And no man taketh this HONOUR unto himself ... so also Christ GLORIFIED not Himself' (5:4,5). We shall find an allusion to this position in 3:3:'for this Man was counted worthy of more GLORY than Moses, inasmuch as He Who hath builded the house hath more HONOUR than the house'. Thus we find Christ superior in honour and glory to both Moses and Aaron, and when we see Him crowned with honour and glory we are indeed considering Him Who is the Apostle (Moses) and High Priest (Aaron) of our profession.

It will be remembered that immediately following the revelation of the Lord's approaching sufferings (Matt. 16), comes the Transfiguration (Matt. 17). In order to have 'an entrance ministered richly into the *aionian* kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ', the apostle Peter bids the believers of the dispersion remember the Transfiguration:-

'For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father HONOUR and GLORY' (2 Pet. 1:16,17).

We pointed out previously that the 'so great salvation' of which the Lord began to speak commences with His rejection, and is related more closely to the testimony of the second half of Matthew's gospel than to the first. Those disciples who saw the rejection of the King (Matt. 12,13), could say after the Transfiguration, 'We see not yet all things put under Him, but we see Jesus ... crowned with glory and honour'.

We now turn our attention to the close of Hebrews 2:9, 'that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man'. How are we to understand the expression 'taste death'? Is it merely a synonym for death itself? Some say so, but we distrust this interpretation of so many expressions as synonyms. We feel that there must be a clear reason why this word is used here, and therefore we turn to the Scriptures for light upon its meaning.

The word is translated in the A.V. 'eat' three times, and 'taste' twelve times. We shall never plumb the profoundest depths of the Scriptures 'unto perfection', but we shall never find them lapsing into the slightest approach to error or slovenly usage of language. That Homer may nod is proverbial; that the Scriptures are infallible is one of the first articles of faith. It is also the impression consistently gained by continual searching. We are not at all surprised therefore in the case of such divinelyarranged words to find that the first occurrence of the expression 'taste of death' takes us back to the close of Matthew 16, immediately before the record of the Transfiguration. There is one feature common to all passages referring to the Transfiguration in the Gospels: immediately before the reference is the statement concerning losing the soul for Christ's sake. Now Peter's epistles have as their theme present suffering followed by future glory. This is the lesson also of Matthew, chapters 12 and 17.

To John 8:52 we need not refer, for the Lord said 'see death' (verse 51) and we are not certain enough of those children of the devil (verse 44) to follow them here. That to 'taste' does not mean to 'drink' Matthew 27:34 shows, and thus, in the figurative sense also, to taste of death need not necessarily mean to die. When the ruler of the feast 'tasted' the water that was made wine, he certainly did not drink the entire amount which the Saviour had miraculously provided, and when the Lord said 'none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper', it is equivalent to the more modern colloquial phrase, 'they shall not have a bit of it'. Again, the phrase in Acts 20:11 does not indicate what we call a meal. The curse under which the enemies of Paul bound themselves was not that they would not eat, but that they would not even taste food, so great was their enmity. Those who during this present evil age experienced in any measure the powers of the age to come are said to have 'tasted' of the heavenly gift, and to have 'tasted' the good word of God (Heb. 6:4,5). They *sampled* these things, but it will be true of them, as of the Queen of Sheba, that 'the half has not yet been told'.

1 Peter 2:2,3 is quite in line with the rest. The new-born babes, though feeding on the milk of the Word, have but 'tasted' that the Lord is gracious. As they grow thereby and feed upon the stronger food, they will realize that blessed truth more. Every passage we have referred to leads us to draw distinctions between tasting and fully eating. Coming back to Matthew 16:28 let us notice how this helps us:

> 'Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in His Kingdom'.

It is a difficulty with many that these men died before the Lord's return. Now apart from all other factors in the true explanation, this difficulty is a fallacy. The Lord did not say 'shall not die', but shall not taste of death, *and He refers to what He had just been teaching them:*

> 'If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and *take up his cross*, and follow Me. For whosoever will save his life (soul) shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life (soul) for My sake shall find it' (24,25).

This is surely 'tasting' death. To take up the cross and to lose one's soul - this, though not actual death, is tasting death. The disciples however were not permitted to suffer anything for their Lord until they had first of all seen the vision of His glory so closely connected with His decease which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem (Luke 9:31). This word 'decease' impressed Peter, for he uses the very same word immediately before he speaks of the Transfiguration in his second epistle. This time it was his own decease, but the link is there and visible. That bitter sorrow of soul 'even unto death' experienced by the Lord in the garden of Gethsemane reveals the awful character of the taste of death to which Hebrews 2:9 refers, while the words 'nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt' link it with Hebrews 5:4-10. Who were they that were chosen to be near the Lord in this dread hour? *The very three* who witnessed the foreshadowing of His glory on the mount of Transfiguration. When the Lord tasted that bitter cup, He prayed:

> 'O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from Me, except I drink it, Thy will be done' (Matt. 26:42).

As we stand upon this holy ground and witness that agony and bloody sweat, we see the Lord Jesus tasting death. How pointed therefore the words are to those who are exhorted to follow Him in this path of suffering when they are told, 'He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted' Temptation hung over that garden of Gethsemane, as is seen by the Lord's words to His disciples. 'Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation'. The garden of Gethsemane is no sentimental idea foisted upon Hebrews 2:9. This is seen by Hebrews 5:7-9:

> 'Who in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared; though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; and being made perfect, He became the Author of *aionian* salvation unto all them that obey Him'.

How fully this agrees with Hebrews 2:9,10. We have only to read on to verse 10 to complete the parallel:

> 'For it became Him, for Whom are all things, and by Whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings'.

His sufferings therefore in this context are viewed as having an effect upon Himself, which is a thought distinct from that of Christ dying for the ungodly.

One more point we must notice; the words 'for every man' are literally 'on behalf of all'. There are some who take the word 'all' in a universal sense, but we must remember that the word is always limited by the context. Salvation from sin is not in view, suffering in view of glory is the theme, and the word 'all' refers here to the 'many sons' who are being led along the pathway of the fellowship of His sufferings to the glory that shall be revealed.

Attention has been drawn to the parallels between Hebrews and Philippians, the epistle of 'The Prize'. While we must not confuse the two sets of teaching, much light will be received if we remember that, although on differing planes, the ways of God with His people are actuated by similar principles, and all find their cause and goal in the same blessed Son of God.

'We see not yet ... But we see' ... (Heb. 2:6-9)

We now commence section B 2:5-18 of the structure of the epistle given on p. xxx. Here suffering and death are prominent, and the position of the Lord is 'for a little lower than angels'.

A more remote connection which it is important not to miss, is that the 'so great salvation' is in fact all that is implied in the words 'the world to come', concerning which, said the apostle, he was speaking. 'The world to come', as we have seen, is literally 'the habitable (world) about to be'. In the original the word 'habitable world' is *oikoumene*. This word has occurred already in Hebrews, being used in 1:6. It is used of the Roman Empire (Luke 2:1; Acts 24:5). This is in line with secular usage, Polybius and Plutarch using it in this way. The LXX in a similar manner uses the expression *he oikoumene hole* ('the whole habitable') for the Babylonian Empire (Isa. 14:17). Alexander's Empire is called *he oikoumene* (AElitan, V.H. 3,29). This combined testimony makes it appear very probable that the term must not be applied to the whole 'world' as we know it, but to that portion which will become the final sphere of Nebuchadnezzar's sovereignty as pictured in the great image of Daniel 2. The word is still further limited in its usage in such a passage as Acts 11:28, for Josephus speaks of a famine in Jud -a at that time, and not to one of world-wide extent. It is used three times in the Revelation:

> 'I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which is about to come on the whole habitable world, to try those who dwell on the earth' (3:10 not AV JP).
>
> 'Satan, the one who is deceiving the whole habitable world' (12:9 not AV JP).
>
> 'Which go forth to the kings of the whole habitable world to gather them together unto the war of that great day of God Almighty' (16:14 not AV JP).

These kings appear to be those which are connected with the Beast, and are kings of the 'civilized' part of the earth. Now what do we learn by thus restricting the meaning of the word *oikoumene*? Surely this, that the great salvation, which is connected with overcoming and being made perfect, has to do with the initial phase of the future kingdom, when it will be necessary to rule the nations with a rod of iron (see Rev. 2:26-27). Parallel also is the blessing of Revelation 20:4, 'they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years'. The wonderful change indicated in Isaiah 11 is at first limited to Israel's land:

> 'They shall not hurt nor destroy in all *My holy mountain: for the earth* shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea' (verse 9).

Isaiah 65, which repeats part of Isaiah 11, links the creation of the new heavens and the new earth with a newly-created Jerusalem. Isaiah 60, verses 1 to 3, makes a distinction too:

> 'Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon THEE, and His glory shall be seen upon THEE. And the Gentiles shall come to THY light, and kings to the brightness of THY rising'.

What redeemed Israel will be in relation to the other nations, those who partake of the 'great salvation' will be to the remnant of Israel.

There is, possibly, a glance backward in Hebrews 2:5. If we put a little stress on the 'world *to come*', the question will at once arise whether angels ruled over the world in any period of the past? Satan is called in Scripture

'the prince of this world', 'the prince of the power of the air', and 'the god of this age'. There are also others who are called 'the world rulers of this darkness' (Eph. 6:12). Michael the Archangel stands for Israel, and angels carry out Divine commissions from the time of Abraham right through the Scriptures, except during the dispensation of the Mystery. There is evidence of an inductive character which makes one feel that angels had much to do with this world before Adam and the creation associated with him. Be this as it may, angels are not the appointed rulers of the world to come:

'But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?' (Heb. 2:6).

There is a strangeness in the manner of the apostle's reference. Why did he not say 'DAVID, in the eighth Psalm', or 'as it is written in the eighth Psalm', or 'as it is written in the book of the Psalms', or even 'as the Scripture testifieth'? If we turn back to chapter 1 we shall find similar vagueness; verse 5 simply says 'for unto which of the angels', etc.; verses 6 and 7 simply have 'He saith'. Right through these verses, which are composed mainly of quotations, there is not a single reference to chapter, verse or book. In chapter 2:12 the only word used is 'saying', and in verse 13 'and again'. At last in chapter 3:7 we have a reference to Scripture, and the speaker is mentioned by *name*. Quoting from Psalm 95 the writer says 'Wherefore AS THE HOLY GHOST saith'. When this Psalm is quoted again (in 4:7) then the apostle says 'saying by David'. *The reason is that by then his special object has been attained.* 'GOD hath spoken' (1:1), 'the LORD hath spoken' (2:3); all other names, such as David and Moses, or Psalms and Law, are but the agents in 'sundry times and divers manners'. The important thing is that these quotations are from the Word of God.

In the second place, of course, the apostle was writing to those who were very familiar with the Scriptures, and who would not need continual reference to chapter and verse for their guidance. Had he been writing to Gentiles only recently brought to the knowledge of the Word, he would doubtless have followed the mode of reference found in Romans. But here he says:

'Thou madest Him a little lower than the angels; Thou crownedst Him with glory and honour, and didst set Him over the works of Thy hands: Thou hast put all things in subjection under His feet' (Heb. 2:7,8).

The writer does not refer to every particular in his quotation, but centres his exposition upon one or two essential features. His first item is the subjection of all things under the feet of the Son of man, namely:

(a) As to its universality.
(b) As to its fulfilment.

(a) *Its universality:*

'For in that He put all in subjection under Him, He left nothing that is not put under Him' (2:8).

How similar this mode of reasoning is to that in 1 Corinthians 15:27:

'But when He saith all things are put under Him, it is manifest that He is excepted, which did put all things under Him'.

Its universality in the one case is proved by the word 'all', which leaves 'nothing' that is not put under Him; its universality in the other case is proved by one obvious exception - God Himself. All, whether principality, or power, heavenly, earthly or subterranean, must be subjected unto Him.

In 1 Corinthians 15 the 'all' includes enemies, which are to be 'destroyed'. This fact will prevent us from reasoning that since all are to be subject beneath His feet, all must necessarily be saved. In 1 Corinthians 15 death as the last enemy is to be destroyed; in Hebrews 2, the devil, the holder of the power of death, is to be destroyed, so the parallel is completed. Before passing to the second feature of this Psalm, the apostle makes another observation upon the subjection of all things:

'But now we see not yet all things put under Him' (2:8).

This constituted a real difficulty at the time. The Messiah had come, but the long promised kingdom had not yet been set up. Peter confesses that the subject was accompanied by difficulties, but he certainly did not endorse the words of the scoffers who said, 'Where is the promise of His coming?' The Lord was not slack concerning His

promise, but the writings of Paul, in which were things hard to be understood, contained the explanation of this apparent delay, while, so far as the dispensational position of the Hebrews is concerned, it was true that 'now we see not yet all things put under Him'. The dispensational viewpoint of the Mystery put things in a different light. *At the very same time* that Paul could confess that prophecy had become temporarily held up (Heb. 2:8), he could personally be rejoicing in a peculiar fulfilment of this same promise (Eph. 1:22,23):

'And *hath put* all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the Head over all things to the Church, which is His Body'.

By this statement we do not intend to teach that Hebrews and Ephesians were written at the same time or about the same subject! Universal headship has not yet been taken by the Lord, but headship over all things *to the Church* is His position now. What He *will be* universally, He is *now* in mystery. What He will be in heaven and in earth is anticipated now in the super-heavenlies. We however are dealing with Hebrews, not Ephesians, and the point of view there is 'we see not'. Not until the seventh angel sounds shall the mystery of God be consummated in the universal sovereignty of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The second feature of Psalm 8 is the reference to man being made a little lower than the angels. Romans 5:14 supplies the link:

'Adam ... who is the figure of Him that was to come'.

and 1 Corinthians 15:45-47 supplements:

'The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam a quickening (life-giving) Spirit ... The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second Man is the Lord from heaven'.

Psalm 8 looks back to the first and forward to the second Man. Viewing Adam in his frailty and fall the Psalmist says, 'What is man that Thou art mindful of him?' Viewing man in the person of the Lord from heaven, he sees the crown of glory and honour placed upon One Who will never fail or forfeit. The apostle's eye is not fixed upon frailty and forfeiture, but upon honour and glory - 'but we see Jesus', 'consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession' he writes; rather than think of Moses and Aaron, 'look off unto Jesus'; rather than to the cloud of witnesses enumerated in chapter 11, consider the end of the conversation of those who have spoken unto you the word of God - 'Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and unto the age' (13:8).

(1) We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels.

(2) We see Jesus, crowned with glory and honour.

Both the A.V. and the R.V. read, 'a little lower than the angels', and place in the margin, 'a little while inferior to', 'for a little while lower'. The element of time does not enter into Hebrews 1:4 where is shown the superior dignity of the Son in virtue of His inherited name. This influences the interpretation of Hebrews 2. He Who now is infinitely above angels achieved that glory by humbling Himself, suffering and dying. It is as important to the right understanding of the crown of glory and honour that we see the depth of the Lord's humiliation, as it is to the right understanding of His excellent glory that we realize His position at the right hand of God. In both cases angels are taken as the standard of comparison, for their position remains unchanged, whereas man fallen in Adam will be exalted in Christ, and so cannot be so easily compared.

The Psalmist does not glory in the exalted position of man. He does not bid us look at his excellency, only just a little lower than angels; he rather considers man's low estate, saying, as he looks abroad upon the creation, 'What is man, that Thou art mindful of him?' The humiliation of the Lord was for a purpose -

'Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil ... for verily He took not on Him the nature of angels' (Heb. 2:14-16).

The argument is parallel, and is Paul's own explanation. This we can readily follow by referring to the structure. In both cases it leads to Christ, either as the *archegorl*: or the *archiereus*, and in both capacities He is set forth as One Who has suffered. Philippians 2:6-13 is a passage to which all readers should prayerfully refer.

With what does the writer link the words 'for the suffering of death'? Does he intend us to understand that the Lord was made a little lower than the angels that He might suffer death? or does He mean that Christ was crowned

with glory and honour because of the suffering of death? If we read it that Christ was crowned with glory as a result of His death, we shall have a difficulty in the conclusion of verse 9, 'that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man'; He was not exalted to taste death, but was humbled. The grammar of the apostle's phrase considered alone and without the context, favours the following as the meaning:

'But we see Jesus crowned with glory and honour, Who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, so that He by the grace of God might taste death for every man' (2:9).

With this agrees Hebrews 10:5:

Wherefore when He cometh into the world, He saith, Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a body hast Thou prepared Me'.

But while this translation appears to conform to the requirement of grammar, we cannot help feeling how fully the alternative rendering fits the theme of the epistle.

Philippians 2:8,9 links the death of the cross with the glorious exaltation, and with the Name above every name, which immediately attracts attention to Hebrews 1:4. Hebrews 12:2 also links the suffering and cross very definitely with the exaltation at the right hand of the throne of God. The whole driving thought of the epistle is that endurance now is necessary to obtain that *aionian* glory and that *so great* salvation. By transposing the order of the words and placing the reference to the glory immediately after the reference to Jesus, we may be more *grammatical*, but we have nevertheless taken a liberty with the way in which the apostle by Divine guidance arranged his sentence, and have robbed ourselves of the very ambiguity he intended.

The Lord did not take hold of angels, He took hold on the seed of Abraham. He was made flesh and received a body that thereby He might suffer the death of the cross. By that very act of humiliation, however, He inherited a more excellent Name than the angels, beneath whose dignity and nature He had voluntarily stooped; and therefore by reason of the suffering of death, we see Jesus crowned with glory and honour.

'All of one'

'For it became Him, for Whom are all things, and by Whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings' (Heb. 2:10).

Instead of simply saying 'God' or 'The Father', the apostle uses the title 'Him for Whom are all things, and by Whom are all things'. There is a reason for this which it is important to observe, and it comes out again in chapter 11 . There the statement is simpler, and will enable us to perceive the underlying principle here in verse 10:

'For it is necessary for him who comes near to God (a special term) to believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them who diligently seek Him' (11:6).

Three statements are here, which placed beside 2:10 will illuminate that passage:

'It was becoming'.	'It is necessary'.
'Him, for Whom and by Whom are all things'.	'He is'.
'Perfecter'.	'Rewarder'.

The doctrine of reward is as primal and absolute as the very existence of God. 'He is', 'He is a rewarder'. The words of chapter 2:10 are an expansion of this. He Who Is, is the Creator Whose creation has been arranged with a view to His own glory. He Who is a rewarder of the diligent seeker, plans also the pathway to glory, 'Perfect through suffering'. Instead of counting the idea of reward as strange, and proudly saying, 'Virtue is its own reward, we ought to do right for right's sake' (which is perfectly true), we should be more Scriptural, and fundamentally more true, if we saw in the framing and enforcing of all law whatever, that reward is essential, and that suffering is of purpose. So the words are introduced by *eprepe*, 'It is becoming'.

Prepei is used again in 7:26, when the essential suitability of Christ as High Priest is spoken of; also in Matthew 3:15, where it was fitting and proper that the Son of God should fulfil all righteousness. It was therefore in the way of the nature of things that God, Who had made all things for Himself, in leading many sons to glory, should perfect their Captain through sufferings. The idea of a suffering Messiah was repugnant to the Jew by reason of the

traditions of the elders, but the apostle shows that the 'taste of death for every man' was most fitting and proper. The path of suffering to glory must not be counted as though some strange thing had happened; it is according to plan. By this acknowledgment we do not pretend to know the solution of life's mystery, we only know that there is one.

The last words of verse 9 are sometimes quoted to prove that Christ died for every man and therefore is the Saviour of every man. The passage does not teach this. We saw previously that the 'tasting' of death did not mean death itself, but the sufferings which preceded it, and that this tasting of death did not have redemption in view, but glory. There is no word for 'man' in the original, and the word 'all' has reference to the 'many sons' who were being led on to glory through suffering.

Christ is their Captain and Joshua is the type. That this is so, the words in 4:8 will shew. 'For if Jesus had given them rest', where the margin says, '*i.e. Joshua*'. Hebrews is NOT dealing with Moses and the passover redemption from the land of Egypt, but with Joshua and the survival through the rigours of the wilderness to the triumphal entry into the land of promise. The wilderness is the setting of the book, not Egypt. A saved people are addressed, and they are not urged to believe and be saved, but to go on unto perfection.

Christ is called the Captain again in Hebrews 12:2, and that once more in connection with perfecting and suffering; the 'Author (captain) and Finisher (Perfecter) of faith' (not of 'our' faith). There He is seen leading the van of the great company who overcame through faith and obtained promises. The 'so great salvation' is for those who have been perfected, just as is the Prize in Philippians 3. It is written again:

'And having been perfected (by the things which He suffered, verse 8), He became the author of *aionian* salvation unto all them that obey Him' (5:9).

In connection with sufferings, Christ as Captain sets us an example, for:

'Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps' (1 Pet. 2:21).

'Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind' (1 Pet. 4:1).

It is well to consider Him, lest we grow weary and faint in our minds. It is in this sense that we see Him as 'the Forerunner for us', Who has entered beyond the veil. The Hebrew believers had endured a great contest (*athlesis*) of sufferings (Heb. 10:32, same word for suffering *spathematon* as in 2:10); which, said the apostle, had great recompence of reward.

The perfecting of faith (1 Thess. 3:10; Heb. 12:2), the perfecting of love (1 John 2:5), and the perfecting of holiness (2 Cor. 7:1) cannot be accomplished apart from suffering. Faith will be tried (Gen. 22), love will be called upon to suffer long and endure all things (1 Cor. 13), holiness will cause separation from much that is attractive.

We are heirs of God, if sons; but we are *joint-heirs* with Christ if so be we suffer with Him (Rom. 8:17). Present affliction is temporal in duration and light in comparison with the *aionian* weight of glory which it works out for those who are exercised by it, and whose eyes see beyond the temporal and the visible. 'The fellowship of His sufferings' is a necessary prelude to the fellowship of His glory.

'Weeping may endure for a night, But joy cometh in the morning' (Psa. 30:5).

To catch the meaning of the concluding portion of Hebrews 2 (verses 11 to 18), we must first of all see it as a whole, apart from details:

'ALL OF ONE'.

A 11. Oneness in Sanctification.
  B 14. Oneness in nature. He partook.
    C 14,15. Oneness in death and deliverance.
  B 17. Oneness in nature. He was made like.
A 18. Oneness in temptation.

This simple balance sweeps aside the idea entertained by some that 'all of one' refers to Adam, or to God. Verse 10 speaks of two parties, 'many sons' and the 'Captain'. The perfecting of the Captain can only bear upon the many sons if they are united in some way. Verse 11 says they are, both Sanctifier and sanctified, 'all of one'.

What therefore happens to the Captain is communicated to the host. We must remember the limitations imposed upon the scope of 'all' by the word 'sanctified'. 'All of one' does not here speak of the human race although Luke traces the genealogy of Christ back to Adam, and Paul uses the same expression (*ex henos*) in Acts 17:26 when he speaks of 'every nation of men'. Neither does the passage speak of redemption from sin and its penalty. The Exodus, so far as Hebrews is concerned, is already accomplished. The union here is with 'the things which accompany salvation'. The Israelites were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea *after redemption*. This oneness is limited to sanctification. We must therefore seek a true meaning for this term before we can appreciate the teaching of this passage.

Hagiazo 'to sanctify' - occurs seven times in Hebrews. It is therefore a keyword and carries an important message:

Sanctify

A **a** 2:11. He that sanctifieth. The one perfected through suffering
b 2:11. They that are sanctified.
B 9:12-14. Blood of bulls ... flesh.
Blood of Christ ... conscience.
C 10:9,10. The will of God The offering of The body once.
B 10:14. Perfected for ever (cf 10:1) by One Offering.
A ***b*** 10:29. The blood wherewith He was sanctified.
a 13:12. The people sanctified by His blood without the gate.

Sanctification is uppermost in Hebrews 1:3 *where purification* for sins, and *not* redemption is the aspect of truth presented. This aspect is sustained in 9:12-14 where the blood of goats and bulls is linked with the ashes of an heifer, which were not used as a 'ransom' or for 'redemption', but for sprinkling the unclean, and results in a *sanctification*, or the purifying of the flesh which had come into contact with *some form of death*. Christ's *sanctification* cleanses the conscience from *dead works*, the spiritual counterpart. Hebrews 10:10 and 14 cannot be understood apart from the earlier verses.

The word translated 'continually' in 10:1 is the same as is rendered 'for ever' in verse 14, and should in both cases be translated 'unto perpetuity'. Chapter 10:1,2 should be rendered:

'For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year make the comers thereunto PERFECT UNTO PERPETUITY. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? Because the worshippers, *once having been cleansed*, should have had *no more conscience of sins*'.

Verses 10 and 14 are the answer to this, just as verse 14 is the answer to verse 13 in chapter 9. Chapter 10:29 speaks of the awful possibility of counting the blood wherewith He was sanctified unholy, and of doing despite to the Spirit of grace, which is opened up in an intensely practical way in the verses that follow, where the drawing back from suffering and trial is a parallel. The last reference shows the Captain of our salvation suffering outside the gate. The oneness between Sanctifier and sanctified is expressed in the words:

'Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach. For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come' (Heb. 13:13,14).

These last words are full of light for us as to the underlying idea of this sanctification. The pilgrim character, the wilderness pathway, the whole theme of race and crown is involved in the word. Its association with 'perfection' or maturity would teach students of Philippians that much. See also another link between sanctification and pilgrim character. Those who are sanctified suffer the spoiling of their goods knowing that in heaven they have a better and an enduring substance. They have here no continuing city, but seek one to come. Like Abraham:

'They desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore *God is not ashamed* to be called their God: for He hath prepared for them a City' (11:16).

'Both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause *He is not ashamed* to call them brethren' (2:11).

Hagiotes and *hagiasmos* in Hebrews 12:10 and 14 speak of holiness as the outcome of the Father's discipline, without which no man shall see God.

Hagios, apart from its occurrences in the expression 'the Holy Ghost', comes in 3:1, 'holy brethren', who are immediately named 'partakers of the heavenly calling', a statement which illuminates the meaning of 'holy brethren' here. In 6:10 and 13:24 it is used for 'the saints' without qualification.

Hagion in its ten occurrences is used to denote the Sanctuary or the Holiest of all, either in the Tabernacle in the wilderness or the true Tabernacle, 'heaven itself'. The sanctification of the epistle to the Hebrews is linked with the wilderness and the Tabernacle, not the kingdom and the Temple, and with the heavenly Jerusalem, not the earthly (see 12:22). It is associated with purification from death; it leads outside the camp, it shares the reproach of Christ, and counts it greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. The Offering that accomplishes our sanctification was made 'through the eternal Spirit', but sanctification of the Spirit is *never once mentioned in Hebrews*. It is always connected with the sufferings of the Captain of our salvation and His once-offered Sacrifice for the purification from sins and uncleanness. It is utterly valueless as an aid to exegesis simply to string together the occurrences of the word 'sanctify' regardless of their origin or context. The word here, as we have seen, has a special shade of meaning which is closely related to the theme of the epistle. It does not mean every saved one by virtue of salvation, as it probably does in Romans 1:7. It is the title of *the many sons who*, through suffering, are going on to glory. It is closely associated with the Captain and Perfecter of faith, Who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God. It is a necessity in view of the *aionian* salvation and inheritance.

The element of overcoming is often passed over in Hebrews 10, but it is there, and there with a purpose. It immediately precedes the reference to the perfecting of the sanctified, 'from henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool' (13). Such sanctified ones the great Captain is not ashamed to call brethren. The three quotations that follow in Hebrews 2 are designed to show the close association of Christ and His people.

This is particularly so in the second one where Christ uses the words, 'I will put my trust in Him' (2:13). There we see Him trusting, in the days of His flesh, and it is there we find the oneness with Him in this sanctification by suffering.

Him who had the strength of death (Heb. 2:14,15)

'For as much then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also, in like manner, partook of the same; in order that by means of death He might render powerless him having the strength of death, that is the devil, and might set free those who by fear of death were all their life held in bondage' (Heb. 2:14,15 not AV JP).

The words of verse 11, 'all of one', here receive fuller explanation. Those who were sanctified and called His brethren were partakers of flesh and blood, and were also held in bondage by the fear of death. The Lord too, their Redeemer, became partaker of the same nature, submitted Himself to death, and rendered the devil powerless. Had the passage meant merely to indicate the Lord's sympathy with our frailty, flesh alone would have been used. 'Flesh and blood' stand for human nature without reference to its deeds. In other words, the Captain of our salvation became a real man 'in like manner', 'not in show, nor in appearance, but in truth' (*Chrysostom*).

'The children' are first described as to their natural state, 'common sharers of flesh and blood'; then, as to their moral and dispensational condition, 'held in bondage by fear of death'. The Saviour is first described as to His natural state, 'He partook of the same', and then as to the moral effects, 'He rendered powerless the devil' and delivered His brethren.

Three passages should be read in conjunction with these verses. Romans 8:3, Philippians 2:7,8, Hebrews 10:5-7, and their contexts noted.

Rom. 8:3. 'God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh'.

Phil. 2:7,8. 'Was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man ...'.

Heb. 10:5-7. 'When He cometh into the world, He saith, Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldst not, but a body hast Thou prepared Me ...'.

The section of Romans which contains 8:3 commences with 5:12, and reveals the entry of death. Here it is spoken of as exercising dominion, 'Death reigned by one'. The dominion of sin and death is the theme of Romans 6:9-14. The law of sin and death is uppermost in Romans 7:21-25. Romans 8:2 introduces the other law which indicates deliverance, 'For the law of the spirit of LIFE in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death'. This was accomplished by Christ assuming our nature, the result being 'that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit'. The context speaks of life (6,10-13), our deliverance from the bondage of corruption (15-23), a bondage which is ever related to 'fear' (15).

The statement that Christ was made in the likeness of sinful flesh is here chiefly connected with the practical out-working of truth, of triumph over death, of 'life because of righteousness', of 'life and peace' as a result of being 'spiritually minded'. The passage speaks moreover not only of being heirs of God by virtue of being sons of God, but of being JOINT HEIRS WITH CHRIST by virtue of suffering together with Him (17,18). The goal is that Christ should be 'the firstborn among many brethren' (29). Here we read of having 'the spirit of Christ'. In Philippians 2 we read of having 'the mind of Christ', of working out our own salvation with fear and trembling, of being finally fashioned like unto the body of His glory (3:21). We have also a close connection with Hebrews:

'Who, being in the FORM OF GOD' (Phil. 2:6).

'Who being the brightness of His glory, and the EXPRESS IMAGE of His Person (Heb. 1:3).

'... was made in the likeness of men' (Phil. 2:7).

'Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same' (Heb. 2:14).

'And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death' (Phil. 2:8).

'That through death He might destroy him who has the power of death, that is, the devil' (Heb. 2:14).

'Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a (the) name which is above every name' (Phil. 2:9).

'Who for the joy set before Him endured the (a) cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God' (Heb. 12:2).

'Being made so much better than the angels, as He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they' (Heb. 1:4).

'Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do (work on account) of His good pleasure' (Phil. 2:12,13).

'Make you perfect in every good work, in order to do His will, doing in you that which is well pleasing in His sight' (Heb. 13:21 not AV JP).

The third reference (Heb. 10:5-7) we have already had occasion to examine when dealing with the word 'sanctified'. There we read of the Lord laying aside His glory, the moment of His *kenosis* or self-emptying (Phil. 2:7); and just as He left the glory that was His before the world was, to enter by human birth that path of suffering, we hear Him say:

'Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a BODY HAST THOU PREPARED ME ... LO, I come ... to do Thy will, O God' (Heb. 10:5-7).

We are allowed by wondrous grace to hear the words with which the Lord of life and glory voluntarily partook of the same flesh and blood as the children of men, that in the body thus prepared for Him He might learn obedience by the things He should suffer, and, being made perfect through suffering, lead many sons to glory.

Before we attempt to explain our verse, we must examine another item. The Lord submitted to death, not only that Adam's sons might live again (1 Cor. 15:22), but that 'He might render ineffective the one having the strength of death, that is the Devil'. What is this strength of death? Here we are not viewing atonement, for Christ offered Himself in all aspects of His sacrifice 'unto God'. This is directed to the Devil. The Devil possessed this strength,

and we must seek from the Word the meaning of the expression. *Kratos* is used in Ephesians 1:19 of resurrection, 'according to the energy of the *strength* of His might', and in 6:10 of its practical application to the believer, 'Finally, my brethren, be empowered in the Lord and in the *strength* of His might', this empowering being in view of the conflict with spiritual wickedness in heavenly places.

It will be remembered that (evidently) at the time when Moses was to appear with Elijah on the mount of Transfiguration, 'Michael the archangel, when contending with the Devil he disputed about the body of Moses' (Jude 9). It will be remembered that the Transfiguration came into prominence in our investigation into the meaning of the expression 'taste of death' of Hebrews 2:9, and Peter in his epistle of suffering in view of glory introduces it in the first chapter. It is the vision of the *overcomer*. Death is spoken of ten times in Hebrews. In 5:7 we are taken to the garden of Gethsemane and there the Lord:

'in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up both prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him Who was able to save Him out of death, and was heard for His piety' (not AV JP).

This passage, the reference following the cluster in Hebrews 2 (9,14 and 15), carries with it the same sense that is more dimly seen there, namely, death, as viewed in connection with suffering and glory, obedience and perfection, *aionian* salvation, and the so great salvation. Here also, as in Hebrews 2:17, the High Priesthood of Christ is introduced (5:6). The next reference to death (7:23) speaks of the priesthood of the sons of Aaron in contrast. The last reference is of great help to us in our endeavour to understand the peculiar meaning of death in Hebrews 2:14,15. In Hebrews 11:5, the chapter of overcomers, sons who are led on to glory and perfected through sufferings, but not yet perfected in resurrection, we read of Enoch, who by faith 'was translated that he should not see death'. When we turn to 3:17,18, we read of the tragedy of the wilderness:

'But with whom was He grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned (those who sinned), whose carcases fell in the wilderness? And to whom sware He that they should not enter into His rest, but to them that believed not?'.

Those in Hebrews 2 were all their lifetime held by the 'fear' of death. In chapter 4:1 we read *immediately* after hearing of those whose carcases fell in the wilderness:

'Let us therefore FEAR, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it'.

In writing of the wilderness to the Corinthians, the apostle says:

'Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were DESTROYED OF THE DESTROYER' (1 Cor. 10:10).

When a believer was handed over to Satan by Paul it was for the destruction of the flesh that the spirit might be saved. Parallel with this is 1 Corinthians 3:15, 'He shall suffer loss, but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire'. This too is the one great theme of Hebrews.

'But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition (destruction, the destruction of the flesh, the two Greek words used come together in 1 Cor. 10:10), but of them who believe to the saving of the soul' (Heb. 10:39).

The death of Christ was effective in rendering ineffective him who had the strength of death. By His one Offering the 'sanctified' (Heb. 2:11; 10:14) are 'perfected' for ever.

The deliverance is like that from a legal opponent (Luke 12:58), or from the grip of a disease (Acts 19:12). It is not the word that indicates deliverance from sin in the gospel sense of the word. It is from the power of some one into whose hands, or under whose authority we have come. The connection between the believer's 'perfecting', expressed in Colossians and Philippians as circumcision, with antagonistic principalities and powers, is indicated in Colossians 2:10-15, and their association with 'reward' is seen in 2:18. The death and the deliverance of Hebrews 2 must be related to the overcoming, the crown, the prize, and it is against this 'strength of death' the believer is ranged as he presses along the path, and to which he is delivered should he so sadly fail as did those who tempted God in the wilderness.

The Captain of our salvation is the TRUE JOSHUA under Whom we shall enter into the rest that remaineth.

Propitiation and the Pilgrim (Heb. 2:16-18)

The passage before us is confessedly difficult, and there are a number of ways in which the language of the apostle can be construed. The A.V. renders Hebrews 2:16 thus:

'For verily He took not on *Him the nature* of angels; but He took on *Him* the seed of Abraham'.

The words printed in italics reveal the point of the problem, and the A.V. margin translates the verse as follows, omitting the italicized words, and telling us that the Greek reads:

'He taketh not hold of angels, but of the seed of Abraham he taketh hold'.

What the A.V. puts into its margin, the R.V. places in its text. The student will discover that there is a great variety of opinion among the commentators and the following is a fair presentation of their differing views.

Parkhurst in his Lexicon says:

'The text therefore means that Christ, when He came to redeem us, did not assume a glorious, awful and angelic appearance, but, etc., etc.'.

This is promptly denied by his Editor who follows with a note:

'There appears little ground for assigning this sense to *epilambanomai*. Ernesti says that the ancient Greek church always interpreted the verb in this place *to assist*'.

Moses Strut disposes of the A.V. idea of the *nature of angels* by saying that both *usus loquendi* and context is against this meaning:

'For the apostle had just asserted above that Jesus took on Him a *human* nature, and it would be a mere repetition'.

Moses Strut thinks it means 'to aid'. Dr. Owen proceeds by lengthy argument and characteristic subdivision to prove the meaning to be *'assumo, accipio*, to take unto, or to take upon', and that:

'The apostle teacheth us by it, that the Lord Christ took to Him, and took on Him, our human nature of the seed of Abraham'.

The idea of 'relieving' or 'helping' is fitly expressed by *antilambanomai* (Luke 1:54; Acts 20:35; 1 Tim. 6:2), but the writer of Hebrews passes by this word. The reader is probably no wiser by all this than before, and we have endeavoured to indicate the exceedingly ambiguous results of past scholarship in elucidating this passage. We shall therefore be justified in saying, that as there is no agreement among the learned themselves, we must turn once more to the Fountain-head. One writer complains that the other usages of the word 'to take hold' do not help him; the reason seems that they do not help *his idea* of what it means. Let us examine the word afresh, *epilambanomai.*

Matthew 14:31	'Stretched forth His hand, and *caught* him'.
Mark 8:23	'He *took* the blind man by the hand'.
Luke 9:47	'And Jesus ... *took* a child'.
Luke 14:4	'He *took* him, and healed him'.
Luke 20:20,26	'*Take hold* of His words'.
Luke 23:26	'They *laid hold* upon one Simon'.
Acts 9:27	'But Barnabas *took* him'.
Acts 16:19	'They *caught* Paul and Silas'.
Acts 17:19	'They *took* him'.
Acts 18:17	'The Greeks *took* Sosthenes'.
Acts 21:30,33	'They *took* Paul'.
Acts 23:19	'*Took* him by the hand'.
1 Tim. 6:12,19	'*Lay hold* on eternal life'.
Heb. 2:16	*The passage under consideration.*
Heb. 8:9	'I *took* them by the hand'.

An impartial examination shews that the word is colourless. There is no moral meaning inherent to it.

We have already observed that the A.V. italics make Hebrews 2:16 a somewhat needless repetition. May there not be some meaning which has been on the surface all the while? We believe there is. There is a footnote in the *Emphatic Diaglott* which reads, 'For truly it', i.e. the fear of death, or death itself, 'does not lay hold of, or seize on angels, but of the seed of Abraham it does lay hold' (*Theolog Ref.* and *Kneeland*). Those of our readers who are not conversant with the original must know that 'he' or 'it' is contained within the verb *epilambanomai*, and *epilambanetai* means equally *it*, as well as *He*, takes hold Let us look at the structure again, verses 14-16 are included together there under one member:

C 14-16. Oneness in death and deliverance.

This member is made up of parts, and we can test the congruity of this new suggestion here.

C 14-16. A The death of Christ.
The destruction of the Devil who had the strength of death.

A The deliverance of those subject to bondage of fear of death.
The seed of Abraham laid hold of by fear of death.

With the exception of the fourth line, the emphatic word is *death*. If the A.V. reading be retained it introduces a discordant note. If the idea of 'assisting' be adopted it harmonizes with 'deliverance', but has no relation with the emphatic word 'death'.

What has Scripture to say about angels and death? Luke 20:35,36 says:

'But they which are accounted worthy to obtain that age (the very pith and marrow of Hebrews) and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: NEITHER CAN THEY DIE ANY MORE, FOR THEY ARE EQUAL TO THE ANGELS' (not AV JP).

If the seed of Abraham, and flesh and blood, were laid hold of by the fear of death and thereby brought into bondage, Christ's becoming flesh and delivering them from that bondage is a fitting sequel.

'Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest' (Heb. 2:17).

We have already seen that the Lord Jesus 'tasted death', and in the garden of Gethsemane His soul was exceeding sorrowful even unto death. Three times He prayed with reference to that awful cup. Hebrews 5:7 tells us that He was heard for His piety. There is a direct connection between Gethsemane and the Melchisedec priesthood of Christ in Hebrews 5. It is an expansion of Hebrews 2:16-18. Since Christ has come and died and risen again, such words as 2 Timothy 1:10 can be written:

'Our Saviour Jesus Christ, Who hath on the one hand rendered death powerless (same word Heb. 2:14) and on the other hand illuminated life and incorruptibility through the gospel'.

Those who once were subject to bondage can now look death in the face and say, 'O death, where is thy sting?'

'For which reason it behoved Him to be made like to His brethren in all things (*kata panta*), in order that He might be a merciful and a faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, with a view to making a propitiation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted' (Heb. 2:17,18 not AV JP).

'All things' here is *panta*, a word liable to much abuse. For although it may seem a very forceful argument to say emphatically, 'God says all things, and that does not admit of exception', we find that this very epistle interprets its own language for us, and definitely teaches that 'all' does not necessarily mean 'all' in our sense of the word.

Hebrews 4:15 returns to the theme of Hebrews 2:17,18:

'For we have not an High Priest Which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but One having been tempted in all points (*kata panta*) like (see 2:17) as we are, SIN EXCEPTED' (not AV JP).

This is important. The temptations referred to in the epistle to the Hebrews in which Christ so fully shared, like the temptations of Abraham (Gen. 22) and the children of Israel in the wilderness, were trials of faith, *not temptations to sin*; thus the 'all points' are by no means universal.

The word *homoioo* 'to be made like', gives us *homoiotes*. This comes in the parallel verse (4:15), where we read that Christ as the high Priest was 'in all points tempted like as we are'. The actual wording is *pepeirasmenon de* KATA *panta* KATH' *homoioteta*, 'having been tempted according to all things according to a likeness'. Hebrews 7:15 contains the only other occurrence of the word in the New Testament. The fact that the Saviour stooped not only to our humanity, but to endure its trials and its sorrows, is emphasized as one of the chief of His high qualifications as the true, merciful and faithful high Priest. His work here is twofold. In the things pertaining to God, expiation for sins of the people; in the things pertaining to His people, succour for those who are tempted. The *hilaskomai* ('reconciliation' in A.V.) gives us the *hilasterion* of Hebrews 9:5, 'the mercy seat' of which Paul said he could not then speak particularly. If we remember that he makes a similar statement regarding the Melchisedec priesthood of Christ (5:11), we shall perceive that the subject before us is fuller and deeper than we at first might suppose.

In the doctrine of Romans, the mercy seat figures in 3:25, 'Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation', but the subject is not exhausted by justification. The mercy seat bore the cherubim of GLORY, and was the very visible throne of God in the Tabernacle.

There, the Lord said, He would meet with Moses and commune with him. The epistle to the Romans, with its emphasis upon justification, sees the blood-sprinkled mercy seat resting upon the ark which contained the unbroken tables of the law. The epistle to the Hebrews sees the same blood-sprinkled mercy seat, but while it recognizes the teaching of the preservation of the tables of the law, it finds the necessity of 'finding fault' with the old Covenant in a way which is parallel with, though different from the setting aside of the law in Romans. Moreover, Hebrews takes account of the other articles which were covered by that mercy seat, and indeed speaks of them before mentioning the tables of the Covenant, viz., 'the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded' (9:4).

The manna speaks of wilderness provision. In Christ as high Priest the believer finds all that the golden pot of manna means. The epistle to the Hebrews is essentially the book of the wilderness and the pilgrim, and in pressing on to perfection, the wilderness experience is repeated. The believer learns that man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Faith, not sight, is his characteristic. The rod that budded speaks of a living Priesthood. This too is emphasized in Hebrews:

'And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of DEATH: but this Man, because He continueth ever, hath an unchangeable (intransmissible) priesthood. Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever LIVETH to make intercession for them' (7:23-25).

Manna from heaven for all our needs, an ever-living high Priest to save to the uttermost, this is vitally connected with the thought of the propitiatory and the propitiation of Hebrews 2:17. The LXX commonly renders the Hebrew word *kopher* propitiation. This word gives us 'atonement' in the A.V. The great Day of atonement is the type which is in view in Hebrews 9.

lt will be noticed that the idea of cleansing or purifying is prominent in that chapter. First we have the cleansing of the conscience by the blood of Christ as the antitype of the ashes of the heifer. Then we have the cleansing by the blood, the patterns of heavenly things and the heavenly things themselves being thus cleansed. The opening section of chapter 9 speaks of the high priest who went into the holiest alone once every year, not without blood. This is an evident reference to Leviticus chapter 16, and the Day of Atonement. The closing section speaks of the Lord Jesus as the true high Priest:

'For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us ... Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the (a) second time WITHOUT SIN unto salvation' (Heb. 9:24-28).

While the 'second time' indicates the Second Coming of the Lord, the meaning which is to be attached to the expression here is the fulfilment of the type in Leviticus 16. Not until the high priest had gone in beyond the veil

with the blood of atonement and had appeared the *second time* did the people, typically, enter into the 'so great salvation' of Hebrews.

When we look at the context of Hebrews 2:17 we observe that it is covered by the thought of 'sanctification' (2:11). The only aspect of Christ's sacrificial Work which is given in that grand summary of Hebrews 1:3 is that of 'purification' or 'cleansing' (as in Heb. 9).

The sufferings of Hebrews 2:9 are connected with perfecting and glory, delivering from the fear of death, and making propitiation for sins. Here, in Hebrews 2:11 we have the Offering of Christ 'sanctifying'. In Hebrews 10:14 we get to the farthest extreme, where we read that 'by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that ARE SANCTIFIED .

This is what is intended in Hebrews 2:17,18. First He sanctifies (2:11), then He perfects (2:17,18). Here the perfecting work is seen beginning; we shall trace it through its various processes until we read the Hebrews equivalent to the prize of Philippians chapter 3, viz., 'the spirits of perfected righteous ones' (Heb. 12:23). This perfecting of the sanctified is the theme of the book, and merely to lift out a verse, as so many do (10:14), is practically to misquote it, for it is not usual for an evangelical or protestant speaker, when using Hebrews 10:14, to teach the 'perfecting' of those *already* sanctified, but to buttress up some anti-Romish doctrines, truth in its way, but not the truth of that verse.

It will be noticed that 2:18 leaves us with the thought of 'succour in temptation', and not 'salvation from sin'. Babes are 'unskilful', i.e., 'untested' or 'untempted', but perfect ones have their senses 'exercised'. The pilgrim journey is one beset with temptations, but all for the good of the tempted. The Lord will never fail them; perfect sympathy exists between the great High Priest and the tried saint. He Himself has suffered being tempted; He can succour those who are tempted. Failure therefore is simply lack of faith, not lack of provision. This we shall see more clearly when we enter upon the examination of chapters 3 and 4.

To summarize. The four steps towards perfection are:

First: Sanctification.

Second: Realization of the oneness existing between the risen Lord and His people.

Third: Consciousness that the one who had the strength of death can no longer hold us in bondage.

Fourth: That complete provision, both for sins on the one hand (Lev. 16 deals with the sins of a people *already* redeemed and separated), and for wilderness temptations on the other hand, has been made in Christ.

The blessed realities of the figures used are for all saints in all times.

'If we walk in the light ... the blood ... cleanseth us from all sin ... We have an Advocate ... He is the propitiation' (1 John 1:7 to 2:1,2).

'In all points tempted like as we are' (Heb. 4:15)

We have seen already that the outstanding characteristic of those addressed in Hebrews is that of the pilgrim. He has here no continuing city. He confesses by his attitude to life that he is a 'pilgrim and a stranger'. Like Abraham, he is willing to dwell in a tent, while waiting for the city which hath foundations. In chapter 3, the teaching draws its local colour from the wilderness journey of Israel, and we have already expressed our conviction that the temptations of Hebrews 2:18 are those which beset the believer as he presses on to maturity with the possibility of the prize before him. In Hebrews chapter 4, this question of temptation is revived, and we feel it will be helpful to anticipate that passage and deal somewhat exhaustively with the words of Hebrews 4:15:

'In all points tempted like as we are',

before entering into the third chapter with its 'temptation in the wilderness' (Heb. 3:8). The subject is of universal interest. No dispensational differences of calling or sphere exempt the believer from the pressure and allurements of the surrounding world, and this must be our excuse, if one be needed, for this diversion.

'For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin' (Heb. 4:15).

How are we to interpret the words 'in *all* points'? How are we to understand the sequel 'yet without sin'? How does this passage influence our understanding concerning the sinlessness of the Man Christ Jesus ?

There have been those who have argued that the presence of the words 'in *all* points', implies the inclusion of every temptation which besets mankind, and, in consequence, have been driven by the irresistible force of logic to affirm that He must therefore have had a 'fallen nature' even though He actually 'did no sin'. The seriousness of the subject should be felt by all. To most of our readers, the teaching that the Saviour had a 'fallen' nature would come as a shock. Moreover, the believer himself is involved for he cannot be unmoved by the consequences of the examination of the words 'tempted in *all* points like as we are'. In order therefore to disclose the scope of the argument that contains these pregnant words, we must repeat the outline of the epistle to the Hebrews and, following that, an examination of other passages where the words 'tempt' and 'temptation' are used, so that, if possible, we may arrive at a Scriptural understanding both of the range of temptation indicated in Hebrews 4:15, and the meaning, origin and different forms of temptation as indicated by the usage of the word in Hebrews and in other parts of the New Testament.

The scope of any passage of Scripture is indicated by its literary structure and we must anticipate our studies a little here, and lift out from the structure of the epistle as a whole two corresponding members, because in them are found every occurrence of the words 'tempt' and 'temptation' found in the epistle.

B	Heb. 3-6. ON TO PERFECTION	Let us come boldly
	'The Profession'	Examples of unbelief
	(*Homologia*) (3:1; 4:14)	Perfect v babes.
		No renewal unto repentance
		Senses exercised
		Crucify afresh the Son
B	Heb. 10:19 to 12:25.	Let us draw near
	BACK TO PERDITION	Examples of faith
	'The Profession'	Sons v firstborn
	(*Homologia*) (10:23;	No place for repentance
	11:13).	Discipline exercised
		Trod under foot the Son.

There can be no question but that these two sections very closely correspond with one another, and if they contain all the occurrences of 'tempt' and 'temptation' that are found in the epistle to the Hebrews, then those temptations *must* be intimately related to the ideas of 'perfection' and 'perdition'; with 'going on', or with 'drawing back'. When we come to consider the smaller portion of Hebrews that contains the passage under review, we discover that its historic background is the story of Israel's *failure in the wilderness*; a failure to 'go on unto perfection', with which the words 'tempt' and 'temptation' are closely interwoven.

Hebrews 2:17 to 4:16

A	2:17 to 3:1.	TEMPTED, Succour, Profession.
B	3:2 to 4:11	'IF' - The TEMPTATION.
		'IF' - They TEMPTED ME.
A	4:12-16.	TEMPTED, Help, Profession.

It will be seen that Hebrews 4:15 is an integral part of this larger context, and no interpretation is therefore valid that ignores or contravenes the general direction of the teaching of the larger context. A 'profession' is in view, something to 'hold fast', something involving trial and self-denial, something that may be lost. Further, with the structure before us, it is impossible to isolate Hebrews 4:15; we must keep in mind the temptation mentioned in chapter 2.

'Your fathers tempted ME' (Heb. 3:9), said God. Now whatever questionable views we may entertain concerning the temptation to which our Lord was subjected in the days of His flesh, no such thoughts are possible when we consider the words 'Your fathers tempted ME'. It is not only repugnant to common sense, but contrary to positive Scripture, that God can, by any possibility, be 'tempted' to, or by, evil. 'God cannot be tempted with evil' is the categorical statement of Holy Writ (Jas. 1:13); consequently we are immediately faced with a fact concerning 'temptation' that must influence our views of Hebrews 2:18 and 4:15.

If we had continued the quotation of Hebrews 3:9 we should have read, 'When your fathers *tempted* Me, *proved* Me, and *saw My* works forty years'. 'Proved' is *dokimazo*, 'to test, try as a metal'. This meaning is borne out by the passages in Hebrews 11, 'By faith Abraham, when he was TRIED (*peirazo* 'tempted'), offered up Isaac' (verse 17). Shall we say that God tempted Abraham to sin when He made the great demand concerning Isaac? God forbid: Scripture positively declares that God never tempts man to sin (Jas. 1:13), and a reading of Genesis 22 reveals that this 'temptation' was a 'testing' of Abraham's faith, 'Now I know that thou fearest God, *seeing* thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from Me' (Gen. 22:12).

The context of the references to temptation in Hebrews 2 and 4 introduce such words as 'succour', 'sympathy' ('cannot be *touched with*') 'infirmities', but we can scarcely speak of 'sympathy' and 'infirmities' when we speak of 'sin' as it appears in Scripture.

The word translated 'succour' (Heb. 2:18) and 'help' (Heb. 4:16) occurs once more in Hebrews 13:6, 'So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my Helper'. This is associated, not with 'sin' or 'forgiveness', but with the promise that the believer would never be forsaken and in connection with 'what man shall do' *unto us*, not what we might inadvertently do ourselves.

Another word which occurs in Hebrews must be included in our examination and that is the word *peira*. This occurs twice in Hebrews:

'By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians *assaying* (making the *attempt*) to do were drowned' (Heb. 11:29).

'Others had *trial* of cruel mockings and scourgings' (Heb. 11:36).

In neither passage can the idea of 'tempting' be discovered. In the first passage 'attempt' gives good English and incidentally reveals that in our own mother tongue the word 'tempt' means a 'trial' or an 'attempt'. The second reference (Heb. 11:36) is but a variant of the word translated 'tempted' and needs no comment.

To complete the tale of occurrences of *peirazo* in Hebrews, one more reference must be included. In Hebrews 5:13 we find the negative, *apeiros*, where it is translated 'unskilful', which accords with the classical rendering 'untried' and 'inexperienced' and with the LXX usage.

'Surely they shall not see the land, which I sware to their fathers; but their children which are with Me here, as many as know not good or evil, every inexperienced (*apeiros*) youth, to them will I give the land' (Num. 14:23 LXX).

The reader will recognize the influence of this LXX rendering in Hebrews 5:13,14, where the unskilful 'babe' is contrasted with the 'perfect' or mature, who discerns 'good and evil'.

As they stand, the words 'yet without sin' in Hebrews 4:15 suggest to the English reader 'yet without sinning', as if our Lord was actually tempted to steal, to murder, to commit adultery, but resisted. We only allow ourselves to write this in order to bring this doctrine and its consequences into the light, for there is no necessity so to translate or interpret the words *choris hamartias*. In his Lexicon, *choris* is rendered by Dr. Bullinger 'apart; asunder'. It comes from *chorizo* 'to put asunder', 'to separate', as in Matthew 19:6 and Romans 8:39. In Hebrews itself we read concerning the Saviour, that He was 'holy, harmless, undefiled, *separate* (*chorizo*) from sinners' (Heb. 7:26).

Dr. John Owen quotes the Syriac Version of Hebrews 4:15 as reading 'sin being excepted'; J.N. Darby and Rotherham read 'sin apart', 'apart from sin'.

The positive witness of the epistle to the Hebrews as a whole, and of this expression in particular, is that the temptation referred to in the words 'tempted in *all* points' relates to the *testings and trials of the pilgrim on his*

journey through the wilderness of this world, as he presses on to perfection; it does not refer to, or include, those temptations to sin which are only possible to those who have within them the effects of the Fall.

Our examination of the usage of the words 'tempt' and 'temptation' in the epistle to the Hebrews leaves us without any doubt but that the apostle had in mind the temptations that beset 'pilgrims and strangers' in maintaining their 'confession' or 'profession', and that the words 'Tempted in all points like as we are' are limited to that aspect of truth. It would be neither fair nor sound exegesis to suppose that there is no other aspect of this subject in the Scriptures. In order, therefore, to present the teaching of the Word as completely as possible, let us consider further aspects of this theme.

As we have commenced with an epistle addressed to the Hebrews, let us continue with the epistles of The Dispersion, namely, that of James and those of Peter, and see whether these introduce a different line of teaching from that of the epistle to the Hebrews.

'MY brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations' (Jas. 1:2).

It would be strange indeed if the believer who fell into all manner of temptations to *do evil*, should count it 'all joy', but it is clear that temptation of this kind is far from the mind of James, for he immediately goes on to say, 'knowing this, that the *trying of your faith* worketh patience' (Jas. 1:3), and, like the epistle to the Hebrews, associates this tempting, or trying, with 'perfection' - 'Let patience have her *perfect* work' (Jas. 1:4). Those who are perfect (mature) will,

'Receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him' (Jas. 1:12).

The introduction of the words 'approved' and 'crown' brings the passage into line with the epistle to the Hebrews.

James now turns to the aspect of temptation that arises from, and leads to sin.

'Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man' (Jas. 1:13).

If these words be taken literally, we are immediately faced with a problem, for we get the two contrary statements: 'Neither tempteth He any man' (Jas. 1:13), and 'God *did* tempt Abraham' (Gen. 22:1). But this is the case only if the words be taken literally, for the reader of the Scriptures will probably be aware that throughout the Old and New Testaments there appears a figure of speech called *Ellipsis*, or Omission, and that in many passages the sense is found by supplying by repetition a word that has already gone before. If in James 1:13 we repeat the governing clause, 'with evil', all will be clear. 'Let no man say when he is tempted (to do evil things), I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man (with evil)'. This, however, is negative; the positive follows, 'But every man is tempted (to do evil things) when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed' (Jas. 1:14).

Returning to the positive teaching of James 1:14, let us note its bearing upon the text, 'He was tempted in all points like as we are'. It is one thing for a congregation to stand and say, 'We are all miserable offenders', and quite another for one member to stand and publicly confess that he is a 'thief'. In the same way it is one thing to quote the passage from Hebrews 4, which says that Christ was tempted in *all points* like as we are, and quite another to be specific and say that Christ was actually tempted to steal. What is it that causes the presence of an unprotected pound note to be a temptation to a man? Is it an *outside* temptation or is it something *within*? It is difficult, without a feeling of irreverence, for us to bring our Lord into this controversy; let us therefore take a step down and cite two fellow-beings as examples.

First, the 'chief of sinners', Paul, the apostle. Is it conceivable that, had Paul entered a synagogue and found the place unattended, the presence of a piece of money lying uncollected would be the slightest temptation to him? Our answer must be 'no'. The second example, dear reader, is yourself. Were you to come into a place of worship and discover that the offering had not been taken charge of by the treasurer, would that be a temptation to you to steal? You rightly repudiate the thought. Why? Because the grace of God and the gift of the new nature make temptation of that kind virtually impossible.

So we return to the Lord Himself. As He had no corrupt and depraved nature, He could never be 'led away' by lust and enticed and, that being the case, no amount of emphasis upon the words 'in all points' can ever teach the evil and destructive doctrine we have been considering. The very presence of temptation to *sin* pre-supposes *evil already within*. He, the Saviour, could mingle with publicans and sinners and remain undefiled. Contrary to all law, He could *touch* a leper and remain immune. We might as well consider that a sunbeam gathers contamination by shining on a rubbish heap as that, even in the presence of the most gilded opportunity, Christ could be tempted to sin.

Turning to the other Circumcision epistles we find that Peter alone uses the word *peirasmos*, translated 'temptation', and that three times.

'Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold *temptations*' (1 Pet. 1:6).

If it were needed, the fullest confirmation of this interpretation is contained in 1 Peter 4:12.

'Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery *trial* which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye ... let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief ...' (1 Pet. 4:12-15).

Other occurrences of the words 'tempt' and 'temptation' are Matthew 4:1-4; Matthew 6:13; which should be read in the light of Revelation 3:10 and Matthew 26:41. None of these passages speak specifically of sin, but rather the attack upon simple trust.

CHAPTER 3

THE PROFESSION OF THE HEAVENLY CALLING

The first word of Hebrews chapter 3 is *hothen*, which properly means 'from whence'. The idea intended by its use here may be expressed by saying, 'Seeing that things are thus' (as indicated in Heb. 1 and 2), 'then I ask you to consider the One Who is both Apostle and High Priest of our profession'. The title High Priest is one which most believers will associate with Christ, but how few realize His equal glory as THE Apostle!

One of the special aspects of the Gospel according to John is to set before us Christ as the Apostle and High Priest. John's Gospel is divided into two sections, the first being the outer and public ministry (1-12, Apostle), the second the inner or private ministry (13-21, High Priest). Both sections begin with a reference to His 'own'. He came to *His own*, and *His own* received Him not'. 'Having loved *His own* which were in the world, He loved them unto the end'. Here in this thirteenth chapter we see the Apostle and High Priest.

'Jesus knowing ... that He was COME FROM GOD' - The apostle.

'And WENT TO GOD' - The High Priest (John 13:3).

This is repeated in the wonderful seventeenth chapter:

'Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast SENT' - The apostle.

'I am no more in the world ... I COME TO THEE' - The High Priest (17:3,11).

The fact that Christ was the *Sent One* is the burden of the Gospel. It is *aionian* life to recognize Him as the *Sent One* (17:3). The disciples are marked by the knowledge that Christ was the *Sent One* (8). The oneness of the Father, the Son, and the saint, so marvellously indicated in verse 21, is with the object that the world might believe that the Father *sent* Christ.

This is repeated with added words, all reminding us of Hebrews 2, 'That they may be *perfected* into one, and that the world may know that Thou hast *sent* Me' (23).

It was no new thought to the Hebrews that Messiah should be the Apostle, or the *Sent* One. In Isaiah 48:16 and 61:1 the Hebrew equivalent is used. According to Isaiah 19:20, the exodus from Egypt is to be repeated: 'He shall send them a Saviour, and a great One, and He shall deliver them. And the LORD shall be known to Egypt'. Moses was evidently a 'sent one' or an 'apostle'.

'Come now therefore, and I will *send* thee unto Pharaoh'. 'This shall be a token unto thee, that I have *sent* thee'.

'I AM hath *sent* me unto you'.

'The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath *sent* me unto you' (Exod. 3:10,12,14,15).

It is possible that Moses had the promised Messiah in view when he said to the Lord, 'Send, I pray Thee, by the hand of Him Whom Thou wilt send' (Exod. 4:13). The immediate result of this continued hesitancy on the part of Moses is the mention of Aaron, destined to be the High Priest. Moses apparently forfeited this office, and instead of holding the office both of apostle and High Priest, this was now to be shared with his brother. Great as Moses was, and great as every Jew held him to be, all must confess who know the truth that He who combined the two offices in His one Person was greater. Thus it is that Moses is introduced in chapter 3. Christ has already been seen as greater than angels.

He is now seen as greater than Moses: then greater than Joshua, greater than Aaron, and greater than all the offerings of the law.

Christ is here called the Apostle and High Priest of our 'profession'. What is the idea contained in the word 'profession' (*homologia*)? Hebrews uses the word three times:

'The Apostle and High Priest of *our profession*' (3:1).

'Let us hold fast *our profession*' (4:14).

'Let us hold fast the *profession* of our faith' (10:23).

Seeing that it is the profession of faith, the word indicates something which is subsequent to faith, parallel with 'the things which accompany salvation'. We view Christ here not as Redeemer, but as Apostle and High Priest of our profession. This profession is further illustrated by use of the cognate *homologeo*.

'These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and CONFESSED that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth' (Heb. 11:13).

'Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach. For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come. By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving praise (CONFESSING) to His name' (Heb. 13:13-15).

Here the two references emphasize the stranger and pilgrim character of this profession of which Christ was Apostle and High Priest. For this other-worldly character see 1 Timothy 6:12,13:

'Fight the good fight of faith (fight is the same word 'race' as in Heb. 12:1) ... and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses (witnesses, same word as Heb. 12:1) ... Christ Jesus, Who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession'.

It is evident by the balance of the words that the 'good fight' is parallel with the 'good confession'; and seeing that the 'fight' is the same as the 'race' of Hebrews 12, the titles 'Apostle and High Priest of our profession', and 'The Captain and Perfecter of faith', have much in common. As the Captain, He was the Apostle, the Sent One. As the Perfecter, He was the High Priest, Who went back to God. The 'profession' being the profession of 'faith', is another view of the particular aspect of faith exhibited in Hebrews 11; in other words the whole theme revolves around the idea of pilgrim walk and perfecting. The holy brethren are exhorted to 'consider' Christ as the Apostle and High Priest of their profession. In close association with the final reference (10:23) recurs the word 'consider'. This time, however, the exhortation is to 'consider one another' in view of the approaching day.

These holy brethren are addressed as 'partakers of the heavenly calling'. It is essentially in harmony with the perfecting of the pilgrim character, that those addressed should be called 'partakers of the heavenly calling', and that heavenly calling needs no further exposition than is given in Hebrews itself to make its scope and position clear to us.

Heavenly

A Partakers **a** 3:1. Partakers of heavenly calling.

Now — Christ not ashamed.
b 6:4. The heavenly gift.

B Place, The Tabernacle
c 8:5. The shadow of heavenly things.
c 9:23. The heavenly things themselves.

A Partakers Then
a 11:16. The better country, a heavenly, God not ashamed.
b 12:22. The heavenly Jerusalem (Holy City).

If we trace the teaching associated with this word, we are led on through participation of the 'gifts', which were anticipations of the age to come (ch. 6), and from the shadow to the real Tabernacle 'heaven itself', to the heavenly country, and heavenly Jerusalem. Hebrews 12:18-21 speaks of Moses, verses 22,24 of 'Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant'. Connected with the latter is the perfecting of those who were sanctified. There we see them, 'the church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven'. These are associated with 'the spirits of perfected righteous ones' and the 'innumerable company of angels'. How any can confuse such a description with the right hand of God *above* all principality and power is beyond our understanding. So far as we are concerned we see a decided difference from the words used, and keep it so.

It was the consciousness of this heavenly calling that supported Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, enabling them to 'confess that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth'. As we have pointed out before, there is a close parallel of principle between Hebrews and Philippians, and the consciousness of the high calling in Philippians 3 enables the believer there to count all things loss, making the same confession of faith and to hold loosely 'earthly things'.

Let us remember what is connected with 'confessing to His name' (Heb. 13:13-16) and the many passages which link suffering with future glory.

'Whose House are we IF ...' (Heb. 3:2-6)

When the apostle wished to lead the Hebrew believers to appreciate the excellency of Christ, he first drew attention to the difference that must be realized between God speaking 'by the prophets' and God speaking 'in Son'. He then proceeds to speak of the excellent name of Christ as compared with angels, and again the emphasis is, 'Thou art My Son'. In chapter 3 the apostle approaches the tenderest spot in the Hebrew mind, the place and honour of Moses. In the Jewish hymns for the Sabbath come the words:

'Thou calledst him Thy faithful servant, and didst put a glorious crown on his head when he stood before Thee in Mount Sinai, etc.'.

The Scriptures themselves emphasize the isolated dignity of Moses:

'I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put My words in His mouth ... whosoever will not hearken unto My words which He shall speak in My name, I will require it of Him' (Deut. 18:18,19).

Deuteronomy 34:10 adds:

'There arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face'.

When the apostle spoke of the angels he did not hesitate to show their inferiority to Christ, but when he speaks of Moses, he is careful to bring forward the highest commendation which Scripture affords. Christ was faithful, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. The reference is to Numbers 12:6-8 where the Lord severely reproves the attitude of Aaron and Miriam, saying:

'lf there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make Myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all Mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold'.

There can be no question that in all the range of Old Testament history no name could mean so much to a Hebrew as that of Moses. The apostle had to overcome this reasonable prejudice, and show them One Who was

greater than Moses, inasmuch as the New Covenant of spirit and life was greater than the Old Covenant with its ministration of death. In the first case he would bid them consider the essential difference between Moses and Christ. Moses was a part of the house over which he ruled, but Christ was the actual Builder of the house Himself. This of necessity spoke of the greater honour of Christ, but in verse 4 the arguments are brought forward which form the climax of his testimony in Hebrews 1:1,2.

'For every house is builded by some man; but He that built all things is God' (Heb. 3:4).

'e can be no purpose served by this statement unless the writer intends the Hebrews to understand that *Christ was God*. Verse 3 demands this meaning, and the fitness of verse 4 is only preserved if we believe it to refer to the Person of Christ. In Hebrews 1, after having spoken of the high dignity of the Son, he leads on to the same point:

'Unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever ... Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth' (1:8-10).

Whether the 'all things' of 3:4 be taken to refer to the creation at large, or in a more restricted sense to all the dispensations, including the Mosaic and the Gospel, Christ is the Builder.

The apostle now proceeds to another feature. Moses was faithful as a SERVANT in all his house, but Christ as a SON over His own house. Not only is there the contrast between Servant and Son, but between Moses IN, and Christ OVER, the house.

Further, the added words 'Over His own house' confirm the interpretation of verse 4 of Christ.

The reason for this carefully debated point is revealed in verse 6. This house over which Christ as the Son presides has infinitely more glory than Moses in the house of which he formed a part, and it represents a special people who are now to be named and described. 'Whose house are WE', the 'we' being the holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling of 3:1, and the many sons who are being brought to glory (cf. 2:10). Their peculiar characteristic is now added, and enforced by historical example.

'Whose house are we, IF we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end' (3:6).

This finds its echo in verse 14:

'For we are made partakers of Christ, IF we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end'.

These two passages are followed by almost identical words, which is a more forcible reason why we should compare them together. Following verse 6 we read:

'Wherefore, (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, AS IN THE PROVOCATION ... forty years ... I was grieved ... I sware ... They shall not enter into My rest.) Take heed, brethren, LEST ...' (3:7-12).

Following verse 14, we read:

'While it is said, To day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, AS IN THE PROVOCATION ... with whom was He grieved forty years? ... to whom sware He that they should not enter into His rest? ... Let us therefore fear, LEST ...' (3:15 to 4:1).

The whole context of chapters 3 and 4 makes it impossible that that 'house' of 3:6 can mean 'the church' as we know it. In the case of the church, there can be no 'if', and the figure of Israel in the wilderness can by no system of interpretation set forth that church whose standing is in pure grace. So also the parallel expression 'partakers of Christ'; this too refers to something which is in addition to redemption. The word 'partakers' is the same as that which is rendered 'fellows' in Hebrews 1:9. The idea in these passages is that of association with Christ in 'the joy that was set before Him', the 'oil of gladness' being that of exultation or extreme joy. Hebrews 3:1 places no 'if' against the statement that those addressed were 'associates of the heavenly calling'. The association with Christ, however, is different. Romans 8:17 contains a parallel with these two conceptions.

'And if children, then heirs; heirs of God' (parallel with Heb. 3:1).

'And joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together' (parallel with Heb. 3:14).

We shall find that the teaching of this epistle focuses upon the few verses with which chapter 12 opens. The exhortation is 'so run that ye may obtain'.

Chapters 3 and 4 are bounded by the word 'confession':

'Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession' (3:1 R.V.).

'Let us hold fast our confession' (4:14 R.V.).

It is evident that the Hebrew believers were exhorted to consider Christ as an Example in the matter of this 'confession'. A somewhat parallel double occurrence is 1 Timothy 6:12-14 where Timothy's 'good confession' is associated with that of Christ before Pontius Pilate. The word contains an element of danger and opposition, and the exhortation is to hold it fast unto *the end*. The one great feature which is singled out by the apostle in the case of Christ Himself is that He 'was FAITHFUL' (Heb. 2:17; 3:2). Therefore within the bounds set by 3:1 and 4:14 will come some further teaching, example, exhortation, encouragement and warning, such as will, by the grace of God, help the tried believer to hold on his way.

The one characteristic of Christ which the Hebrew believers were called upon to consider was *His faithfulness*; the one great warning which follows is that against *unbelief*:

'Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of UNBELIEF, in departing from the living God ' (3:12).

'So we see that they could not enter in because of UNBELIEF' (3:19).

'The word preached did not profit them, because they were not united by FAITH to them that heard' (4:2 marg.).

The great example is 'the provocation', which will be considered later on. This not only deals with unbelief but also with that of murmuring and complaining. It will be remembered that in Philippians, the Epistle of the PRIZE, the exhortation is:

'Do all things without *murmurings* and disputings: that ye may be ... the sons of God, without rebuke' (2:14,15).

In 1 Corinthians 10 also, this feature is brought forward:

'Neither *murmur* ye, as some of them also *murmured*, and were destroyed of the destroyer' (verse 10).

Murmuring may seem a small thing, but it is the seed of unbelief that departs from the living God. On one of the occasions, that of Numbers 11:4, it was the *mixed multitude* that led Israel astray - the type of those 'whose God is their belly, who glory in their shame, who mind earthly things' (Phil. 3:19). Israel murmured at the heavenly provision of manna, saying 'Our soul loatheth this light bread' (Num. 21:5). Psalm 78 reveals that unbelief was at the bottom of this rejection of heavenly food - 'Because they *believed not* in God'; 'Their heart was not right with Him' (verses 17,18,22,25,37). In the dealings of God with His people *after* salvation, the principle remains true that 'Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap ... flesh ... spirit'; for in Numbers 14:28,29 we read:

'As ye have spoken in Mine ears, so will I do to you: your carcases shall fall in this wilderness ... which have murmured against Me'.

The very sending of the spies into the land of promise was an act of provocation to the Lord. 'We will send men before us' (Deut. 1:22). He allowed them their own way in the matter, but the result was that 'they brought up an evil report'. Ezekiel 20:6 definitely tells us that the Lord Himself had 'espied' the land for them, but Israel did not believe Him.

It is comforting to know that while 'Some, when they had heard, did provoke; howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses' (Heb. 3:16), for Caleb and Joshua wholly followed the Lord and are blessed examples of those who by patience and continuance inherit the promises. We should give earnest heed to these things, so that we may in our turn 'press according to a mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus' (Phi]. 3:14).

The apostle and High Priest of our Profession (Heb. 3:1)

When we quote a passage of Scripture we are not at liberty to alter its wording, lest we appear to hold its teaching lightly or have unworthy views of its inspiration. We therefore have quoted Hebrews 3:1 as it is written. But is the Lord Jesus Christ the High Priest of OUR profession? Yes, surely if we are Hebrews, but does this apply to Gentiles, and particularly Gentiles saved under the dispensation of the Mystery? We can only answer such a question if the Scriptures, either by some positive statement, or as a result of comparing one epistle with another, provide sufficient material.

In the calling and sphere of Hebrews, the outstanding office associated with Christ as He sits on the right hand of God, is that of High Priest. In the calling and sphere of Ephesians, His outstanding office as He sits on the right hand of God, is that of Head. Are these but two names for the same thing, or do they differ? No epistle, apart from Hebrews, uses the title 'High Priest' or 'Priest' as a title of Christ, yet without the doctrine that revolves around these words, how could the teaching of Hebrews proceed? The exhortation 'to draw near' is based upon the fact that those thus exhorted have 'an High Priest over the house of God' (Heb. 10:21).

References to the necessity of a sacrifice for sin are not limited to any one epistle. Paul's epistles, both before Acts 28 and after, contain many such references, yet never throughout the course of his ministry as *God's appointed Preacher, Teacher and apostle of the Gentiles*, does he ever use the word 'Priest' or 'High Priest', either of the believer or of his Lord! But, when he comes to write the epistle to the Hebrews, he breaks entirely new ground, using the word 'Priest' fourteen times, a number that we have already noticed earlier in this series, 'Great Priest' (*megan*), once (Heb. 10:21); and 'High Priest' seventeen times, and so interwoven with the theme of Hebrews is this thought of 'Priesthood' that the teaching of chapters 5 and 7 to 10 demand continual reference to 'priests', while chapters 2 to 9 and 13 necessitate continual reference to the 'High Priest'.

Words are counters, they are index fingers; their inclusion or exclusion from any reasonable piece of writing indicates its general trend. Any treatise, letter or book dealing with such matters as war, finance, religion or logic would of necessity include certain specific terms and exclude others, and if the treatise, letter or book were of the length of either Hebrews or Ephesians, the subject matter of the title could be deduced from a collation of the distinctive words employed. If the theme of Hebrews necessitated the constant use of the words 'Priest' and 'High Priest', that fact would go a long way to indicate the character of its teaching. If to this it is added that Ephesians contains neither of these words, that additional fact would go a long way to indicate that the essential theme of Ephesians differed from Hebrews. Further, if it is observed that in the whole of Paul's other writings (thirteen epistles) there is not one occurrence of the word 'Priest' or 'High Priest', the evidence for the difference between his apostolic ministry as covered by the thirteen epistles and this letter to the Hebrews is still further increased, and when we remember that the same writer, Paul, is responsible for the use, or non-use, of these words, and that the use, or non-use, is controlled not only by Paul's reasonableness, and faithfulness, but by inspiration of God (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21), then the evidence for the difference in calling and sphere of Hebrews and Ephesians becomes overwhelming.

Before we can appreciate the use or non-use of the word 'Priest' in these epistles, it will be necessary to consider the testimony of Scripture concerning the office of the Priest and its relation to Israel and the nations. The epistle to the Hebrews itself provides evidence that long before Israel's time, the idea of priesthood was entertained by the

nations, for Melchisedec was a 'King-Priest' at the time of Abraham (Gen. 14:18-20). There is much to be said concerning the Melchisedec priesthood (Heb. 5:11), but the present is not the time for it. There were priests in Egypt in the days of Joseph (Gen. 46:20) and in Midian in the days of Moses (Exod. 2;16), yet, out of the 725 occurrences where the word *kohen* is translated 'priest', at least 700 refer to the priesthood of Israel. If under the law of Moses the offering of sacrifice and the building of an altar are the work of a priest, this was by no means the case before the introduction of the 'law of commandments and carnal ordinances' introduced after the breaking of the tables of stone of the Covenant at Sinai.

Abel offered an acceptable sacrifice, yet he was no priest. Noah offered a burnt offering upon an altar, and distinguished between clean and unclean animals (Gen. 8:20). Job, too, as the head of his family 'sent and sanctified his children' and 'offered burnt offerings' on their behalf (Job 1:5). Upon his entry into the land of promise Abraham also 'built an altar, and called upon the name of the Lord' (Gen. 12:7,8), and is seen arranging the sacrifices at the time of the great promise (Gen. 15:9-21). Isaac built an altar (Gen. 26:25), and Jacob built an altar at Shechem (Gen. 33:20), and another at Bethel, by the command of God (Gen. 35:1-7), and last, but by no means least, *the great sacrifice of the Passover* was offered by the head of each family, no priest being mentioned or necessary. In the Scriptures priesthood is not introduced by Divine command until the consecration of Aaron and his sons, recorded in Exodus 29. Before that consecration, priests are mentioned in Exodus 19:22 and 24, but these seem to have occupied the same sort of position that was given to David's sons as recorded in 2 Samuel 8:18, where the words 'chief rulers' is the Hebrew word *kohen*, or to Zabud in 1 Kings 4:5, where the words 'principal officer' is the Hebrew word *kohen*. This unusual use of the word *kohen*, ordinarily translated 'priest', appears to hark back to the primitive idea contained in the root-meaning of the word, which signifies either 'to represent oneself, or to present something or someone else' (J.M.A. in the *Com. Bib. Dict.*). It is a matter of Scriptural testimony and not of inference or deduction, that the only priesthood recognized in Israel under the law of Moses was the Levitical priesthood, of which the high priest's office was given to the family of Aaron, and the priesthood to the tribe of Levi (Heb. 5:4; 7:5,14).

When we turn to the epistle to the Ephesians, however, those belonging to the sphere and calling there administered are seen to *have been* 'redeemed' and to *have been* 'made nigh' by blood (Eph. 1:7; 2:13). *They themselves* constitute a 'holy temple in the Lord' and a 'habitation of God in spirit' (Eph. 2:21,22). This company are called 'saints' (Eph. 1:1), and find their inheritance 'in the saints' and 'of the saints' (Eph. 1:18; 2:19), yet without the intervention of a priest. This company has access, yea, boldness of access, with confidence, *but no human priest is found necessary to open the way*. In the practical section, Christ is said to have 'given Himself for us an Offering and a Sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour' (Eph. 5:2), and in the same practical section He is said to have sanctified and cleansed the church, and will present it unto Himself ... holy and without blemish (Eph. 5:26,27). Yet in chapter 1 Christ is set forth not as 'High Priest' but as 'Head' and the church is set forth as His 'Body'. This two-fold title occurs again in chapter 5, and the 'One Body' is prominent in chapter 2. The calling of the church of the Mystery is not typified in the types and shadows of the law.

The extraordinary insistence upon priesthood found everywhere in the law of Moses finds its echo in but one epistle, namely the epistle to the Hebrews. The earlier position, that of *head of a family*, set forth by Noah, Job, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob before the law, is more in line with the relationship that Christ holds to the church today. Instead of indicating an enrichment, the addition of the Levitical priesthood was a sure indication of failure. No perfection was possible or intended under the Levitical priesthood, which was made after the law of a carnal commandment (Heb. 7:11,16). In the case of Israel, Christ, by being a Priest after the order of Melchisedec, fulfils the office foreshadowed with such frailty by Aaron's priesthood. No such order is needed by the Gentiles who come under the dispensation of the Mystery; they find all, and more, in their ascended Head than Israel can find in their King-Priest.

Having seen that the office of the high priest is limited to the calling and profession set forth in this epistle to the Hebrews, and having seen that in Christ our Head, the One Mediator, we have all and more than all the priests of Israel or the Melchisedec priesthood can provide, we turn to the epistle to the Hebrews to learn the precious lesson, realizing that, while all Scripture may not be ABOUT US or written TO us, all Scripture is profitable and written for our learning. Those who were holy brethren and partakers of the heavenly calling are here called upon 'to consider Him'.

First the 'heavenly calling' must be considered, *epouranios* 'heavenly'. This word is found but twice in the LXX, once in Psalm 68:14, where it stands as a title for the 'Almighty', and once in some MSS. of the LXX in Daniel 4:23, where we read 'The heavens do rule' (26 A.V.). In the Apocrypha the word occurs but once, in 2 Maccabees 3:39, where it speaks of 'Him Who has His dwelling in the heavens'. When we turn to the New Testament we find the word in the Gospels and the epistles some twenty times, of which number of occurrences Hebrews uses six. There we find:

'Partakers of the heavenly calling'.

'Tasted of the heavenly gift'.

'The example and shadow of heavenly things'.

'The heavenly things themselves'.

'A better country, that is, an heavenly'.

'The heavenly Jerusalem'

(Heb. 3:1; 6:4; 8:5; 9:23; 11:16; 12:22).

This word *epouranios* provides an opportunity which we must not miss. Those who use a concordance use a most helpful instrument, but at the same time we should be warned, that an indiscriminate or mechanical use of a concordance can *mislead*. Here is a case which bears very closely upon our calling. We have from time to time affirmed that the phrase *en tois epouraniois* occurs five times in Ephesians and that it occurs *nowhere else*. The reader who consults his concordance, turns up the word *epouranios*, sees the five occurrences in Ephesians listed side by side with those in 1 Corinthians and Hebrews and decides that we are untrustworthy teachers, and without more ado sets aside the claim of Ephesians to be that of a unique calling, and yields to those who assure him that such are the claims of *ultradispensationalism* (an intentionally frightening term calculated to deter the timid or untaught), and so another believer is turned aside in his quest for truth. We have never said that the adjective *epouranios* 'heavenly occurs only in Ephesians; rather the phrase translated '*in heavenly places*' occurs only in that epistle, a very different statement. In spite of what has been said elsewhere, *en tois epouraniois* does not occur in the LXX. If we would understand the heavenly calling of Hebrews 3:1, the remaining occurrences of the word 'heavenly' must be examined. 'The heavenly gift' is associated with 'holy spirit' (the gifts) and 'the powers of the age about to be' (Heb. 6:4,5). The Levitical priests 'serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished by God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, see, saith He, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed thee in the mount' (Heb. 8:5). This argument continues throughout chapters 8 and 9 and reaches its conclusion in chapter 9:23,24:

'It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us' (Heb. 9:23,24).

These two references to the Tabernacle are followed by two to the Heavenly City or Country.

'Now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly'.

'But ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem' (Heb. 11:16; 12:22).

The heavenly calling of Hebrews 3:1 is therefore that which all of like faith with Abraham and the other witnesses to faith in Hebrews 11 share, the New Jerusalem, the heavenly country and city being its sphere. The church of the One Body finds its sphere of blessing 'where Christ sits at the right hand of God', a sphere distinct from the Heavenly City which will eventually come down from God out of heaven. In connection with the participation in this heavenly calling, the Hebrews are called upon to 'consider the Apostle and High Priest of their profession, Christ Jesus'. *Katanoeo* 'consider' occurs fourteen times in the New Testament. and about twenty times in the LXX of the Old Testament. where it translates the Hebrew *bin, nabat, sakal, shamem, tsaphah* and *raah*. These Hebrew words respectively mean understand, regard, understand as the result of wisdom, to be astonished, watch and behold. In all these terms, patient, careful regard is implied. Our English word 'consider' comes from 'watching the stars', *sideris* being the Latin for 'star'.

'There is most caution in *considering*; most attention in *regarding*. Consideration is employed for practical purposes; *reflection* for matters of speculation' (Crabb).

The scope of the consideration enjoined in Hebrews 3:1 may be estimated by the other occurrence of the same word:

'Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works' (Heb. 10:24).

This consideration embraces the apostle, the High Priest, and one another in its embrace, the Redeemer and the redeemed, the Captain and His followers, and is far removed from mere curiosity and academic interest. In Hebrews 7:4 the apostle directs our attention to Melchisedec saying:

'Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils'.

Here the attention is turned from the true High Priest Himself to His most exalted type, Melchisedec. Again our attention is drawn to Christ, this time as the Author, the Captain, as the word is translated in chapter 2, and the Finisher and Perfecter, the Beginning and the Ending, and related to the race set before Him, the endurance of the cross, the Overcomer.

'Consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds' (Heb. 12:3).

And lastly we read 'The end'.

'Considering the end of their conversation. Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever' (Heb. 13:7,8).

The object of consideration in Hebrews 3:1 is Christ in His two great offices (1) The Apostle, (2) The High Priest of their profession. It comes as something of a surprise to many to discover that Christ is THE Apostle, and while we have referred to this before, it will be well for us to get a clear idea of the import of the term.

Apostle. The word has come straight from the Greek into the English language, but it is not, except for this adoption, an English word. Its meaning must be sought in the original language of the New Testament, where it is found under the form *apostolos*. This word is used both in the Greek version of the Old Testament, the Septuagint (a translation generally indicated by the sign LXX, and so designated in our pages), and in classical or common Greek used outside the Scriptures.

In classical Greek *apostolos* meant 'a messenger, ambassador or envoy' and, in later usage, 'the commander of a naval force'. This rather limited meaning of the word is further seen in the use of *stolos*, 'a fleet ready for sea, a naval squadron or expedition'. In the LXX *apostolos* occurs in 1 Kings 14:6 in the phrase, 'I am sent to thee with heavy tidings', where 'sent' translates the Hebrew *shalach*, which immediately connects with such missions as that of Joseph (Gen. 37:13), Moses (Exod. 3:14), and Isaiah (Isa. 6:8); and generally with the bearing of 'tidings', whether of deliverance or judgment. The composition of the word is simple. *Apo* is a preposition, and, like nearly all prepositions, carries with it a sense of motion, direction or rest. In this case the translation 'from' indicates origin, motion and direction. *Stello* is the verb 'to send', and so an apostle is one 'sent from another'.

Apostello the verb is used of the 'sending forth' of the twelve (Matt. 10:5); of John the Baptist (Mark 1:2; John 1:6); of preachers generally (Rom. 10:15); of angels (Heb. 1:14); and of Paul (Acts 26:17). There is, however, one other occasion where *apostello* and *apostolos* are used, that gives all subsequent apostles and messengers their true and only authority. Both words are used of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is pre-eminently 'The Sent One' (1 John 4:9,10,14); He is pre-eminently 'The Apostle'.

'Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus' (Heb. 3:1).

Here therefore is revealed the character of the solemn office denoted by the title 'apostle'. Here Paul's insistence on the use of the word 'me' in 2 Timothy 2:2 is carried back to another and higher use of the pronoun, 'He that receiveth you receiveth ME' (Matt. 10:40) and, through Him, to the ultimate source of all authority, God Himself.

In the very opening of His public ministry, the Saviour spoke of the apostolic character of His mission:

'The Lord hath *anointed Me* to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath *sent Me* to bind up the broken hearted' (Isa. 61:1; cf. Luke 4:18).

He spoke of Himself as One Whom the Father had 'sanctified and sent' into the world (John 10:36), and in the great prayer of John 17 He said:

'Sanctify them through Thy truth ... As thou hast *sent* Me into the world, even so have I also *sent* them' (John 17:17,18).

Over and over again in John's Gospel we meet this word 'sent'.

'God *sent* not His Son into the world to condemn the world'.

'He Whom God hath *sent* speaketh the words of God'.

'The same works that I do, bear witness of Me, that the Father hath *sent* Me' (3:17,34; 5:36).

The reference here in Hebrews 3:1 to the office of apostle arises out of the superiority of Christ to the angels, with which both chapters 1 and 2 are occupied, but the actual verbal link between these two passages may not be perceived by the English reader.

Of the angels, the apostle said:

'Are they not all ministering spirits, SENT FORTH (*Gk. apostello*) to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?' (Heb. 1:14).

Angels were 'apostles', but we are not called upon to 'consider' them; our eyes are turned away to consider Him. In Hebrews 3:2-6, Christ the Apostle is also compared with Moses, even as in succeeding chapters, Christ the High Priest is compared with Aaron and with Melchisedec.

Moses, a servant; Christ, a Son (Heb. 3:2-6)

It is evident that the apostle is pursuing his theme, namely, the superiority of Christ, the Son, above angels and all other intermediaries, but the reader may not realize that, in the mind of any familiar with the LXX, the word *apostello*, as used in Exodus, links angels and Moses together:

'The LORD God of your fathers ... *hath sent* me unto you' (Exod. 3:15).

This verb is used in verses 10 and 14 also. After the Exodus from Egypt and while Israel were in the wilderness, God said:

'Behold, I send (*apostello*) an Angel before thee ... if thou shalt indeed obey his voice' (Exod. 23:20-22).

Of all the names that were revered by Israel, none were more held in honour than Moses and Abraham. Paul, who had intimate acquaintance with the traditional beliefs of his fathers, knew that any attempt by any teacher to dethrone Moses from the place given to him would be resisted, and any doctrine thus introduced would be doomed to failure. We need not turn to the writings of the Rabbis for this, for we read:

'Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples'.

'We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is' (John 9:28,29).

'We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and against God ... we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us' (Acts 6:11,14).

To which we add, from Hebrews itself:

'He that despised Moses' law died without mercy' (Heb. 10:28).

'Moses was faithful in all his house' (Heb. 3:2). This is the testimony of Numbers 12:7 'My servant Moses ... is faithful in all Mine house'. The apostle now introduces a comparison that places Christ far above Moses:

'For this man was counted worthy of MORE GLORY than Moses' (Heb. 3:3).

We have but to turn to 2 Corinthians 3:6-11 to have the apostle's own comment on this comparison.

OLD COVENANT. MOSES. NEW COVENANT. CHRIST.

Letter killeth	Spirit giveth life
Glory done away	Rather glorious
Condemnation - glory	Righteousness - exceed in glory
No glory in this respect	By reason of the glory that excelleth
That done away is glorious	Much more that which remaineth is glorious
We are changed from glory	To glory
The face of Moses 3:13	The face of Jesus Christ 4:6
Veiled 3:13,14.	Unveiled 3:18.

We know more or less how the apostle will proceed. He will go 'from glory to glory'. He will honour the law, the types, the names of Moses and Aaron, but he will faithfully point out where the Old Covenant failed and where the New succeeds. Christ therefore according to 2 Corinthians 3, as well as Hebrews 3, has 'more glory' than Moses. In 2 Corinthians, this was because of the infinite superiority of the New Covenant, here, in Hebrews, Paul has another purpose in view, although related, as we shall find later, with this same New Covenant. Here he says that the greater glory of Christ over Moses, is 'inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house. For every house is builded by some one; but He that built all things is God' (Heb. 3:3,4).

'This Man' (Heb. 3:3). The apostle draws attention by the use of 'this', 'this man' or 'these', to prophets, priests and offerings in this epistle, setting the old over against the new, and thereby magnifying the Son of God in all His mediatorial offices.

'God Who ... spake in time past ... by the prophets, hath in THESE last days spoken unto us by His Son' (Heb. 1:1,2).	PROPHET
'For THIS MAN was counted worthy of more glory than Moses' (Heb. 3:3).	Apostle
'For THOSE Priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by Him that said unto Him, The Lord sware ... order of Melchisedec' (Heb. 7:21).	KING
'But THIS MAN, because He continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood' (Heb. 7:24).	PRIEST
'For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that THIS MAN have somewhat also to offer' (Heb. 8:3).	PRIEST OFFERING and
'But THIS MAN, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God' (Heb. 10:12).	SEATED

While the word 'house' in Hebrews 3:2-6 is the Greek *oikos*, the apostle avoids the use of *oikodomeo* 'to build' in Hebrews. There must be some reason for this, for *oikodomeo* and its compounds are of frequent employment by Paul in his other epistles. If the reader should call to mind the passage in Hebrews 11, where it says of the Heavenly City 'Whose builder and maker is God', he will find that the word translated 'builder' is the Greek word *technites* 'artificer'; or if the words of Hebrews 9 come into mind 'not of this building', there the word translated building is the Greek *ktisis* 'creation'. The word translated 'build' in Hebrews 3:3,4 is *kataskeuazo, skeue* is the 'tackling' of a ship (Acts 27:19). *Skeuos* is a 'vessel' and in Hebrews 'the vessels of the ministry' used in the Tabernacle erected by Moses (Heb. 9:21). So in Hebrews 9:2 the word 'made' *kataskeuazo* is used of the Tabernacle, and after speaking of the candlestick, the table and the shewbread, the golden censer, the ark and the mercy seat, the apostle says:

'Now when these things were thus ordained' *kataskeuazo* (Heb. 9:6).

In Exodus 27:19 and 36:7 *kataskeue* is used in the LXX for the 'vessels' and the 'stuff' of the Tabernacle. We have no need to range the universe to discover what 'house' it is that is *thus* built in Hebrews 3:2,3 and 4; the house that Moses built, which is incomparably less in glory than the house that Christ built, refers particularly to the Tabernacle made after the pattern in the mount, which is what Moses erected, as contrasted with the 'true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man' (Heb. 8:2). The avoidance by the apostle of any use of the word *oikodomeo* 'to build' is significant. Those to whom Hebrews is written are visualized as pilgrims. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are spoken of as 'tent dwellers'; here they have 'no continuing city'; they look for one to come.

'He that built all things is God' (Heb. 3:4).

'This verse has been a kind of *offendiculum criticorum* in past ages, and has never yet, in any commentary which I have seen, been satisfactorily illustrated ... if the verse be entirely omitted, and the third verse be immediately connected with the fifth, there seems to be nothing wanting, nothing omitted that is at all requisite to finish the comparison which the writer is making ... The amount then of the reasoning seems to be: 'Consider that Christ, as *Theos* and the former of all things, must be the Author too of the Jewish and Christian dispensations, which glory belongs to Him, not only in His mediatorial office, and as being the Head of a new dispensation, but also as the Founder both of this and the Jewish dispensation in His divine character; while Moses is to be honoured only as the head of the Jewish dispensation, in the quality of a commissioned superintendent, but not as author and founder' (Moses Stuart).

Kataskeuazo is not used in the New Testament Scriptures of creation, and it is beside the mark to bring heaven and earth as the 'all things' of Hebrews 3:4 into the argument. The divine command to Moses was 'See ... that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount' (Heb. 8:5) where the words 'all things' must be limited to the Tabernacle which Moses was about to erect. In two passages in Hebrews the A.V. leads the reader to think of the creation of 'the world', where the original speaks of 'the ages': Hebrews 1:2 and 11:3. The reader should be aware of this tendency on the part of the A.V., and for the sake of clearness we indicate the several words that are thus translated 'world', and hope that the survey of the examples will fully justify the diversion.

World - kosmos	'From the foundation of the world' (Heb. 4:3; cf. 9:26). 'He condemned the world' (Heb. 11:7). 'Of Whom the world was not worthy' (Heb. 11:38).
World - *aion* (age)	'By Whom also He made the worlds' (Heb. 1:2). 'The powers of the world to come' (Heb. 6:5). 'Once in the end of the world' (Heb. 9:26). 'The worlds were framed' (Heb. 11:3).
World - *oikoumene* (habitable world, prophetic earth).	'When He bringeth in the First begotten into the world' (Heb. 1:6). 'For unto the angels hath He not put into subjection the world to come, whereof we speak' (Heb. 2:5).

In Hebrews 9:26 it will be observed that both *kosmos* and *aion* are translated 'world', which is misleading, coming as they do in the same verse. Hebrews 1:10 has made it abundantly clear WHO it was that created heaven and earth, there is no need to bring that subject into the argument of Hebrews 3:1-6. The contrast is between Moses, as a *servant*, and Christ as a *Son*, for the Son has already been addressed as Lord and God. Again there seems to be an intended selection of the word used for servant here. It is *therapon*. This word is taken from Numbers 12:7,8 where the Lord's dealing with Moses is contrasted with His dealings with lesser prophets.

'My servant (*LXX therapon*) Moses is not so, who is faithful in all Mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth'.

While *therapeuo* is generally rendered serve or minister in the LXX, one passage reveals its inclination to medical and healing service.

'Mephibosheth (who was lame on his feet, 9:3) ... had neither dressed (*therapeuo*) his feet' (2 Sam. 19:24).

In the New Testament *therapeia* is rendered 'household' twice (Matt. 24:45; Luke 12:42) and 'healing' (Luke 9:11; Rev. 22:2). *Therapeuo* occurs forty-four times in the New Testament and is translated 'cure' five times, 'heal' thirty-eight times and 'worship' once. The word is never translated 'serve', the one occurrence 'worship' being the nearest approach to this meaning (Acts 17:25). It does not seem possible, with this insistence upon a healing ministry, to eliminate entirely that thought when speaking of Moses as a *therapon*. Moses did not 'serve' as a slave, his work was neither that of a manual labourer, nor of an artisan. He was engaged in holy things, and with the spiritual health of Israel. Israel's ultimate restoration is likened to 'healing' (Isa. 6:10), and 'the Salvation' (*soteria*) of Acts 4:12, looks to verse 9 where the words 'made whole' are the translation of *sozo*. Physicians would form a part of the entourage of a great house, and Herodotus says when speaking of Egypt, 'Every great family as well as every city must needs swarm with the faculty'. It will be remembered that the priest had to deal with leprosy and pronounce a man clean or unclean. This service of Moses, gracious as it was, is placed over against the position of Christ, Who as the Son was over His own house. This ministry of Moses was:

'For a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after' (Heb. 3:5).

Thus, also, after describing the Tabernacle, its service and its furniture, the apostle says:

'The Holy Ghost this signifying ... a figure for the time then present ... until the time of reformation' (Heb. 9:8-10),

which is immediately followed by a reference to the greater and more perfect Tabernacle over which Christ presided as the High Priest of good things to come (Heb. 9:11). At verse 6 of Hebrews 3, the apostle turns from the house built by Moses to the house ruled over by the Son and says 'Whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end'. This new facet of truth we must now consider.

The Provocation

Chapters 3 and 4 are bounded by the word 'confession':

'Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession' (3:1 R.V.).
'Let us hold fast our confession' (4:14 R.V.).

It is evident that the Hebrew believers were exhorted to consider Christ as an Example in the matter of this 'confession'. A somewhat parallel double occurrence is 1 Timothy 6:12-14, where Timothy's 'good confession' is associated with that of Christ before Pontius Pilate. The word contains an element of danger and opposition, and the exhortation is to hold it unto *the end*. The one great feature which is singled out by the apostle in the case of Christ Himself is that He 'was FAITHFUL' (Heb. 2:17; 3:2). Within the bounds set by 3:1 and 4:14 therefore, will come some further teaching, example, exhortation, encouragement and warning, such as will, by the grace of God, help the tried believer to hold on his way.

The one feature of Christ which the Hebrew believers were called upon to consider was His *faithfulness*; the one great warning which follows is that against *unbelief*:

'Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of UNBELIEF, in departing from the living God' (3:12).
'So we see that they could not enter in because of UNBELIEF' (3:19).
'The word preached did not profit them, because they were not united by FAITH to them that heard' (4:2 marg.).

The great example is 'the provocation'. This word comes from *pikraino* - 'to be bitter', and illuminates Hebrews 12:15,16 where another type for the believers' warning (Esau) is closely linked with a 'root of bitterness'. The great text of the apostle in chapters 2 and 3 is taken from Psalm 95 which he introduces with the solemn words, 'As the Holy Ghost saith'.

lt is evident that we must know something of this provocation on the part of Israel if we would profit by the Scripture before us. In Numbers 14 we have the record. Caleb and Joshua had urged upon the people a confident faith in the Lord with respect to the entry into and possession of the land of promise.

'But all the congregation bade stone them with stones ... And the LORD said unto Moses, How long will this people PROVOKE Me?' (Num. 14:10,11).

Their provoking was largely due to their unbelief, for the passage continues, 'How long will it be ere they believe Me?' The Lord threatened to disinherit and smite the people, but upon the prayer of Moses, He said, 'I have pardoned according to thy word' (20). The people therefore were a *pardoned people*. But does this mean that they did go up and possess the land? No, for after pronouncing the gracious pardon the Lord added:

'But as truly as I live ... surely they shall not see the land ... neither shall any of them that provoked Me see it' (Num. 14:21-23; see also Psa. 99:8; 2 Sam. 12:10-12).

In Numbers 14:22 the Lord declares that already this people had tempted Him *ten times.* Some have taken this literally, and *The Companion Bible* sets out the 'ten times' as follows:

(1)	At the Red Sea	(Exod. 14:11,12).
(2)	At Marah	(Exod. 15:23,24).
(3)	The Wilderness of Sin	(Exod. 16:2).
(4,5)	Twice about the Manna	(Exod. 16:20,27).
(6)	At Rephidim	(Exod. 17:1-3).
(7)	At Horeb (golden calf)	(Exod. 32).
(8)	At Taberah	(Num. 11:1).
(9)	At Kibroth Hataavah	(Num. 11:34).
(10)	At Kadesh	(Num. 14:2).

While we must honour those who have taken God at His Word, and have collected 'ten' occasions in the history of Israel's wanderings where they 'tempted' the Lord, we must remember that there were other occasions both before and after Numbers 14:22 when Israel provoked the Lord by their unbelief, and which form an essential part of those Scriptures which have been written for our learning. Meribah (Exod. 17:7) was repeated (Num. 20:7-13) with disastrous results to Moses himself (see verse 12). 1 Corinthians 10 enumerates some of the 'provocations' of the wilderness, and introduces that most extraordinary testimony to the fact that Christ was before His incarnation 'The Lord God' of Israel:

'Neither let us tempt CHRIST, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents' (1 Cor. 10:9).

Dr. John Lightfoot says 'The nation of the Jews delighted mightily in the number TEN, both in sacred and civil matters. A synagogue consisted not but of ten men at least, and the number of those who comforted the mourners after the burial of the dead, consisted of ten at the least. 'Peradventure *ten* shall be found there' (Gen. 18:32), aid Abraham and apparently reached the minimum. Jacob complained of his treatment at the hand of Laban saying 'Your father hath deceived me, and changed my wages *ten* times' (Gen. 31:7). Are we to take the number 'ten' literally in such a statement as:

'And when I have broken the staff of your bread, *ten* women shall bake your bread in one oven' (Lev. 26:26)?

When Elkanah in his endeavour to comfort his wife said: 'Am not I better to thee than *ten* sons?' (1 Sam. 1:8), does anyone believe that his intention would be expressed the more or the less had he said 'eleven' sons, or 'nine'? Why 'ten loaves' or 'ten cheeses'? (1 Sam. 17:17,18). Are we expected to count the occasions when the 'comforters' of Job had reproached him 'ten times'? (Job 19:3). To these examples we may add the 'ten days' and the 'ten times better' of Daniel 1, the 'ten men' of Amos 6:9 and Zechariah 8:23.

The provoking of the Lord by Israel is introduced in Hebrews 3 as an extension or illustration of the exhortation given in verse 6,

'Whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end',

the reference to the 'provocation' being introduced by the word 'wherefore' and concluded by the warning:

'Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God' (Heb. 3:12),

and the conclusion in verse 14 balances the introduction of verse 6 thus:

A 6. Whose house are we, IF we hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.
B 7-11. Psalm 95 quoted 'They shall not enter into My rest'.
C 12,13. Take heed. Heart of unbelief.
A 14. We are made partakers of Christ, IF we hold fast the beginning of our confidence stedfast to the end.
B 15-18. Psalm 95 quoted 'They should not enter into His rest'.
C 19. So we see. Unbelief.

Psalm 95 is made much of in this passage, and calls for examination. The fourth book of the Psalms (see *The Companion Bible*), commences with the Psalm of Moses, and corresponds with the fourth book of the law, Numbers, the book of Israel's wandering in the wilderness. Psalm 90 refers to those of responsible years who had rebelled against the Lord, declaring that their children had been led out of Egypt only to die in the wilderness. Psalm 91 speaks of those very children who were preserved throughout the wilderness dangers and entered into the land of promise under Joshua, when all those of the latter generation were dead.

'Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men' (Psa. 90:3).

While there may be a spiritual application of these words, they refer in the first place to Numbers 14:28-30:

'As truly as I live, saith the LORD, as ye have spoken in Mine ears, so will I do to you: your carcases shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against Me, doubtless ye shall not come into the land, concerning which I sware to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun'.

Psalm 91, however, is the fulfilment of the succeeding promise of verses 31-34:

'But your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised ... Your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years ... after the number of the days in which ye searched the land ... and ye shall know My breach of promise'.

So in Psalm 90:9 we read:

'For all our days are passed away in Thy wrath: we spend our years as a tale that is told'.

But in Psalm 91:7-16 we read:

'A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand: but it shall not come nigh thee ... with long life will I satisfy him, and shew him My salvation'.

And so Psalm 95 takes up the story, and calls upon Israel to hear the voice of the Lord and not to harden their hearts as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness. Let us remember that in Numbers 14, where this great provoking is recorded, those who were thus doomed to wander and to die in the wilderness were A PARDONED PEOPLE (Num. 14:20). Those who were warned about the evil heart of unbelief were 'holy brethren'. Hebrews is not dealing with the gospel of initial salvation; it deals with believers who, though delivered from their spiritual Egypt, united with Christ as were Israel when they were 'baptized into Moses', partaking of the blessings of the wilderness provision 'bread from heaven' yet, like those who were intimidated by the report of the ten spies, lost their place in the land of promise. We observe in 1 Corinthians 10:1-5:

'That ALL ... were under the cloud, and ALL passed through the sea; and were ALL baptized unto Moses ... did ALL eat the same spiritual meat; and did ALL drink of the same spiritual drink ... but with MANY of them God was not well pleased'.

In the immediately preceding context of these words, the apostle had said:

'They which run in a race run ALL, but ONE receiveth the prize. So run, that ye may obtain' (1 Cor. 9:24),

and Hebrews 12 picks up the thread and continues:

'Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the Author and the Finisher of faith; Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God' (Heb. 12:1,2).

The exhortation of Hebrews is 'Let us go on unto perfection' (Heb. 6:1), and this is implied in the words of Hebrews 3:14 (cf. Heb. 3:6):

'If we hold the BEGINNING of our confidence stedfast unto the END'.

Going on unto perfection implies reaching a goal, going on to the end, finishing the course, touching the tape. Perfection and its associate words are all derivations of the root *tel* which gives us *telos* 'the end'. This will be made more evident when the exhortation to go on unto perfection is before us, but it should ever be kept in mind. Unless we clearly distinguish between Hope which is ours by gift in grace, and which can neither be won nor lost, and Prize and Crown which is associated with running a race, pressing on, enduring to the end, a prize that even Paul himself when writing to the Philippians was not sure of attaining, we shall make sad havoc of the teaching of Hebrews. Throughout the epistle, those addressed are already looked upon as 'holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling'. The wilderness experiences of Israel were the experiences of the REDEEMED. Those who forfeited entrance into the land included Moses himself, and surely Moses was a saved man!

In Hebrews 5:8-12 and 6:1, the apostle writes:

'Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; and having been perfected, He became unto all that obey Him the author of *aionian* salvation; named of God a high priest after the order of Melchisedec, of whom we have many things to say, and hard of interpretation, seeing ye are become dull of hearing; for when by reason of the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need again that some one teach you what are the elements of the beginning of the oracles of God... Wherefore *leaving* the word of the beginning of Christ, *let us go on* unto perfection' (not AV JP).

There we have a parallel with the 'forgetting' and the 'stretching out to' of Philippians 3.

The historical illustration supplied by Hebrews is found in chapters 3 and 4. The failure of Israel in the wilderness is largely connected with their fickleness of memory. While it could have been written of them after the mighty redemption from Egypt, 'they soon *forgat* His works', we find that they '*remembered* the fish which they did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick' (Num. 11:5), and accordingly, after the spies had made their report, and after they had seen the bunch of grapes from Eshcol (note the contrast to the viands of Egypt), 'they said one to another, Let us make a Captain, and let us return into Egypt'. It is significant that the word 'Captain' in the LXX is the same as that name of Christ in Hebrews, and the contrast is vitally connected with the two attitudes of mind expressed in 'leaving' and 'going on unto', 'forgetting' and 'stretching out to'. The Israelites' failure to 'leave' and 'go on' was used by the apostle to impress his teaching in the epistle to the Hebrews as a warning and the possibility of losing the 'Reward'.

CHAPTER 4

THE SABBATH, THE SWORD, AND THE SYMPATHY (Heb. 4:9-16).

In chapters 3 and 4 the words *katapausis* and *katapauo* ('rest') occur eleven times, and the one reference in 4:9 where the word *sabbatismos* is used, makes twelve in all. It is evident therefore that this 'rest' is an essential subject. In the first case the entry into the land of promise was typical of the rest that remaineth to the people of God, for it is used directly in connection with Israel in the wilderness. That it was not the actual 'rest', but a type only, may be seen from Hebrews 4:8:

'For if Joshua (Jesus A.V.) had given them rest, then would He not afterward have spoken of another day',

which the Lord did in David's time, as is seen in Psalm 95. Not only is the rest here spoken of likened to the entry of the faithful overcomer into Canaan, it is also likened to the Sabbath day rest of the week in creation:

'For He spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all His works' (Heb. 4:4).

The structure of Hebrews 4:1-13 will help us to see the chief features of the passage and guide us in our study.

The A.V. of 4:2 reads 'not being mixed with faith' and gives in the margin '*Because they were not united by faith to*'. The R.V. reads 'But the word of hearing did not profit them, because they were not united by faith with them that heard'. This reading turns our attention to the great division that came about after the return of the spies. Israel did not join with Caleb and Joshua in their triumphant faith, but with the unbelievers and the complainers.

Hebrews 4:1-13

A 1,2. **a** Let us therefore fear, lest
b Any come short.
c Not united by faith.
d The Word of hearing.
B 3,4. Nature of this rest After works, e.g., Creation.
C 5,6. It remaineth (*apoleipo*) - a rest.
D 7. David.
D 8. Joshua.
C 9. There remaineth (*apoleipo*) - a rest.
B 10. Nature of this rest After works, e.g., Creation.
A 11-13. ***a*** Let us therefore labour, lest
b Any fall.
c Example of unbelief.
d The Word of God.

With regard to the nature of this 'rest' both verses 3, 4 and 10 look back to Genesis 1 and 2, where we are told that God rested upon the seventh day after the completion of the six days' creation. The believer is said to rest 'from his works as God did from His' when he enters into this 'rest that remaineth'. Verse 9 departs from the usual word for rest to give us its full and perfect meaning:

'There remaineth therefore a *Sabbatismos* (a Sabbath rest) to the people of God'.

There is one further feature that demands attention, and that is the statement made in 4:3:

'Although the works were finished from the foundation of the world'.

'The foundation (*katabole*) of the world' is an expression that has been carefully examined in *The Berean Expositor*, and the translation 'The overthrow of the world' has been adopted instead of the A.V.

This 'overthrow' we find indicated in Genesis 1:2:

'And the earth became without form, and void',

the six days' work which follow being the preparation of the earth as a platform for the outworking of the plan of the ages. When the writer of Hebrews wished to speak of *laying* a foundation, he uses the verb *themelioo*, Hebrews 1:10, and not *kataballo*. The question that comes to us as a result of this is:

'In what way does this reflect upon the believers to whom the apostle addressed his words, for their rest is likened to the seventh day rest of God' (see Heb. 4:3,4,10)?

A little wider study, we think, will help us to appreciate the apostle's meaning. In 4:1 he writes:

'Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it',

and in 4:11 he adds:

'Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief'.

Now we are already acquainted with the fact that the grand exhortation of Hebrews is to 'go on unto perfection', *perfection* being the doctrinal equivalent of *the rest that remaineth*. So therefore in Hebrews 6:1 we read:

'Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine (word of the beginning) of Christ, let us go on unto perfection'.

this 'perfection' we see to be the parallel with the 'rest' of chapter 4 by observing the second half of chapter 6:

'Things that *accompany* salvation' (9).

'The full assurance of hope unto the end' (11).

'Followers of them who through faith and patience *inherit* the promises' (12).

'And so, after he had patiently endured, he *obtained* the promise' (15).

In 4:3 we read of works that were done since the overthrow of the world, and in 9:25,26 we read that Christ did not offer Himself often as the High Priest who entered the most Holy Place yearly with the blood of another, for in that case He must have suffered often since the overthrow of the world.

The work of the six days' creation is brought into line with the work of redemption, as indeed it was a part. The rest that remaineth unto the people of God is a rest which follows completed work. The epistle will go on to develop the twofold character of this rest. It will first of all show it to be the result of the great finished Work of Christ Whose one Offering caused the oft-repeated sacrifice of the law to 'rest' (*pauo* - cease) from being offered (Heb. 10:2). And secondly it will show it to be the result by grace of that faith which obtained promises and was the substance of things hoped for. Sabbath *succeeding* work is not gospel, *it is reward*. 'Let us labour therefore' while we at the same time rest in the finished Work of Christ.

It is tolerably certain that in the book of the Revelation the Lord Jesus Christ enters into His office as the great King-Priest, 'after the order of Melchisedec' (see Psa. 110). This brings the Apocalypse and the epistle to the Hebrews into line. The fact too that both books treat of the overcomer and the New Jerusalem will add to this sense of similarity. We have been considering the 'rest that remaineth unto the people of God' and in Revelation that rest is materialized. There too we have the words:

'Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them' (Rev. 14:13).

The concluding verses of Hebrews 4 contain a two-fold presentation of Christ: (1) as He appears to the seven churches (Rev. 2 and 3); and (2) as the merciful High Priest, Who can sympathize with His people's weaknesses.

'For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him to Whom we must give an account' (Heb. 4:12,13 not AV JP).

In Revelation 2:12-16 Christ says:

'These things saith He which hath the sharp sword with two edges ... Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth'.

The words spoken to each of the seven churches are searching indeed. Their works are known; the One Who speaks is a Judge of the thoughts and intents of the heart. His purpose too is to lead them on to perfection or as the Revelation words it, to 'overcome'. So in Hebrews 4, the searching statement of verses 12 and 13 is addressed to those who are being urged to endure to the end.

Some commentators say that the reference in Hebrews 4:12 is exclusively to the *written* Word, while others maintain that it can only refer to the *living* Word. It is evident that somewhere before verse 13 the personal element is introduced. The simplest view seems to be that which is expressed in the figure of Revelation 1:16, 'And out of His mouth went a sharp twoedged sword' and Revelation 19:13 'His name is called The Word of God'. The apostle, in Hebrews 4:12,13, speaks of Christ together with the Word, using it for His people's good. There is possibly a reference also to that specific passage of the Word which underlines the apostle's argument, viz. Psalm 95, which

he referred to as the words of the Holy Ghost. That Psalm is still 'living and energetic'. The Lord can still use it to reveal the vital difference between 'soul and spirit'. This is a distinction that is not kept clear in the minds of many of the Lord's people.

Much that enters into Church life, witness and worship, if viewed in the pure light of the Word, would prove to be of the soul rather than the spirit. While body, soul and spirit compose the complete man, the highest service and the only acceptable worship is that of the spirit or the new nature. Philippians, the epistle of the *Prize*, shews that discernment is necessary:

'And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment (*discernment*); that ye may *try the things that differ* (margin); that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ' (1:9,10).

2 Timothy, the epistle of the *Crown*, also urges discernment:

'Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, *rightly dividing* the Word of truth' (2:15).

Hebrews, the epistle of the *Perfecting*, also reveals the need for discernment. Soul and spirit must be kept distinct.

The last words of verse 13 read in the A.V. 'with Whom we have to do'. In Hebrews 13:17 the word rendered 'do' (*logos*) in 4:13 is translated 'account', and this is its meaning in Hebrews 4:13 'to Whom we must give an account'. The atmosphere is that of the Judgment Seat of Christ, and verses 12 and 13 leave the mind impressed with the 'terror of the Lord'. This is but one side of truth however. There is another, which equally impresses us with infinite sympathy, tender care, wondrous grace, and bids us to come boldly. That other phase is expressed in Hebrews 4:14-16:

'Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, Who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession' (not AV JP).

With this 'profession' chapter 3 opened:

'Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus, Who was faithful ...'.

We have turned aside to consider the unfaithful of Israel and their forfeiture. We turn again and see in Him the great Captain and Perfecter of faith, Who, for the joy set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. An added reason for continuance is given in 4:15,16:

'For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched (sympathize) with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, APART FROM SIN'.

As we have stressed before, God never tempts a man to sin. Temptation is an essential feature in the record of the *race* and the *crown*, but it is a temptation which is of the nature of trial and test. Temptation which springs from our own sinful selves is another matter. James clearly distinguishes between the two sorts of temptations in the first chapter of his epistle:

'My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations ... blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life' (verses 2 and 12).

That is the temptation of Hebrews and of Revelation. The other kind of temptation to which Hebrews 4 takes exception is next reviewed by James:

'Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man: but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed' (1:13,14).

Just as Hebrews 4:14 looked back to 3:1,2, we find 4:15 looking back to 2:18:

'For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted'.

An example of the temptation that is intended here is found in Hebrews 11:17:

'By faith Abraham, when he was tempted, offered up Isaac'.

Whatever the temptation may be through which we may be called to pass, it is a comfort to know that He Who sits at the right hand above was made partaker of flesh and blood, was tempted like as we are, apart from sin, and is 'able to sympathize with our weaknesses'.

'Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need' (4:16).

This question of temptation, and in particular the meaning of the words 'tempted like as we are yet without sin' were given a careful examination in chapter 3, and the reader is earnestly exhorted to acquaint himself with this exposition if for any reason its study has been overlooked, as it is vital both to the understanding of the epistle, and for the safe guidance of the pilgrim through the wilderness of this world.

CHAPTER 5

MELCHISEDEC, THE PRIEST OF THE PERFECTED (Heb. 5:8).

The Triumph of Gethsemane

Before seeking the relation of this order of Melchisedec priesthood with the theme of the epistle, we must be clear as to its place in the context, and therefore call the reader's attention to the structure of Hebrews 5 to 6:

Hebrews 5 to 6

A 5:1-6. Melchisedec Priest.
  B 5:7-10. The Priest perfected.
    C 5:11 to 6:1. The slothful (dull) *versus* the perfect.
  B 6:1-10. The saints Let us go on unto perfection.
    C 6:11-19. The slothful *versus* the overcomers.
A 6:20. Melchisedec Priest.

It will be seen that the subject enclosed within these references to Melchisedec is that of the two classes under notice through this epistle, namely:

(1) Those who attain unto perfection.

(2) Those who fail of it - the slothful.

There must be something peculiarly fitting therefore in this great title of Christ, and we propose to seek its meaning and connection.

The opening reference is in a sphere of suffering:

'Prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears ... learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; and being made perfect, (by these sufferings, 2:10) He became the author of a salvation which is age-lasting unto all them that obey Him, called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec' (5:7-10 not AV JP).

The closing reference in this section gives to Christ the further title of 'The Forerunner'. The Greek word *prodromos* does not occur elsewhere in the New Testament, but in the LXX it occurs twice. In Isaiah 28:4 the Hebrew is unfortunately rendered 'hasty fruit'. The Hebrew equivalent *bikkur* is translated elsewhere by the word 'first-fruits' seventeen times. Cognates are translated 'firstborn', 'firstling' and 'birthright'. This reflects upon the teaching of the epistle to the Hebrews, for the saints who go on unto perfection are firstfruits, the Church of the Firstborn, who do not, like Esau, sell their birthright for a little ease in this life. The other occurrence of *prodromos* is found in Numbers 13:20 and is very similar; there the word is a translation of the Hebrew from which we have the English 'first-ripe'. It will be seen therefore that if we keep to Scriptural usage we shall not think of our Lord as having gone to heaven as a kind of Forerunner going on before us to clear the way, but as the first-ripened fruit, a pledge to the Father of the harvest that was to follow, a harvest of the many sons that He was leading through suffering to glory. The passage in Hebrews 12:1-3 which speaks of Christ as the Captain and Perfecter of faith, the

race to be run, the endurance ending in exaltation and glory, will come before the mind as we think of Christ as the Forerunner; and the apostle uses the word *dromos* 'course', in the parallel passage of 2 Timothy 4:7.

In Hebrews 7 we find a further explanation given of the Melchisedec priesthood. We are taken back to Genesis 14 where Abraham is met by this priest after his victory over the armies of the kings. It was here that Abraham renounced all rights and dues as a result of his triumph, taking neither thread nor shoe latchet, lest the king of Sodom should say 'I have made Abram rich'. There he also learned something more of the all-sufficiency of the Most High God, the possessor of heaven and earth. The Melchisedec priesthood *blesses the overcomer.* That is an important truth to be remembered here.

The greatness of this priesthood is further emphasized by an elaboration of a number of details that occur in the passage in Genesis. The name has a meaning. Melchisedec means King of Righteousness, and King of Salem means King of Peace. The fact that no genealogy is given in Scripture is taken to typify the risen and unending priesthood of the Son of God. The greatness of this priesthood is still further shown by the fact that even Abraham the patriarch gave a tenth of the spoil to Melchisedec, and the blessing of Abraham by Melchisedec shewed that 'without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better'. The perfection of which the epistle speaks is not connected with the Levitical priesthood (7:11), and the essential difference between the Aaronic order and that of Melchisedec is found in the fact that this priesthood is not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life (7:16). The introduction of the Levitical order of priesthood moreover was not accompanied by an oath, but in the case of Christ:

'The Lord SWARE and will not repent ... by so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament (covenant)' (7:21,22).

The subject is summed up in 8:1,2 in these words:

'Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an High Priest, Who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man'.

The verse, so often repeated in this section, 'Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec', is taken from Psalm 110, which speaks of Christ sitting at the right hand of the Lord until His foes be made a footstool, and also of His people presenting themselves as free-will offerings in the day of His power, which day seems closely linked with the day of His wrath (Psa 110:5) when He shall strike through kings. The first mention of Melchisedec is connected with the slaughter of the kings near Sodom, the last (in the Old Testament) speaks prophetically of 'striking through kings in the day of His wrath'. In the book of the Revelation we have Christ presented to us as both Priest and King. Hebrews dwells mainly on the priestly side, Revelation unites the two offices and shews how this royal Priesthood of Christ in the heavens and the fashioning of that royal priesthood on earth ('kings and priests unto God' Rev. 1:6; 1 Pet. 2:5,9) are the goal of the 'perfecting' of Hebrews and the 'overcoming' of the Apocalypse.

The ministry associated with Christ as a Priest after the order of Melchisedec takes us neither to the Tabernacle nor Temple, but to Gethsemane; the offerings here are not sin offerings or trespass offerings, but prayer and supplications, the end 'perfecting', not forgiveness or acceptance.

'Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; and being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him' (Heb. 5:8,9).

How are we to understand the awful agony of the garden of Gethsemane? Albert Barnes voices a common interpretation of the agony of Gethsemane thus:

'The posture of the mind of the Redeemer, perhaps, was something like this. He knew that He was about to be put to death in a most cruel manner. His tender and sensitive nature, as a man shrank from such a death. As a man, He went under the pressure of His great sorrows and pleaded that the cup might be removed and that man might be redeemed by a less fearful scene of suffering. That arrangement, however, could not be made ... even though the prayer of the pious sufferer is not directly answered, yet that prayer is acceptable to God, and the result of such a trial is worth all that it costs'.

We believe these words present very fairly what is in the mind of many who read the story of Gethsemane. The repeated words 'as a man' are put in to soften the apparent shrinking that is implied. We cannot, however, accept this apology for the Son of God in whatever terms of grace and love it may be presented.

First let us consider the place that this experience occupies in the epistle to the Hebrews. Paul is approaching his great exhortation 'Let us go *on* unto perfection' which finds its dread alternative in '*drawing back* unto perdition'. Now, however we endeavour to soften the charge, the view expressed by Albert Barnes means in plain terms that the Saviour did, if only temporarily, 'draw back'. Yet Gethsemane issues in His 'perfecting'. If the common view of Gethsemane be the true one, should we not fee] that Paul very unwisely introduced such a subject here?

(1) Christ your Saviour, your Captain, momentarily drew back.

(2) You, Wis followers are expected not to draw back.

Something seems amiss with this argument. If Hebrews 10 teaches anything, it teaches that Christ fully knew what was involved when He accepted the office of the One Mediator. Setting aside all the typical offerings of the law, He said 'A body hast Thou prepared Me', and that body was destined to be 'offered' (Heb. 10:5,10). These Hebrews were exhorted to look unto Jesus, the Author and the Perfecter of faith, 'Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame' (Heb. 12:2). If Hebrews 5:7 be interpreted to mean that the Saviour prayed to be delivered from the awful death that awaited Him on the cross, it will certainly read discordantly with John 12:27,28:

'Now is My soul troubled; and what shall I say? (Shall I say?) Father, save Me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. (No, I will say) Father, glorify Thy name'.

How does the apparent drawing back of Gethsemane harmonize with the words of John 10:17,18?

'Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of My Father'.

John 17 precedes the garden of Gethsemane. In that sublime chapter the Saviour reviewed His life's work, and said:

'The hour is come ... I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do'.

'When Jesus had spoken these words, He went forth with His disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden' (John 17:1,4; 18:1).

Are we to believe that the strong confidence of chapter 17 was followed by a temporary drawing back in chapter 18? The Saviour knew intimately what awaited Him at the end of His journey:

'He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day' (Matt. 16:21).

He knew all that the prophets had written concerning His crucifixion and death:

'Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man shall be accomplished. For He shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on: and they shall scourge Him, and put Him to death: and the third day He shall rise again' (Luke 18:31-33).

To suggest that in the garden of Gethsemane the awfulness of Calvary just began to dawn upon the Saviour, is a contradiction of all that is written of Him. He knew, even to the fact that He should be 'spitted on'. We certainly read of the disciples, when they were on their way to that last visit to Jerusalem, that they were amazed and afraid, but the Saviour assured them by telling them that He knew already all that could and should be done unto Him (Mark 10:32-34).

Let us return to Hebrews 5 and read the passage afresh. Let us go to the end of verse 7, and note, *whatever* it was that formed the burden of the Saviour's prayer, *He was heard.* To 'hear' prayer is equivalent in many cases to 'answer'.

'Now we know that God heareth not sinners' (John 9:31).

This does not and cannot mean that God is unable to hear what a sinner says, it means He does not hear with approval or acceptance. 'I knew that Thou hearest Me always' (John 11:42) said the Saviour. Whatever therefore was the subject of Christ's supplication in the garden of Gethsemane was acceptable, was heard, and was answered. We learn moreover that Christ was heard 'in that He feared', which the A.V. renders in the margin 'for His piety'. This is a most necessary correction. On the surface the A.V. gives the impression that the Saviour's prayer was the result of 'fear', of His being 'afraid', but 'piety' points entirely to the opposite direction. *Eulabeia* is found in Hebrews 12:28:

'Let us ... serve God acceptably with reverence and *godly fear*'.

Not only is such service 'acceptable', the godly fear is echoed by the word 'reverence'. Whatever the Saviour asked for, therefore was heard, and that for His godly fear or piety. The burden of His petition is realized in the character given to the Hearer and Answerer of His prayer. He prayed 'unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His piety'. Here, however, we must anticipate an objection. It may be objected, Christ was not saved from death, He did die on the cross, He was not spared. In this objection lies the root of all the misunderstanding and misrepresentation of the blessed Lord. What He dreaded, and what was threatened was *physical collapse* in the garden of Gethsemane. The bloody sweat is a physical accompaniment and sign of intense agony and exhaustion, and had the Saviour collapsed in a fatal seizure in the garden, the Devil would have triumphed! Let us remember the emphasis that is laid upon the 'weakness' of that hour. It is written 'He was crucified through weakness' (2 Cor. 13:4) and Paul said 'We also are weak with Him' and could say also 'My strength is made perfect in weakness' (2 Cor. 12:9) using the same word *teleioo* that is used of His Lord (Heb. 2:10; 5:9). The suffering Saviour turned to His disciples and said 'What, could ye not watch with Me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak' (Matt. 26:40,41).

Whose spirit was willing? whose flesh weak? Most think He addressed these words to the disciples. No, He spoke of Himself and His bodily weakness in the hour of His agony. The evidence of physical weakness is seen in that the rough soldiery who manifested no traits of human kindness, were obliged nevertheless to transfer the cross from the Saviour's shoulders, to that of a man of Cyrene, Simon by name (Matt. 27:32). Again, death by crucifixion was a lingering death, lasting four, five, or six days, and consequently Pilate 'marvelled' and could not readily believe that Christ had died so quickly, and called the centurion to get confirmation (Mark 15:44). The Saviour indeed was crucified through weakness. His spirit was always unalterably willing, it was the flesh that was weak, and the flesh in its physical sense, not in any moral way.

It has been assumed that the 'cup', which the Saviour asked might pass from Him, was the death of the cross. This is monstrous and contradicts the whole tenor of the life of Christ. The 'cup' was the possibility that it would be the Father's will that He should die in the garden and the cross never be reached. 'Nevertheless' if His life's work were to end in such apparent failure the Saviour still as the perfect Servant and obedient Son bowed before the Father's will. He had done this earlier. When rejection instead of acceptance by Israel was made manifest He said 'Even so Father: for so it seemed good in Thy sight', and called upon all who labour and are heavy laden to take His yoke upon them and learn of Him, for said He 'I am meek and lowly of heart'. We can get some confirmation of this by observing the balancing members of the structure of Matthew's Gospel:

Matthew

A	1:1 to 3:1.	Birth to Baptism Ministry of John the Baptist. 'Born King of the Jews'.
B	4:1-16.	Threefold Temptation of the King. Triumph.
B	26:36-44	Threefold agony of the King-Priest. Triumph.
A	27; 28.	Baptism of suffering to Birth in Resurrection. Ministry of those who are to baptize all nations. 'This is Jesus the King of the Jews'.

This structure is not complete, but the temptation in the wilderness and the agony in the garden perfectly correspond. Will any one dare to suggest that the word 'triumph' be altered to temporary hesitation, drawing back

or any other derogatory expression? Christ as surely triumphed over the attack of the Devil in the garden, as He had overcome the same Tempter in the wilderness. The word 'agony' *agonia*, which is so closely associated with this awful experience in the garden, provides us with the word 'race' of Hebrews 12:1 where the Greek word is *agon*. After an unprecedented list of suffering and endurance (Heb. 11:33-38) in which there is no hint that any drew back, the reader is exhorted to 'look away unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of faith'. There is no hint that He drew back for an instant, but rather 'for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame' and this is followed by an exhortation to:

'Consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds' (Heb. 12:3),

adding the pregnant words,

'Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin' (Heb. 12:4).

Three passages of Hebrews are linked together:

'It became Him ... to make the Captain (*archegos*) of their salvation - PERFECT (*teleioo*) THROUGH SUFFERINGS' (Heb. 2:10).

'Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; and being made PERFECT (*teleioo*), He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him' (Heb. 5:8,9).

'Looking unto Jesus the Captain (*archegos*) and PERFECTER (*teleiotes*) of faith' (Heb. 12:2 not AV JP).

It is of the very essence of the words translated 'perfect' that one goes right on to the end (*telos*), 'forgetting the things that are behind'. Can we believe that Paul could say, 'None of these things move me', but his Lord would momentarily have found it difficult to utter these words in the garden? How then could He be both Captain and Perfecter? How could He be said to have learned obedience? *How could His followers be rebuked for 'drawing back'*? (Heb. 10:38,39). Peter drew back, the other disciples forsook their Lord, but the Prophet looking down the age says:

'The Lord GOD hath opened Mine ear, and I was NOT rebellious, NEITHER turned away back ... therefore have I set My face LIKE A FLINT, and I know that I shall not be ashamed' (Isa. 50:5-7).

'The cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?' (John 18:11).

In Matthew 16, when Peter out of misguided love for the Saviour said 'Be it far from Thee, Lord; this shall not be unto Thee', he was rebuked as an instrument of Satan (Matt. 16:22,23). In Matthew 26 Peter said 'Though I should die with Thee, yet will I not deny Thee' (Matt. 26: 35) although we know only too well that he would deny the Lord thrice before that day was over. *Are we to believe that Peter, who had thus manifested the frailty of his faith, would be the spectator in the self same night of His Lord's temporary drawing back*? We trust that no reader will ever attempt to apologize for His Lord, but will maintain in face of all, that in the hour of His mortal weakness, with sweat pouring from Him like drops of blood, He nevertheless prayed to be preserved so that He might finish the work for which He had been born; that He was 'saved from' *that death that threatened Him in the garden*, and was 'heard for His piety', being strengthened by the ministering angel, ultimately offering Himself through the eternal spirit to God; remaining all the time, and through all the bitter experience of His earthly ministry - 'Holy, harmless, undefiled' and ever well pleasing in the sight of Him Who sent Him.

Melchisedec The Priest of the Perfected (Heb. 5:8-10)

Babes versus Full grown

The reference to the priesthood of Melchisedec which was introduced in Hebrews 5:6, is resumed at verse 10:

'Of Whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing' (Heb. 5:11).

The LXX uses the word translated 'dull' in Proverbs 22:29 to translate 'mean' in the expression 'mean men', and the verse speaks of one diligent in his business. In Proverbs 12:8 it is used for 'perverse'. It would appear from the usage of the word that the A.V. 'dull' is hardly strong enough. The Hebrew word in Proverbs 22:29 is *chashok* 'obscure' or 'darkened', and the cognate *chosek* is translated scores of times 'darkness'.

The spiritual ear and eye are of the first importance. Peter in his second epistle uses the word *myopia* ('cannot see afar off') of those who had become forgetful of the purification of old sins (1:9). We trust our readers will immediately remember the strong emphasis upon 'purification for sins' found in Hebrews, especially the fact that in the opening summary this alone is written of the Lord's work on earth. 'When He had made purification for sins' (Heb. 1:3). 2 Peter 1 speaks of 'adding to your faith', a parallel expression to the words of Hebrews 6, 'things that accompany salvation'. These added things have in view the rich furnishing of the entry into the *aionian* kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:11). So in Hebrews the perfecting is connected with the *aionian* salvation.

This reference to the dullness of hearing is additionally a gathering up of the words of the great historic type of chapters 3 and 4. 'Today if ye will HEAR His voice'. 'Some, when they had HEARD, did provoke'. 'The word preached did not profit them, because they were not united by faith with them that HEARD'. Dullness of hearing, moreover, is another mode of expressing the truth of Hebrews 2:1:

'Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we drift away' (not AV JP).

'Hearing' together with 'seeing' may be reckoned as the chiefest of the senses. How sad to allow any precious sense, even in the physical realm, to be atrophied through lack of use! How doubly sad to have the precious gift of hearing spiritually and then through not having 'the senses EXERCISED' (Heb. 5:14) to fail, to come short, to drift! Over against this drifting and dullness the apostle places endurance, obedience, suffering, steadfastness unto the end. Surely we, too, need the exhortation of the Lord, 'Take heed how you hear'.

Not only were there many things to say about Melchisedec, but the apostle said that they were 'hard to be interpreted (not uttered)'. The word translated 'uttered' is *dusermeneutos* which is cognate with *hermeneuo* which occurs in Hebrews 7:2 again in connection with this same Melchisedec:

'First being by *interpretation* King of righteousness'.

Paul had no difficulty concerning 'utterance'; his difficulty was 'to make intelligible to you' (Moffatt). This difficulty of interpretation could reside in the apostle himself, or could arise from some quality or lack in his hearers. This is what he actually said. Their dullness of hearing, made for dullness of teaching. It is good to remember that there could be no 'buyers' if there were no 'sellers', no 'borrowers' if no 'lenders', and the teacher is dependent upon the hearer. If the hearer be 'dull' the 'interpretation' will be thereby rendered difficult. That this is an integral part of the apostle's lesson here, the structure makes manifest, the words 'dull' and 'slothful' (Heb. 5:11; 6:12) being the only occurrences of the Greek word *nothros* in the New Testament. These dull and slothful ones were not laying aside every weight, but were evidently cumbered with useless impediments, 'the other things' that choke the word. Not only does this dullness of hearing seriously hinder the growth of the believer, it prevents him from exercising that most blessed office, the ability to teach others. Teaching demands of the teacher many precious gifts, but the most important of all is that he too shall have the 'hearing ear'. The 'tongue of the learned' is most closely related to the 'ear of the learned' (Isa. 50:4) 'As I hear I speak' said the greatest Teacher of all. This dullness of hearing the apostle associates with stunted growth and in Hebrews 5:12-14 he expands his meaning under six heads:

(1) It indicates *lack of progress.*
'For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you'.

(2) It indicates *spiritual infancy.*
'Ye have need of milk, and not of solid food'.

(3) It indicates *lack of experience.*
'For every one that useth milk is without experience of the word of righteousness'.

(4) It indicates the opposite of being *perfect.*
'But solid food belongeth to them that are perfect'.

(5) It indicates a *culpable neglect.*
'Perfect, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised'.

(6) It indicates *lack of discernment.*
'Senses exercised to discern both good and evil'.

Let us take these six points and gather their lessons. Teachers are placed together with those who can take solid food, have senses exercised and are perfect or mature. This passage comes to us very solemnly and says that the qualification for teaching is something more than head knowledge and ready speech. In the Sermon on the Mount, breaking the commandments and doing them are associated with teaching men so, and also with losing or gaining a position in the kingdom of heaven. James utters the warning, 'My brethren, be not many *teachers*, knowing that we shall receive a greater judgment' (3:1). Instead of progress there was retrogression.

'For even when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again certain rudiments of the beginning of the oracles of God' (Heb. 5:12 not AV JP).

Ta stoicheia tes arches, 'The rudiments of the beginning'. *Stoicheia* are the initial steps in knowledge, and also the 'elements' of the natural world. (See Gal. 4:3,9; Col. 2:8,20; 2 Pet. 3:10,12). The verb *stoicheo* comes in Acts 21:24, '*Walkest orderly*'; Romans 4:12, '*Walk* in the steps of the faith'; Galatians 5:25, '*Walk* by the Spirit'; Galatians 6:16; Philippians 3:16, '*Walk* by rule'.

These Hebrew believers had progressed no further than the initial steps of the faith, and indeed needed teaching in these things all over again. An intellectual grasp of the teaching of men on any subject may be sufficient, *but a mere intellectual grasp of God's truth is not sufficient.* The doctrine and faith of the early church was rightly called 'The Way', for it involved *walk* as well as *word, life* as well as *lip.*

What these 'first principles' were that they needed to be retaught we shall see better when we come to Hebrews 6. The spiritual infancy of these saints is indicated by the figurative use of foods for doctrine, 'Ye have need of milk and not of solid food'. The apostle had occasion to use this same figure when writing to the Corinthian Church, and for similar reasons:

'And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able' (1 Cor. 3:1,2).

The milk, the rudiments of the beginning of the oracles of God, to them had been 'Jesus Christ and Him crucified' (2:2). 'Howbeit,' said the apostle, 'we speak wisdom among them that are PERFECT' (2:6). The thought is resumed and developed in chapter 13:8-13. Milk diet is natural and right for infants, but it has a purpose and a limit. 'As new-born babies desire the sincere milk of the word that ye may GROW thereby'. Peter adds a word to this that links it with Hebrews 6. 'If so be ye have TASTED that the Lord is gracious' (1 Peter 2:2,3).

CHAPTER 6

'LEAVING ... LET US GO ON ... NOT LAYING AGAIN' (Heb. 6:1)

Whatever view we may entertain as to what constitutes 'the principles of the doctrine of Christ', one thing is beyond controversy, Hebrews 6:1 bids the reader to LEAVE them:

'Therefore *leaving* the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let *us go on* unto perfection'.

'Leaving' is answered by 'go on', 'principles' answered by 'perfection'. First we observe that this exhortation arises out of and is logically connected with what had already been said about those who were dull of hearing. The apostle commences his exhortation with the word 'therefore'. Seeing that there are many Greek words translated 'therefore' in the A.V. of the New Testament, it might be wise to note which of this number is selected here. *Dio* the conjunction used in Hebrews 6:1 is a relative of *dia* 'through' and suggests that what follows is a consequence or an inference from what has been already advanced (see its use in Heb. 3:7,10; 10:5; 11:12,16; 12:12,28 and 13:12). These believers 'for the time' ought to have been teachers, but owing to their sluggishness they needed that one should teach them AGAIN which are the FIRST PRINCIPLES of the oracles of God. The apostle's inference in Hebrews 6 is that the believer should *leave* these first principles not in the sense of giving them up, but should *go on*, should not *lay them again and again*. It is natural and right that new born 'babes' should feed on 'milk' (1 Pet. 2:2) but only in order that they may 'grow thereby'. These believers to whom Paul writes were stunted ... 'for the time' they should have reached adulthood (full age or perfect Heb. 5:14) and been teaching others. But faculties, whether physical or spiritual, will suffer atrophy if they are not exercised. The 'first principles of the oracles of God', likened to milk, must be left and built upon if growth is to be maintained. The 'principles of the doctrine of Christ' must be left if maturity is to be attained. If Hebrews 6:1 is read in the light of chapter 5:12 no harm will be done by retaining the A.V. translation, but without its context the idea of 'leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ' is monstrous. What is apostasy but leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ? Moffatt translates this passage 'Let us pass on then to what is mature, leaving elementary Christian doctrine behind'. The margin of the A.V. gives the literal translation:

'The word of the beginning of Christ'.

Looking at these words by themselves, we may entertain a number of possible meanings, but they form part of an argument that has been developing ever since the opening chapter. In Hebrews 2:3 we read:

'How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord',

and in this passage lies the key to Hebrews 6:1. First we remember that the Hebrew believers were accused of being 'dull'; here in chapter 2 they are warned of the dangers that accompany 'negligence'. The reciprocal character of this neglect is actually stated later in Hebrews. The Greek word *ameleo* 'neglect' being translated 'regard not' in Hebrews 8:9. Israel *neglected* the Lord. He *regarded* them *not.*

'Because they continued not in My covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord'.

When writing to the Corinthians, Paul said that he had delivered unto them 'among the first things what I also received' (1 Cor. 15:3) where the word 'received' is *paralambano*. In Hebrews 2:3 we have the simpler word *lambano* 'receive', but which is not translated by the A.V., it being considered an idiomatic usage. Where Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15:3 *en protois* 'among first things', he says in Hebrews 2:3 'which a beginning (*arche*) having received (*lambano*) to be spoken by the Lord'. This, while being an awkward rendering, does set before the reader a parallel with 1 Corinthians 15:3, and is moreover intensified by the warning in verse 2 'If ye keep in memory (or hold fast)'. The messages referred to were 'first principles' of the Gospel, 'Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures'. J.N.D. reads 'having had its commencement in being spoken of by the Lord', again somewhat awkward, but nearer the truth than the A.V. While fundamental truth is and must be of fundamental importance, it is of no more value than is a solid concrete foundation upon which no building is ever erected. A granite rock may become a first-class foundation, but it remains a granite rock only, unless a building rests upon it. (A foundation after all is a relative term. It presupposes the erection of a building). In all the three hundred and more occurrences of *logos*, it is only translated 'doctrine' in this passage, and as *didache* is correctly rendered 'doctrine' in verse 2, we

must retain the simpler idea of 'word', 'saying' or 'discourse' in verse 1. *Logos* is translated 'account' in Hebrews 13:17 and again in Philippians 4:17. To translate *arche* 'principles' is a double violation of its meaning. It is singular in number, whereas the A.V. and the R.V. render it by the plural, and in every other occurrence of the word in Hebrews it is rendered either by 'first' or 'beginning'. If we use the word 'account' here in Hebrews 6:1 we read:

'Leaving the account (narrative or treatise) of the beginning of Christ'.

it may turn us to the opening of the Acts of the Apostles. Green translates the passage 'The former *account* I composed, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus *began* both to do and to teach', and this leads us to the Gospel by Luke. Here we arrive at something tangible. The Gospel narratives are a *beginning*, their sequel, 'perfection' or completion must be sought elsewhere. Where we are speaking of Israel, the Hebrews, perfection will be found in the New Covenant. The exhortation of Hebrews 6:1 does not speak of the present calling of the church of the Mystery, although, any believing Hebrew, who went all the way with the apostle in this epistle, would find no barrier that prevented him from taking the step of faith to pass through the broken middle wall and to find himself a member of the One Body. That however is not visualized here.

To all believers whose pasture is mainly the Gospels, we would say 'go on'. The Lord Himself told His disciples that He had many things to say which could not be imparted unto them until the Holy Spirit was given, and promised that then He would guide them into 'All Truth' (John 16:13), and that moreover, this complete body of truth would have as its outstanding characteristic the glorifying of the Saviour, and anything new that might be thus revealed would still be, He said, taking of Mine and showing it to you. What is true of a foundation is true also of a house. A foundation that is never built upon, or is continually being relaid, taken up and put down is not a foundation at all. 'Whose house are we, IF' which implies continuance and endurance until the end be attained. If we receive the elementary doctrines of Christ, but never build upon them, these doctrines will never be, so far as we are concerned, a foundation.

Those familiar with our publications are aware that we translate the Greek of Ephesians 1:4 *pro kataboles kosmou* 'before the overthrow of the world', and some who endorse this translation would read Hebrews 6:1 similarly 'Not overthrowing again a foundation'. The two passages are however not quite comparable. There is no *word* for foundation in Ephesians 1:4, but in addition to *kataballo*, Hebrews 6:1 uses the word *themelion*, which does mean a foundation (Eph. 2:20). Bloomfield, commenting on Erhard's rendering 'not demolishing', says 'Not demolishing is forbidden by the *usus loquendi*, for I cannot find a single example of the middle form in the sense "to demolish", but only in the sense of *jacere* "to lay down" whether in a literal or figurative sense'. While therefore we leave the new translation of Ephesians 1:4 unimpaired, for the actual word 'foundation' is not used there, we can and must endorse the translation of the A.V. of Hebrews 6:1 'not laying again'.

Paul was not the founder of this company. Peter, not Paul, is the apostle of the circumcision, and the foundation had been laid by him and his associates. Paul had however exercised his privilege as a private believer, and a Hebrew by race, to write to the dispersion, as Peter himself acknowledged in 2 Peter 3:15,16, and as no other such epistle than Hebrews is known to us, we cannot help but believe that it is to this epistle that Peter refers. Peter uses the figure of blindness as a consequence upon forgetfulness (2 Pet. 1:9), and urges his reader to make his calling and election sure. He directs his reader to the 'honour and glory' that Christ as 'The Beloved Son' received on the Mount. The dissolution of heaven and earth of 2 Peter 3, finds an echo in the shaking of heaven and earth in Hebrews 12. The preservation through it all, indicated in 2 Peter 3:13, finds its parallel in the kingdom that cannot be shaken of Hebrews 12:28. The doctrines that the Hebrew believers were not to lay over again, but leave in order to go on unto perfection are six in number, and these we must now consider.

The six-fold Foundation (Heb. 6:1,2)

We have seen that in order to go on unto perfection or full growth certain fundamentals, called 'the word of the beginning of Christ' must be left, that it is not reasonable to keep on laying again a foundation, but to proceed to the related building. The sixfold foundation we set out here, as an introduction to their examination:

- Repentance
- Faith
- Baptisms
- Laying on of hands
- Resurrection
- Judgment *aionian*

Internal and Doctrinal

External and Confirmatory

Future.

Repentance from Dead Works

1 Thessalonians 1:9 shows how fundamental this must be. 'Ye turned to God from idols'. It is manifest that it is not contemplated by the apostle that this 'repentance' should be repeated. This is also true for the Hebrews. Turning from idols and repentance from dead works marked a vital fundamental change. That Galatians was a covering letter to this epistle to the Hebrews, and the apostle's words both to Peter and to the Galatians are more than suggestive here.

'For if I *build again* the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor' (Gal. 2:18).

'Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods. But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how *turn ye again* to the weak and beggarly elements (*stoicheia*, same word as 'principles' in Hebrews 5:12), whereunto ye *desire again* to be in bondage' (Gal. 4:8,9).

Does this mean that we are to have no sorrow for sin, no departing from iniquity? No! 'Repent' is the keyword of the gospel of the earthly Kingdom. John the Baptist, the Lord Jesus, and Peter alike commenced their ministries with this word. Let the reader turn to Ephesians; let him read through the six chapters, seeking every occurrence of the word 'repent' and 'repentance'; he will not find one. Let him continue through Philippians and Colossians; the result will be the same. Why is it that this word, so frequent in the Gospels and the Acts, is so rigorously excluded from these epistles which give the foundation teaching of the present dispensation? Is it not that the Lord, by omitting this key-word of the earthly Kingdom, would lead us to observe that we are in an entirely different dispensation?

We shall find by turning to Hebrews 9:14 that the apostle, who told them to leave 'repentance from dead works', has a very satisfactory reason, and one which glorified the Lord Jesus Christ. 'How much more shall the *blood of Christ* ... purge your conscience from dead works'! Reader, which is better, the oft-repeated repentance, or the once completed purgation? Let Hebrews 10:1-14 answer the question. This is in harmony with Colossians 2:13, 'Having forgiven you *all* trespasses'. The apostle's standard is an infallible test for doctrine so far as we are concerned, and 'He shall glorify *Me*' is surely heard here.

Faith Towards God

If it seemed strange to speak of leaving the doctrine of repentance, it must sound doubly strange to speak of not laying again the foundation of 'faith toward God'. We may be perfectly sure that the one who so emphasized justification by faith is not advocating its abandonment here. Let us again apply the touchstone. How does the apostle Paul speak of faith in the epistles?

'The faith of *Jesus Christ*' (Gal. 2:16).

'The faith of the *Son of God*' (Gal. 2:20).

'By faith of *Jesus Christ*' (Gal. 3:22).

'By faith in *Christ Jesus*' (Gal. 3:26).

'Your faith in the *Lord Jesus*' (Eph. 1:15).

'Through the faith *of Christ*' (Phil. 3:9).

'Your faith in *Christ*' (Col. 2:5).

'The faith which is in *Christ Jesus*' (1 Tim. 3:13).

'Through faith which is in *Christ Jesus*' (2 Tim. 3:15).

By reading the contexts of the above passages it will be seen that all the blessings of the gospel are not only vitally connected with 'faith', but faith which *rests in Christ*! Justification, resurrection, life, the sonship and salvation, are all spoken of as resulting from faith which has *Christ* for its object.

By birth, by nationality, by their very law, customs, and distinctions, the Jews were continually reminded that Jehovah was the *God of the Jews*. Every Jew prided himself upon that fact, so much so that Paul had to write, 'Is He not also (the God) of the Gentiles?' (Rom. 3:29). But this national faith toward God, though it ministered to their pride, could not save them. In the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican we have a vivid example of this. The Pharisee had 'faith toward God', otherwise he would never have troubled to go to the Temple and say what he did. The Publican, however, realized that this vague, general recognition of God, was not sufficient for his need. Notice the words of his prayer. 'God be propitious (merciful upon the ground of sacrifice) to me, the sinner'. Here was faith not only in God, but in the divine provision for sin. The fact that from earliest childhood these Hebrews had heard of God and read His law, was in some measure a stumblingblock to them. They did not realize that they needed a Saviour as much as the Gentiles. The Gentile, on the other hand, had no national faith to rest upon; he cast himself upon the unconditional mercy of God in Christ.

The Lord Jesus when on earth had said, 'Ye believe in God, believe *also* in Me' (John 14:1). To trust in the God of one's fathers is a poor substitute for that faith which owns Him as the 'God of my salvation'. The epistle to the Hebrews emphasizes the necessity of the sacrificial and high priestly work of Christ. All who come unto God for salvation come unto God 'by Him' (Heb. 7:25).

The Doctrine of Baptisms

The order of the words in the original is 'baptisms of doctrine' (or instruction). The word 'of' may be the genitive of relation, and mean that these baptisms were related to instruction and doctrine, for the ordinances of every dispensation have always had a deeper value than the mere ritual observance. The most important word for our consideration is 'baptisms'. We notice that it is in the plural, contrasting with the one baptism of Ephesians 4. The apostle here says 'Leave ... not laying again ... the doctrine of baptisms'. In Ephesians he says 'Endeavour to keep ... one baptism'.

We would first direct attention to the two other passages of Scripture where the word 'baptisms' occurs. (1) in Hebrews 9:10 it is translated 'washings':

'The first tabernacle ... was a figure ... in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the *conscience*; which stood only in meats and drinks, and *divers washings* (*baptisms*), and *carnal ordinances*, imposed on them until the time of reformation' (Heb. 9:6-10).

God has used the same word here as in Hebrews 6:2, and has placed it in such a context that nothing but blindness or wilfulness can bring it into the present dispensation of heavenly and spiritual blessings. It is related to carnal ordinances which touched the flesh but not the conscience, and is placed in full contrast with that which is perfect. (2) The only other occurrence of this word is in Mark 7:4-8:

'And when they come from the market, except they wash (baptize), they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing (*baptisms*) of cups, and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables ... Howbeit in vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrines (similar word as in Heb. 6:2), the commandments of men. For laying aside (same word as *leaving* in Heb. 6:1) the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men'.

It is striking to see that the inspired author of Hebrews takes up the very words of the Lord in the Gospel. The Lord had said that among the doctrines of men which they held was the 'doctrine of baptisms', and that they had 'left' the commandment of God to 'hold the traditions of men'. The apostle says, in effect, 'Reverse all this; leave the doctrine of baptisms for the revealed Word of God'. What have we found hitherto?

The 'baptisms' used in Hebrews 6:1,2, and 9:10 have one meaning. They formed part of 'carnal ordinances' imposed by God, which made none 'perfect'. Again, the word occurs in Mark 7:4, and designates the 'ceremonial

cleansings' imposed by the traditions of the elders. Thus, whether imposed by God or men, these baptisms were carnal ordinances, and had no place in 'that which is perfect'.

A careful comparison of Hebrews 9:10 with Hebrews 10:1-4 will show by the repetition of such words as 'conscience' and 'perfect' that these ordinances were contemporary with the Levitical sacrifices, and both passed away together. The epistle to the Hebrews is the first Scripture which reveals that the *sacrifices* appointed by God were to cease; so also with the *ordinances* which formed a part of the same appointed service.

The Laying On of Hands

Acts 8:12-18 makes the connection between water baptism, and the laying on of hands very apparent. 'They were baptized', then 'they laid hands upon them, and they received *pneuma hagion*' (holy spirit, the *gifts*). 'Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands *pneuma hagion* was given'. Again, in Acts 19:6 we read, 'When Paul had laid his hands upon them, *pneumato hagion* came on them, and they spake with tongues, and prophesied'. In Acts 28:8, 'Paul prayed and laid hands upon him and healed him'. These things have ceased and passed away. After Acts 28, although we have the record of several who were sick, we have no instance of anyone healing them by the laying on of hands. After Acts 28 we read of believers receiving the seal of the Holy Spirit of promise, but never that such was given by the laying on of hands. 'Not with hands' might be an appropriate inscription written over the present dispensation. As we have seen, the gifts today are directly given by the ascended and glorified Lord (Eph. 4:8-11), without the interposition of man at all.

Paul reminded Timothy of a past act in 1 Timothy 4:14 and in 2 Timothy 1:6, but when he tells Timothy to 'do the work of an evangelist' there is no need or warrant for the 'laying on of hands'. The instruction, 'lay hands suddenly on no man' (1 Tim. 5:22) has reference to the custom which signified approval (as in Acts 13:3); no gifts were conferred thereby, and none are specified as necessary in the qualifications given in 1 Timothy 3. Thus again we see that even in the setting aside of this ceremony, a ceremony which was once accompanied by such mighty power, a confirmation in the true sense of the word (Mark 16:20 and Heb. 2:3), the believer is led to see the fulness that is his in Christ alone.

One has but to read 1 Corinthians 12 to 14 to understand that the possession of miraculous gifts *was not* a sign of 'perfection' but rather of 'childhood' (see 1 Cor. 13:8-11).

The Resurrection of the Dead

Nothing can be more certain than that the apostle Paul would never tamper with the 'foundation of God', the 'hope' of the believer, which is resurrection. Yet there must be something hidden beneath the surface to account for so remarkable a statement as that given in Hebrews 6 in both the A.V. and R.V. We make a great mistake when we assume that the resurrection as taught by the Pharisees, or believed by the generality of the Jews and the disciples, and that proclaimed by the apostles, were all one and the same. We must carefully follow the actual 'words which the Holy Ghost teacheth', if we would understand Hebrews 6:2.

The words translated 'the resurrection of the dead' in Hebrews 6:2 are in the original *anastaseos nekron*. Let us trace the use of these words in other passages. We are aware that one of the great differences between the Sadducees and the Pharisees was that the former denied the resurrection, whereas the latter believed it (Matt. 22:23). In Acts 23:6 we read, 'Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee, of the hope and resurrection *of* the dead (*anastasis nekron*) I am called in question'. Again in Acts 24:21 he says, 'touching the resurrection of (the) dead (*anastaseos nekron*) I am called in question'. In reference to this he had said, 'believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets, and have hope toward God, *which they themselves* also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust'. These passages give us the belief of the orthodox Jew, founded upon the Law and the Prophets.

John 11:24 shows us that the sister of Lazarus entertained the same belief. 'Martha saith unto Him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection *at the last day*'. The same Gospel gives Christ's own words on this subject in John 5:28,29, 'The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of

judgment'. Hitherto, all the passages quoted are in keeping with Hebrews 6:2. Turning now to Mark 9:9,10 we shall discover something which will throw light upon Hebrews 6:

'And as they came down from the mountain, He charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from (*among*) the dead (*ek nekron*). And they kept *that* saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean'.

If the Pharisees, Martha and the Jews generally, believed the resurrection of the dead, we may be certain that these disciples believed it too. What then was their difficulty? Wherein was the need for questioning? '*That* saying' certainly contained a problem for them, and it is found in the little word *ek* translated 'from'.

They, in common with the majority, believed in a resurrection of the dead *at the last day*, but this statement as to a resurrection 'out from among the dead' was something new. In Luke 16:31 it is said, 'If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose *out from among the dead*' (*ek nekron*). The sign of the prophet Jonah was the only sign which God would vouchsafe to that sinful generation. After the Lord Jesus had been crucified, buried, and raised from the dead, the words of Luke 16:31 proved only too true.

The apostles, during their ministry in the Acts, emphasized the resurrection of the Lord, but it was rejected. We have such words from Peter concerning Christ, 'Whom God raised up'; 'this Jesus hath God raised up'. In connection with the healing of the lame man (Acts 3:13-15) Peter says, 'God ... hath glorified His Son Jesus ... God hath raised Him *out from* among the dead' (*ek nekron*). The Sadducees were grieved that 'they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection *out from* among the dead' (Acts 4:1,2,10).

We find the expression again in Romans 1:4 'By the resurrection *out from* among the dead'. The epistles of the Mystery reveal, as one of the blessings peculiar to themselves, that the believer in Christ will be raised *out from* the dead, even as was the Lord Himself. Philippians 3 teaches this plainly. Starting at verse 4 the apostle summarizes his position as a Pharisee. Then following his wondrous conversion he declares, 'What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ'. Among the 'gains' he enumerates is this one of resurrection. As a Pharisee he held the orthodox belief in a resurrection *of* the dead. The time came, however, when he gave up that belief, not to become a Sadducee, but to be a participator in the resurrection *out from* among the dead.

Hebrews 11:35 and 40 speak of a '*better* resurrection', and of being 'made *perfect*'. When these Hebrews left the primitive doctrine of the resurrection, it was but to see more clearly what was set before the believer, as contrasted with the Pharasaic doctrine of a general resurrection at the last day. Paul speaks of this subject in the same way as he does concerning 'baptisms'. There were the divine ordinances, and there were the human traditions connected therewith. The first had to be left because the dispensation had changed, the second, because they made void the Word of God.

Eternal Judgment

Just in the same way does the apostle deal with eternal judgment. In the first place, God is the Judge, not man, and in the second place, much has been read into the Word on that dread subject which is untrue. Note the passages in Hebrews where the word 'eternal' is used, every one of which, except Hebrews 6:2, having reference to redemption, and not to judgment.

'Eternal salvation' (Heb. 5:9).

'Eternal judgment' (Heb. 6:2).

'Eternal redemption' (Heb. 9:12).

'Eternal Spirit' (Heb. 9:14).

'Eternal inheritance' (Heb. 9:15).

'Eternal covenant' (Heb. 13:20).

Din olamim is the eleventh fundamental of the Jewish creed. It involves both reward and punishment. The apostle would urge them to leave their reasonings concerning judgment for the more blessed, and to them, personal realities concerning redemption. 'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay'. The Hebrew believers like many Christians today, were perhaps too fond of apportioning out the future judgment upon those who did not believe with them, or

belong to their race and creed. This the writer would alter. He says, in effect, leave this with God; see to the 'eternal kingdom', the 'eternal life', the 'eternal glory' which you may be missing by your over-zeal concerning 'eternal judgment'.

If God permit' (Heb. 6:3-6)

'*If God permit*'. It is most essential that every believer who contemplates running the race, pressing for the prize, gaining the crown, and being numbered among those who are called 'the perfect' or 'mature', should realize the meaning hidden behind the apostle's words, 'If God permit'. The verses that follow are an explanation, speaking as they do of the impossibility of renewing again unto repentance those who, having tasted the heavenly gift, fall away. The type given later, of Esau, is very explicit.

'Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of REPENTANCE, though he sought it carefully with tears' (12:16,17).

The only occurrences of the word 'repentance' in Hebrews are in 6:1,6 and 12:17. It is evident that the case of Esau is an amplification or an illustration of the case of those spoken of in Hebrews 6.

The words 'If God permit' glance back to that period of Israel's history that has already provided the great basis of exhortation in chapters 3 and 4, 'the day of temptation in the wilderness'. It will be remembered that, upon hearing the evil report of the ten spies, Israel murmured and said, 'Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt'. The Lord then bade Moses say:'As truly as I live ... your carcases shall fall in this wilderness ... and the people mourned greatly'. It would appear also that their mourning was in some measure a repentance, for 'they rose up early in the morning, and gat them up into the top of the mountain, saying, Lo, we be here, and will go up unto the place which the Lord hath promised: for we have sinned. And Moses said, Wherefore now do ye transgress the commandment of the Lord? but it shall not prosper. Go not up, for the Lord is not among you: that ye be not smitten before your enemies ... BUT THEY PRESUMED TO GO UP UNTO THE HILL TOP ... then the ... Canaanites ... smote them ...' (Num. 14:28-45).

In the words 'but they presumed', we have a parallel with the expression in Hebrews 11:29, 'the Egyptians *assaying* to do'. This passage together with those of Hebrews 6 and 12 causes one to pause and think of the seriousness of the lesson here being taught. Of a similar import is the saying of the Lord:

'No one, having put his hand to the plough, and looking unto *the things that are behind*, is well placed with a view to the kingdom of God' (Luke 9:62 not AV JP).

The exact repetition of the words 'The things that are behind' in Philippians 3:13 is too pointed to be a coincidence, the context being so closely connected with those we have been considering. Having turned to Philippians 3 it may be as well to observe another parallel before proceeding. In Hebrews 6:6 there occurs that strong expression 'having crucified again the Son of God and are exposing Him to shame', and again in 10:29, 'having trampled on the Son of God, and having esteemed the blood of the covenant a common thing'. So in Philippians 3 we have many walking as the enemies of the cross of Christ.

Returning for a moment to Numbers 14, we must remember that although that great multitude perished in the wilderness, they were a pardoned people. Moses had prayed:

'Pardon, I beseech Thee, the iniquity of this people ... and the LORD said, I have pardoned' (Num. 14:19,20).

Yet it was not possible to renew again unto repentance that people, pardoned though they were. If this had been remembered when dealing with Hebrews 6 many would have been spared the awful error that some have taught from this chapter, namely, the possibility of a child of God losing his salvation. This epistle, as we have said again and again, and this chapter particularly, deals with things that *accompany* salvation, things that belong to the perfect or full-grown and the overcomer. These things may be lost or forfeited, but salvation is by grace, and works or reward have no place in it.

'If God permit' therefore reveals that sometimes God may not permit. To attempt to ascend the mountain and enter the land of Canaan without the assurance of His presence was madness and destined to fail. Our first and

greatest concern must be to walk with Him. If for any failure on our part the permission to go on unto perfection should be withdrawn, let us humbly bow to the will of God, and in lowliness of mind seek the presence of the Lord. While we feel the crown and the prize will but add to His glory, and therefore we should run with patience the race set before us, the prize is valueless, the crown a bauble if it does not glorify Him.

It is impossible to be too keenly sensitive to the serious nature of the failure dealt with in this chapter. To be 'dull of hearing', to remain 'a babe', to be satisfied with the 'milk' of the word, and to make no advance may seem bad but not serious. The inspired apostle takes another view. To remain a babe is really to go back, and this may be the beginning of apostasy. Let us see how the Scriptures speak of those who failed to go on unto perfection.

'It is impossible to renew them again unto repentance if they should fall away, having crucified again to themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame' (Heb. 6:6 not AV JP).

'If we should voluntarily sin after having received the full knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more a sacrifice for sins ... having trampled under foot the Son of God' (Heb. 10:26-29 not AV JP).

We must distinguish between the fact that many, if not all saints after conversion, lapse into sin of one sort or another, and the falling away intended here. It is the teaching of the Scriptures that if a man be overtaken in a fault, the spiritual ones of the church must restore him in a spirit of meekness, considering themselves lest they also should be tempted (Gal. 6:1). The exhortations to the seven churches of Revelation chapters 2 and 3 are further illustrations of the same truth. It is evident that here in the epistle to the Hebrews something more serious is involved.

'For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost (holy spirit), and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come (coming age), if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame' (Heb. 6:4-6).

We must first of all seek to understand the nature of these blessings so that we may the better understand the nature of the falling away from them.

(1) *They were once enlightened* (*photizo*). In chapter 10 this word occurs again and the context is so helpful that we must draw attention to it. To save space we will not quote fully:

'Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together ... for if we sin wilfully after receiving the full knowledge of the truth ... no more sacrifice ... fearful expectation of judgment ... consume the adversaries ... trampled on the Son of God ... but remember the former days in which having been *enlightened* ye endured a great contest of sufferings ... cast not away your confidence, which has great recompense of reward ... if any man draw back ... we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the acquiring of the soul' (Heb. 10:25-39 not AV JP).

This is a valuable commentary, setting Hebrews 6 in its true light and preventing us from making erroneous applications of its solemn teaching. Some who do not realize the setting of Hebrews 6 have sought to minimize the force of the word 'enlighten', so that it only means an external, but not a real and inward illumination. If this is proved, then of course we are dealing merely with professors and the problem is ended. But Hebrews 10:32, wherein is the only other occurrence of the word *photizo*, does not allow of such an interpretation. These enlightened ones were believers, not empty professors.

(2) *They had tasted of the heavenly gift. They were made partakers of Holy spirit.* These two statements explain one another. They moreover look back to the laying on of hands which usually was instrumental in the bestowal of this gift. It will be remembered that when 'Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands holy spirit was given he offered them money', and that Peter said, 'Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that THE GIFT OF GOD may be purchased with money'.

(3) *They had tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the coming age.* The promise of restoration from Babylon is thus called in Jeremiah 29:10.

'After seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform *My good word* toward you, in causing you to return to this place'.

The miraculous gifts of the Acts were foretastes of the age to come. It will be seen that a great place is occupied in this list by the Holy Spirit and His gifts. This we find is likewise true of Hebrews. There, as we find in Hebrews 10, the punishment that followed the violation of the law of Moses is small when compared with that which shall follow the despising of the Holy Spirit's witness of Christ:

'How shall we escape, if we neglect ... which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and distributions of holy spirit, according to His own will? For unto the angels hath He not subjected the world to come, whereof we speak' (Heb. 2:3-5 not AV JP).

One quotation from Hebrews 10 we now include, as bearing out the strong emphasis placed upon the Holy Spirit here - 'and done despite unto the Spirit of grace' (Heb. 10:29).

This falling away which occupies so large a place in Hebrews is variously referred to as 'letting slip', 'neglecting', 'hardening hearts as in the provocation', 'lest any fall under the same example of unbelief', 'forsaking the assembling of selves together', 'sinning wilfully after full knowledge', 'drawing back unto perdition'.

The falling away was after enlightenment and partaking of the Holy Spirit, and herein lies the extreme danger. This aspect of teaching in Hebrews is but the application to the Hebrews of the teaching of the Lord given in Matthew 12:31,32:

'All ... sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven to men, but blasphemy against the Spirit shall NOT BE FORGIVEN unto men. And whoever may speak a word against the Son of man it shall be forgiven: but whoever may speak against the Holy Spirit, it will in no wise be forgiven him, *neither in this age, nor in the coming one*' (not AV JP).

Here is the sore punishment awaiting those who, after having all the confirmation of the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven, and after having embraced the witness and having become partakers of the Spirit's gifts, fall away. They echo the fatal words of Numbers 14, appointing themselves a captain to return to Egypt. The more one penetrates into the structure and atmosphere of Hebrews, the more marked the gracious distinctions of the dispensation of the Mystery become. Let us try the things that differ and approve those things that are more excellent, at the same time learning from these other records the essential need for growth in grace.

'Things that Accompany salvation' (Heb. 6:7-9)

The character of the falling away of Hebrews 6:4-6 may be understood by a consideration of the illustration which immediately follows in verses 7 and 8. The figure is that of a field. The Greek word translated 'earth', *ge*, stands for 'land, as distinct from water; or earth as distinct from heaven; or region or territory, used of one special land, or country, as distinct from other countries, in which peoples dwell, each on its own soil' (*The Companion Bible*, Appendix 129/4).

'For land which hath drunk in the rain which often comes upon it, and which bringeth forth vegetation useful to those for whom also it is cultivated, receives blessing from God; but that yielding thorns and thistles is disapproved and near to a curse; the end of which is for burning' (Heb. 6:7,8 not AV JP).

Two words are of special importance as indicating the line of teaching that we are to observe here, the word 'disapproved', which in the A.V. is rendered 'rejected', and the word 'near' or 'nigh' unto cursing. *Adokimos* = 'disapproved' is best understood by observing the context of the word in 1 Corinthians 9:27. The scene is the Corinthian racecourse.

'Know ye not that they which run in a race course run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. But every one that striveth in the games, in all things useth self-control; They indeed then that a corruptible crown they may receive; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly. I am boxing, as not beating air, but I am beating my body under, and leading it captive, lest by any means having proclaimed the contest to others, *I* myself should become disapproved' (1 Cor. 9:24-27 not AV JP).

The verses that follow, viz. 1 Corinthians 10, are very strongly reminiscent of Hebrews 3 and 4. The argument hinges upon the 'all' and the 'many'. All may have passed out from Egypt as the redeemed of the Lord, but all did not enter the promised land. We now see that the whole of Hebrews 6 is dealing with the question of 'going on unto

perfection', or of being disqualified or disapproved in the race. The entry into the land of promise is placed in the same place as the crown at the end of the race. The showers of God's love and grace had fallen for many years upon Israel, but comparatively few brought forth fruit.

We must observe that it does not say that the alternatives are blessing or *cursing*, but blessing or *disapproval*, which places such *nigh unto* a curse. Take for example the two servants of Matthew 24:44-51. The one is rewarded by being made ruler over all his Lord's goods, the other servant is cut asunder, and finds his position with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. The same fate awaits the unprofitable servant of Matthew 25 who hid his talent in the earth.

Both suffer loss and are certainly perilously 'near unto a curse'. In neither case is salvation in view, but service. 'The end of which is for burning'. When a field produces thorns and thistles 'the end' is burning. *The field itself is not destroyed, but that which it has produced.* This is quite in harmony with 1 Corinthians 3. The foundation remains unchanged whether the building be destroyed by fire or whether it stands the test:

'He shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; YET SO AS BY FIRE' (1 Cor. 3:15).

In Hebrews 12:16,17, Esau is brought before us as one who forfeited his birthright. There is an evident parallel with Hebrews 6, the words 'he found no place of repentance' echoing 'it is impossible to renew unto repentance'. So also the word *adokimos* (disapproved or rejected) is echoed by Hebrews 12:17, *apodokimazo* ('rejected').

The 'blessing' also is one received 'by inheritance'. The chapter ends with the words 'For our God is a consuming fire', which are parallel with the words 'whose end is burning'. The whole situation is summed up in Hebrews 6:9 where the apostle says:

'But, beloved, we are persuaded of you THE BETTER THINGS' (not AV JP).

Readers will remember that the word 'better' is a key word of Hebrews, closely associated with 'perfect' throughout the epistle. 'The *better* resurrection' is expressed by the words, 'The spirits of *perfected* righteous ones'. Here in chapter 6, those who go on unto perfection produce 'the better things, even those things which accompany salvation although we thus speak' (verse 9). The word 'accompany' is a rendering of the middle voice of *echo*, 'to have, to hold'. So in Mark 1:38, '*next* towns', and Luke 13:33, 'the *day following*'. The epistle to the Hebrews does not deal with salvation, but the things that *accompany* it; not the 'resurrection of the dead' (6:2) but the 'better resurrection'; not the exodus from Egypt, but the entrance of the land of promise; not justification by faith, but the emphasis upon the fact that the just shall *live* by faith. We find the distinction observed in 6:9 and throughout the chapter. May we, called though we are with a different calling, produce the better things, even those things that '*follow*' *or* '*go with salvation*'.

The work that perfects faith (Heb. 6:10)

The apostle, though uttering the terrible warnings against apostasy, hastens to tell his readers that though he thus speaks, he is persuaded that they possess those things that *accompany* salvation. He now proceeds to unfold these 'better things that accompany salvation' and to consider them from various points of view. It is evident from the very next verse (10) what these 'better things' include.

'For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward His name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister' (Heb. 6:10).

In 10:22-24 we have a somewhat similar passage. There we have 'full assurance of faith'; in 6:9-11 we have 'full assurance of hope'. In the former the exhortation is based upon the fact that 'He is faithful that promised', whilst in the latter we are told that 'God is not unrighteous to forget your work', etc., and moreover that 'He sware by himself' (verse 13) to make the assurance of hope doubly sure. In the former the believers are exhorted to 'provoke unto love and good works', whilst in the latter 'your work and love unto His name' is remembered. The things that accompany salvation are those things that indicate the perfecting of faith. We have only to remember James 2:17, where we learn that 'faith, if it hath not works is dead, being alone'. The great illustration of James 2 is the faith of Abraham, but not the faith of Genesis 15 when Abraham believed God and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness, but the faith of Genesis 22 when Abraham was willing to offer up his beloved son. Of this James says:

'Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith *made perfect*? And the Scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness' (James 2:22,23).

We are here upon exactly the same ground as in Hebrews 6. The things that accompany salvation are those things that 'perfect faith'. The perfected faith 'fulfilled' the promise of its inception. Genesis 15:6 was filled out when Abraham's faith manifested itself in acceptable works. If we glance to the end of Hebrews chapter 6, we shall find that the same illustration is used by Paul. There once again Abraham's faith as manifested in Genesis 22 is brought forward. It is therefore important to remember that a man is *justified without* works, but is *perfected by* works (Rom. 5; James 2). A man is *saved by* faith 'not of works', but he has been saved to *walk* in 'good works' (Eph. 2). While Titus 3 declares that we are saved by faith and 'not by works of righteousness which we have done', Titus 2 reveals that we were redeemed in order that we might be a peculiar people 'zealous of good works'.

It is surprising the antipathy that some of God's children show to any mention of works. We yield to none, we trust, in a steadfast belief that grace and works, so far as salvation is concerned, cannot blend. If we are saved by grace, then that initial salvation cannot be 'of works', for grace excludes works as works exclude grace (Rom. 11:6). We do, however, feel that much vital truth is dimmed to the eyes of many by carrying their opposition to works beyond the limits of truth. It is but another case of failure rightly to divide the Word of truth. What is true in the case of the origin of salvation may not necessarily be true in the case of the *fruits* of that same salvation. The law is excluded as a factor in justification, but the law is nevertheless holy, just, good and spiritual, and it is the will of God that it shall operate in the kingdom yet to come.

'But the God of peace ... Adjust you by every good work unto the doing of His will, doing in you that which is well pleasing in His presence, through Jesus Christ' (Heb. 13:20,21 not AV JP).

We cannot 'do His will' without at the same time 'doing good works', but these good works will not take their rise from the flesh, but will be the Lord's own 'doing' within us, through Jesus Christ. Hebrews 10:24 says, 'provoke unto love and good works'; Hebrews 6:10 links works and love together. This reveals the essential character of the good works that are well pleasing to God. It is a good work to bestow all one's goods to feed the poor; it is a good work to suffer one's body to be burned rather than to give up the faith, but only so if love is the spring of such actions; if love be absent 'it profiteth nothing'.

'For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith through love inworking ... for all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself' (Gal. 5:6,14 not AV JP).

The same emphasis upon 'serving one another' is found in Romans 13:8:

'Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law'.

Then follow the commandments that relate to man's relationship with man, adultery, murder, stealing, false witness, coveting. It is surprising to note that both in Galatians 5 and Romans 13 love which fulfils the law is manifested not to God but to man.

'And if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself' (Rom. 13:9).

Are we to understand then that mere philanthropy satisfies the requirements of the case? Not at all. The strong emphasis upon the man-ward side is because of a weakness in human nature. It does not say in 1 John 2:9,10 that he that loveth God is in the light, but:

'He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light'.

Again, 1 John 3:14 does not say that the possession of new life is manifested by our love to God, but:

'We know that we have passed from death into life, *because we love the brethren*'.

The same test is applied to the profession of the love of God in verse 17:

'Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in Him?'.

The same apostle brings the argument to a climax in 4:20,21, when he says:

'If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he *hath* seen, how can he love God Whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from Him, That he who loveth God love his brother also'.

There is no thought in any of these passages of teaching that the love to our neighbour or brother comes before love to God. This is made clear in 1 John 5:2:

'By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep His commandments'.

We may trace the same spirit in Mark 7:10-13. The law said that a man was to honour his father and mother, but the tradition of the Pharisees allowed a man to assume a hypocritical piety, and say, 'it is Corban'. He could say to his parents, I have given all to God, and therefore that which I might have allowed you in your old age has been devoted to higher and holier uses. The Lord has only one word for such - *hypocrites*! There is a danger of similar hypocrisy among believers today. We speak about 'the Lord's work'. What is the Lord's work? When we contribute to *the expenses* of our meeting do we more than the man of the world who pays for *his ticket* for a lecture or concert? When we subscribe for a copy of a magazine have we done more than the man who pays for his morning paper? Let us not be deceived with meaningless words. To withdraw from the claims of those connected with us by ties of flesh and blood because we are devoting our means to the Lord may come under the severe censure of Mark 7 and 1 John. When we have these things clearly before us we may learn without distraction the true order as given in Hebrews 6:10:

'The love, which ye have shewn forth *unto His Name*, in that ye have ministered *unto the saints*' (not AV JP.

The love shown for the name of God was manifested towards His people.

Unto His name. Why does the Scripture use the 'name' and not the 'Lord'? What is a name? Is it not the sum of many qualities, and used by us as a convenient means of expression? When we say the word *house* it is the sum of such items as bricks, mortar, wood, glass, etc. Thought would for ever remain unexpressed if it were not for this ability to 'sum up' in one name. The names of God express all that He is to us. The varied names of God express His many-sided relations with His creatures. What attributes are expressed in the names *Father, Saviour, Lord and God*! Love shown to His name is love that goes out to One Who possesses those wondrous qualities that have been revealed to us in Christ.

We pray in the name of Christ. We are forgiven for His name's sake. His name is called upon us. We are enjoined to do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Love unto the name of the Lord is *shown* by ministry unto the saints. This does not bring the love of God *down*, but lifts the ministry to the saints up to a higher level. We minister to the saints and we love our brethren because we love the Lord.

'Every one that loveth Him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of Him' (1 John 5:1).

We cannot love the Father if we do not love *the Son*, and we cannot love the Father if we do not love *His sons* also. Here then is the practical manifestation of the apostle's desire. 'Let us go on to perfection'. Faith is perfected in such works of love. These are the things that accompany salvation; these are the things that:

'adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. For the grace of God that *saves* ... *teaches us* ... that we should live ... looking ... zealous of good works' (Titus 2:10-14 not AV JP).

It is one thing to minister to the saints, it is another to continue. This is the feature that is prominent in the passage before us.

'In that ye have ministered unto the saints, and are ministering' (Heb. 6:10 not AV JP).

Ministry to the saints can involve much more than mere gifts or a pleasant round of visiting; it comes under the heading of enduring a great fight of afflictions:

'But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used' (Heb. 10:32,33).

Here we see that this ministry unto the saints involves suffering and calls for endurance. The passage continues to show that such ministry leads to confidence which hath great recompense of *reward*:

'For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise' (Heb. 10:36).

This is parallel with Hebrews 6:11,12. They had ministered to the saints, and they were continuing so to do. They had shown (*endeiknumi*) love unto the name of the Lord. Now the apostle says:

'But we earnestly desire for each one of you to show (*endeiknumi*) the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end' (Heb. 6:11 not AV JP).

They *had shown*, may they *continue* to show, for this was closely associated with the great recompense of *reward*. We catch an echo of chapter 3:6 and 14 here:

'Whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end' (Heb. 3:6).

'We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end' (Heb. 3:14).

These are called 'partakers of the heavenly calling' in verse 1 of chapter 3, and the failure to enter into the land of promise, which occupies the remainder of chapters 3 and 4, is again before us in Hebrews 6:11,12:

'That ye be not slothful, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises' (not AV JP).

The mention of the word 'slothful' bids us compare this passage with Hebrews 5:11 where the same word is translated 'dull'. This has already appeared in the structure given on page xxx. The context is concerning Christ and His people 'being made perfect'. The figures used are those of 'babes' and 'full grown or perfect'. The 'dull' had made no progress, they had remained babes. The further lessons connected with their perfecting and with Christ as the Priest after the order of Melchisedec could not be told them in their condition. These things are carried over to Hebrews 6:12. The dull or slothful would fail 'after the same example of unbelief' (Heb. 4:11), for the 'inheriting' of promises must not be confounded with those gifts in grace that are ours through Christ alone.

Hebrews 11:33 speaks of those whose faith 'wrought righteousness' (which cannot refer to justification without works); who 'obtained promises'. Hebrews 6:15 tells us that this 'obtaining' is the result of 'patient endurance':

'And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise'.

The Hebrews, though saved, were in danger of giving up and going back. The apostle seeing this, and knowing the history of his people as he did, was allowed the privilege of writing to his kinsmen this word of exhortation (13:22). Throughout the epistle the thought of slipping away, turning back, failing to enter, losing confidence, denying the Lord, bartering the birthright as did Esau, is uppermost. The going on to perfection is enforced and illustrated by the examples of Caleb and Joshua, the elders who obtained a good report, and by the example of the Lord Himself. Work, love, hope, faith, patience; if the word 'labour' be retained in verse 10, we have a similar series to that set out in 1 Thessalonians 1:3, and expounded in that epistle.

'Faith' and 'patience' are the two words used in direct connection with inheriting the promises. In Hebrews 10:38,39 we have 'living by faith' placed in contrast with 'drawing back', and the faith that inherits the promises is the faith that believes unto the 'acquiring' of the soul (Heb. 10:39). This rendering we shall justify when dealing with chapter 10. The faith that inherits the promises is further expressed in Hebrews 11:1 as:

'the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen'.

This enabled Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham and the rest to overcome and to obtain promises. The whole teaching concerning faith is summed up for us in chapter 12:2:

'Looking away to Jesus the Author and Perfecter of faith, Who for the joy that was set before Him endured ... and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God' (not AV JP).

The sequel expresses the need for continuance:

'lest ye be wearied and faint ... ye have not yet resisted unto blood' (Heb. 12:3,4).

The apostle urged his readers to become 'imitators' of those who by faith and patience inherit the promises. He says in 13:7,8:

'Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow (be imitating), considering the end of their conversation. Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever (unto the ages)'.

Amidst all the change and decay, the fall and the failure of things seen, the Lord remains the same. Our faith and hope are within the veil. Our anchorage is there. While that remains we must endure.

We usually translate *hupomone* by patience, but this is not the word in Hebrews 6:12, which is *makrothumia*. Patience is distinguished from *makrothumia* in 2 Timothy 3:10, *te pistei, te makrothumia, ... te hupomone*: 'faith, longsuffering, patience'. Again in Colossians 1:11, 'unto all patience and longsuffering'. Longsuffering is ascribed both to God (Rom. 2:4; 9:22; 1 Pet. 3:20; 2 Pet. 3:15) and to Christ (1 Tim. 1:16).

The believer reflects the longsuffering that God shows to a world of wickedness by quietly waiting with uncomplaining spirit for God's good time. The spirit that chafes, murmurs, and complains, is in danger of forfeiting the reward. One of the marks of the perfect is that he bridles his tongue (James 3:2). Murmuring lost the land of promise to those who were redeemed out of Egypt. The epistle of the prize of the high calling urges all those who would be perfect to 'Do all things without murmurings and disputings' (Phil. 2:14).

Two related themes occupy the closing verses of Hebrews 6, viz., the Oath and the Hope.

'When (for example) God made promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, He sware by Himself' (Heb. 6:13).

'For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by (interposed with) an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation' (Heb. 6.16-18).

On several occasions God made covenant and promise to Abraham, but upon one occasion only did He interpose with an oath. The occasion was not that first initial act of justifying faith recorded in Genesis 15, but the crowning act of faith given in Genesis 22.

The apostle had said 'God is not unrighteous to forget', and the way in which the Lord responded to Abraham's implicit trust is surely one element in that strong consolation which our hope in God gives us. The angel of the Lord did not merely say to Abraham, 'Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing that thou hast not withheld thy son from Me', but 'seeing that thou hast not withheld thy son, THINE ONLY SON from Me'. God did not 'forget'. He gives prominence to the sacrifice that Abraham made and in His delight at this great act of faith goes beyond strict necessity and 'swears by Himself, saying, Blessing I will bless thee'.

God was willing 'more abundantly'. It was, as we have said, beyond strict necessity. It is sufficient for God to speak. A simple promise made by God should be enough to command our fullest faith. Yet so does He condescend, that in this recognition of Abraham's trust, the Lord goes beyond this, and 'swears by Himself'. The intention was to manifest the unchangeability of His counsel. In the expression, 'two immutable things', the word 'things' is:

'*Pragma*, an 'act or deed' such as we make and deliver, when we convey anything from one to another' (Owen).

Are we to understand by these two immutable things:

(1) The promise of God originally given,

(2) The oath super added afterwards?

We do not think such an answer fully meets the case. If we read on to the end of the chapter we find that the Melchisedec priesthood of Christ is resumed. This priesthood is connected with 'hope' (Heb. 6:18-20). In chapter 7 Abraham is seen together with Melchisedec where the greatness of Melchisedec is established, and then by an easy transition the superiority of the Melchisedec priesthood to that of Levi is shown. This is followed by a reference to a 'better hope' and the fact that unlike the Levitical priesthood, Christ was made a Priest with an oath.

'For those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by Him that said unto Him, The Lord SWARE and will not repent (cf. the immutable counsel and the oath, 6:17), Thou art a priest for ever (the age) after the order of Melchisedec' (Heb. 7:21).

This close connection of the two oaths, the one with Abraham, the other with Christ, together with the double reference to hope and to Melchisedec, is too plainly the part of a design to be ignored. There is yet further testimony. The words of 6:17, 'confirmed it by an oath', are given in the margin as 'interposed Himself by an oath'. (The word in the original is *mesiteuo*, 'to mediate'). *Mesites* occurs in Hebrews 8:6; 9:15; 12:24, and is consistently rendered 'mediator'. 1 Timothy 2:5 tells us that there is but 'one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus'. We understand therefore the passage to convey this thought. When God first gave Abraham the promise that he should be the father of many nations, there was not made known to him at the time the fact that the promise was secured in Christ. Nevertheless, even at the beginning, Abraham's faith went out to God Who quickeneth the dead, and the deadness both of Abraham and Sarah is set forth as a picture of resurrection. So then in Romans 4:16 the promise is of faith:

'that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed'.

Hebrews 11 shows that not only the birth of Isaac, but the offering of Isaac are both closely connected with resurrection:

'Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence he did also in a parable receive him back' (Heb. 11:19 not AV JP).

It was, we believe, on Mount Moriah that Abraham, in this fellowship with the great gift of God, rejoiced to see the day of Christ, calling the name of the place Jehovah-Jireh. Then it was that the oath was uttered; then it was that the purpose of God was seen secured in Christ as the Priest after the order of Melchisedec. The association of Melchisedec with Abraham we leave until we consider chapter 7, but it is important to remember that Abraham had met Melchisedec and had received a profound impression sometime before the great call of Genesis 22 came. After the Lord had 'mediated with an oath' Abraham returned 'and dwelt at Beer-sheba' (Gen. 22:19), Beersheba meaning, 'the well of the OATH' (Gen. 21:31, margin).

One more reference to an oath in Hebrews completes the testimony:

'So I sware in My wrath, If they shall enter into my rest' (Heb. 3:18; 4:3 not AV JP).

Here the two references deal with failure to enter into the promised land, or promised rest. Again the subject is not *salvation*, but the things that *accompany* salvation. The three 'oaths' of Hebrews therefore are linked together:

(1) Those who did not overcome, like Israel in the wilderness (Heb. 3:11; 4:3).
(2) Those who do overcome, like Abraham (Heb. 6:17,18).
(3) The Priest of the overcomer (Heb. 7:21).

These two oaths are the two immutable things of Hebrews 6 and refer to the oaths made to Abraham and the Saviour as the High Priest. Abraham's hope rested upon a covenant that was made sure by the shedding of blood. The oath leads on to the hope:

'That ... we might have strong consolation who have fled along to grasp the hope set before us, which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil' (Heb. 6:18,19 not AV JP).

The reader will miss the familiar 'fled for refuge' of the A.V. *Katapheugo*, translated 'flee for refuge' here, is used by the LXX in several places for fleeing to the city of refuge, and this probably influenced the translators of both the A.V. and R.V. The word, however, is used in other ways, and does not necessarily indicate fleeing for

refuge, unless the context so demands. For instance, the LXX version of Leviticus 26:25 renders 'gather together', *katapheugo*, and the Hebrew word so translated is *asaph*, its normal meaning. Jeremiah 50:5 and Zechariah 2:11 use the word to translate the Hebrew *lavah*, 'to join'. Isaiah 54:15 uses *katapheugo* to translate *naphal*, 'to fall'. In Isaiah 55:5 the word translates the Hebrew *rutz* 'to run'. This Hebrew word is found in Psalm 19:5 (6) where it is used of 'running a race' and in Esther 3:13,15; 8:10,14 for the 'posts' that ran with letters, and Job speaks of his days being 'swifter than a post' (9:25). This meaning of the word *katapheugo*, viz., 'to run', is in entire harmony with both the context of Hebrews 6 and the more remote context of Hebrews 12.

The reason why we see a connection in Hebrews 12 is found in the recurrence of another word which we must consider. The hope is said to be 'set before' us. This word is *prokeimai* and occurs in Hebrews 12:1,2:

'Let us run with patience the race that is *set before us*' (*prokeimai*).
'Who for the joy that was *set before* Him' (*prokeimai*).

Here the subject is unmistakable. It is a race *with a reward at the end*. It sums up the whole series of overcomers detailed in Hebrews 11. It speaks of those who do not draw back but who go on unto perfection, who believe unto the acquiring of the soul. The apostle, further, urges the believer 'to lay hold upon' this hope that is set before him. This word *krateo* appears in Hebrews 4:14, 'let us *hold fast* our confession'.

So far then we have seen that those who, like Abraham, were pressing on toward the goal set before them in going on unto spiritual adulthood were comforted and supported by the fact that they had a High Priest Who knew their temptations, Who had passed that way before them, and Who was ever ready to succour them that are tested, even as Abraham was sustained.

Let us, however, not forget that in our own case also we have strong consolation and encouragement drawn from Christ, not perhaps as Priest after the order of Melchisedec, but from the sublime statement of Philippians 2:6-11 where many parallels may be found with the teaching of Hebrews.

'Being confident of this very thing, that He Which hath begun a good work in you will perform (perfect) it until the day of Jesus Christ' (Phil. 1:6).

The Anchor and the Forerunner (Heb. 6:19,20)

Having seen that the hope was not to be looked upon as a 'refuge', but rather as something to run for and obtain, this hope is now likened to an anchor:

'Which we have as an anchor of the soul' (Heb. 6:19).

The use of the figure is most suggestive. It is part of the equipment of a ship that is not ordinarily used until the voyage is ended. If the anchor is called into use before the journey's end, the suggestion is that ordinary seamanship is of no avail. If we read the context of the only other occurrences of the word anchor in the New Testament we shall appreciate its place in Hebrews 6 the better:

'But when the fourteenth night was come, as we were driven to and fro in the Sea of Adria, about midnight the sailors surmised that they were drawing near to some country, and they sounded, and found twenty fathoms: and after a little space, they sounded again, and found fifteen fathoms. And fearing lest haply we should be cast ashore on the rocky ground, they let go four *anchors* from the stern, and wished for the day' (Acts 27:27-29 not AV JP).

The Hebrews were in the throes of a great 'fight of afflictions'. The storm of opposition was rising, and they were in danger of 'making shipwreck concerning the faith'. This latter expression is found in 1 Timothy 1:19. There we find the alternative is 'holding faith and a good conscience', which is parallel with the thought of Hebrews 6. This was the anchor that held the worthies of Hebrews 11. These are set forth as examples of those who 'believe unto the gaining of the soul', a translation which we shall explain later.

Why is the hope called an anchor of the soul? Why not spirit? Scripture distinguishes between soul and spirit (Heb. 4:12; 1 Thess. 5:23; 1 Cor. 15:44,45). The meaning that attaches to the soul in Hebrews we may find by reading Matthew 16:24-27:

'If any man will to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me ... For whosoever is willing to lose his *soul* (*psuche*) for My sake shall find it ... For the Son of Man shall come ... then shall He render unto every man according to his deeds' (not AV JP).

Here it will be observed that the Lord bids His disciples to 'lose their soul', not to 'save it'! What is involved in the losing of one's soul? Self-denial, the taking up of one's cross, and the following of the Lord. When we have a Scriptural conception of the word 'soul', we shall realize that to lose one's soul means to forfeit many of the pleasures and good things of this life for the truth's sake. Abraham lost his soul. He left Ur of the Chaldees, and kith and kin, to become a dweller in tents, looking forward to the future when in resurrection he should 'find' or 'gain' his soul, and under happier and holier conditions enjoy to the full those things which he had foregone in this present evil age. Moses lost his soul, that he might gain it. Before him lay a dazzling prospect. He was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. He evidently had the offer of adoption into the royal family; yet he chose to suffer affliction with the people of God, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of *the reward*.

The epistle of Peter makes use of the 'salvation of the soul' in a similar manner. In 1 Peter 1:3-11 this expression is approached in the following manner:

(1) An inheritance is in view (verse 4), which is further spoken of as
(2) Salvation ready to be revealed in the last time (5).
(3) In view of this the believer was rejoicing even though for a little while being put to grief through manifold temptations (6);
(4) These trials were in the nature of a test, faith being submitted to a fiery trial, that it may be found unto praise, glory and honour at the revelation of Jesus Christ (7).
(5) This is spoken of as 'receiving the *end* of your faith, even the SALVATION OF YOUR SOULS' (9).

To such, 'hope' was an anchor of the soul, called in verse 3, a 'living hope'.

Taking Matthew 16 and 1 Peter together we learn that the believer must 'lose his soul' during this life, and look forward to the 'saving of his soul' in the life to come. The context of both passages is reward for faithful service at the Second Coming of the Lord. As we have said so many times, Hebrews does not deal with salvation in its primary evangelical sense, but with things that accompany it. To take joyfully the spoiling of their goods, as the Hebrew believers had, necessitated some such anchor for the soul. In Hebrews 10:34 we read:

'For ye ... took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye (that you yourselves) have in heaven *a better and an enduring* substance',

the words in italics being equivalent to the hope as an anchor of the soul. The anchor for the soul is that better and enduring substance that far outweighs the 'light affliction which is but for a moment'. Unlike the vain promises of the world, this hope, this anchor, is 'sure and stedfast'. 'Sure' is *asphales.* In Acts it is used of the Roman officials in connection with Paul:

'He could not know the *certainty* for the tumult' (21:34).
'He would have known the *certainty* whereof he was accused' (22:30).
'Of whom I have no *certain* thing to write' (25:26).

Asphaleia occurs in the phrase 'peace and *safety*' of 1 Thessalonians 5:3. *Asphalizo* occurs in Matthew 27:64-66 'to make sure'. The word 'safe' in Philippians 3:1 is *asphales,* a compound of *a*, a negative, and *sphalo* 'to supplant, to trip up the heels'. The LXX employs *sphaleros* 'slippery' in Proverbs 5:6. The apostle used an apt term therefore when he wrote to the Philippians. He was about to speak of a race and a prize. Moffatt's translation will be appreciated by the reader, for he gives 'the safe course' in Philippians 3:1. This usage not only adds weight to the idea already put before the reader that the Race and the Crown rather than initial salvation is in view in Hebrews, but also provides one more linguistic link between Philippians and Hebrews. 'Stedfast' (of Heb. 6:19) is translated 'firm' in Hebrews 3:6, 'If we hold fast the confidence and ... hope firm unto the end'. The two words appear to be used to express the properties of the anchor in itself and in its usage. In itself it is 'sure'; in its usage it is 'reliable'; 'hope maketh not ashamed'.

If the inspired statement ended here, the hope of the tired and afflicted believer would be of little avail. For of what use is the strongest anchor if it can find no solid anchorage? Therefore the apostle continues:

'and which entereth *into that* within the veil' (Heb. 6:19).

At a meeting for children once we were speaking of 'hope' and had this verse before us. The children were asked to express their opinion as to what word of four letters was the most important in the verse. Some said 'hope', some 'soul'; others 'sure'; yet others, 'veil'. Our own choice was the somewhat strange word 'that' -

'Which entereth into THAT within the veil'.

When we read chapter 9 we shall have occasion to consider the typical teaching of the Tabernacle at some length; here we only need to remember the Ark and the Mercy Seat which were hidden from view by the Veil. There in the Ark were the unbroken tables of the law, the rod of Aaron that budded, and the golden pot of manna. These spoke of:

RIGHTEOUSNESS - The unbroken tables of stone.

UNCHANGING PRIESTHOOD - The rod that budded.

WILDERNESS PROVISION - The manna.

Resting upon the Ark was the Mercy Seat which spoke of sins forgiven, of atonement, of reconciliation. '*There* I will meet with thee and commune with thee' the Lord had said to Moses, and says to us, '*Here* is the sure anchor ground of the tempesttossed believer'. If hope enters into THAT, nothing can ever happen in this life that will prove too severe a test. The anchor and the anchorage are sure and stedfast. The 'strong consolation' which is ministered to those who run for the hope set before them gathers strength as the fulness of God's supply is opened up. The hope they have is an anchor for the soul. This hope is both sure in itself and stedfast in its use. Moreover it enters into *that within the veil*, the bedrock of redeeming love.

Yet one more item is added to make the consolation complete. We have already seen that the 'oath' sworn to Abraham is echoed by the 'oath' sworn to Christ as Priest after the order of Melchisedec. The apostle therefore appropriately concludes by saying:

'Whither the Forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an High Priest for ever (the age) after the order of Melchisedec' (Heb. 6:20).

As a forerunner, Christ is seen in John 14:2, 'I go to prepare a place for you'. Dr. Macknight says:

'Here the allusion is to one sent from a ship to fix its anchor in the place to which it is to be drawn as had to be done on such a coast as that of southern Greece'.

The references to Christ as High Priest in this epistle have much to do with the encouragement of the overcomer:

'Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, *that is passed into* (*through*) *the heavens* (where the Forerunner is for us entered), Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession' (4:14).

It must also be remembered that the mention of the Melchisedec priesthood of Christ at the close of chapter 6 is really a resumption of the theme started in chapter 5. If we keep in mind the way it is introduced in chapter 5 and the nature of the parenthesis of chapter 6, we may get further light upon the connection of this Priesthood with the believer's hope. In chapter 5, after speaking of Christ as Priest after the order of Melchisedec, the apostle immediately proceeds to speak of the sufferings of Christ, whereby He was 'perfected'. The apostle, however, realized that those to whom he wrote were not sufficiently mature to appreciate the subject:

'Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing' (5:11).

The dullness of hearing is evidently carried over into 6:12 where it reappears as 'slothful':

'That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises'.

The exhortation of the parenthesis is 'go on unto perfection'. We shall find that Melchisedec is essentially connected with the overcomer, and therefore is appropriately mentioned at the close of chapter 6.

As we have before noted, there is one meaning of the word 'forerunner' that is not mentioned by commentators. *Prodromos* occurs twice in the LXX but in neither case does it refer to a 'forerunner' in the sense usually attaching to the word. The two passages are:

'Now the time was the time of the FIRSTRIPE grapes' (Num. 13:20).

'As the HASTY fruit before the summer' (Isa. 28:4).

In both cases the meaning is the first ripe fruit. The reference in Numbers 13:20 is to that occasion when the spies entered into the promised land, the results of which form the background of Hebrews 3 and 4, where Caleb and Joshua stand forward as overcomers. Christ as the 'Forerunner' is Christ the 'First-fruits'. Here He is seen as the pledge and earnest of the overcomer. As the 'Forerunner' or 'First-fruits' He is seen in Hebrews 12:2:

'Who for the joy that was set before Him (cf. the hope set before us) endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God'.

If then we consider the hope itself, we find it a sure and stedfast anchor; or the anchor ground, we find it to be grounded in 'that within the veil'; or the encouragement of example, we find it in Christ the Forerunner and 'first ripe Fruit' of the harvest of many sons He is leading 'to glory'.

We have now reached that stage in the unfolding of truth that necessitated the fuller mention of the Melchisedec priesthood of Christ. To this the writer now proceeds, and by a series of statements sets forth the superiority of the Priesthood of Christ to that of Aaron, bringing this established fact to bear once more upon the great theme of the epistle, 'perfection' (7:11,19). If we keep this before us, we shall be less likely to be overwhelmed with the mass of detail that meets us in this section. Omitting the parenthetical details, the proposition of Hebrews 7:1-3 reads:

'For this Melchisedec ... abideth a priest continually'.

The intervening details supply the necessary information to establish this proposition.

Melchisedec was first of all KING OF SALEM. Jerome maintains, in his epistle to Evagrius, that this Salem is a city near Shechem, mentioned in Genesis 33:18 and John 3:23. Salem, however, is used to indicate Jerusalem in Psalm 76:2:

In Salem also is His (God's) tabernacle, and His dwelling place in Zion'.

There are some who think that after the Jebusites took possession of the place it was called Jebus-Salem, which became transformed to Jerusalem. We find in Joshua 10:1-4 that the king of Jerusalem was called Adonizedec, which has much the same significance as that of Melchisedec.

Not only was Melchisedec king, but he was 'PRIEST OF THE MOST HIGH GOD'. This title *El Elyon*, 'The Most High God' is used for the first time in Scripture in connection with this incident (Gen. 14:18). The various titles of God are used with precision and with special regard to the relationship intended in each particular passage. For instance, Genesis 1:1 to 2:3 treats of creation, and the title used through the record is *Elohim*, 'God'.

Immediately we commence 'the generations', in verse 4, the title changes to 'the Lord God'. Coming to Abraham's time we have not only the title 'The Most High God' but in Genesis 17:1:

'I am *El Shaddai*; walk before Me, and be thou perfect',

and again in Exodus 6:3 we read:

I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of *El Shaddai*, but by My name *Jehovah* was I not known to them'.

The Priest upon His throne

Melchisedec was both king and priest. These two offices were kept distinct under the economy of the law. We may remember the awful judgment that fell upon Uzziah when as king he sought the priesthood also. In Christ alone can these two wondrous offices meet. Zechariah 6:12,13 says:

'Behold the Man Whose name is The BRANCH ... He shall be a *Priest* upon His *Throne*'.

The epistle of 'suffering and the glory that follows' names those who thus overcome 'a royal priesthood' (1 Pet. 2:9), and Revelation, that book of the overcomer, speaks of Christ as:

(1) Prince of the kings of the earth - KING.

(2) One Who looses from sin by His blood - PRIEST,

and as a result constitutes those thus blessed:

'Kings and priests unto God and His Father' (Rev. 1:6).

Melchisedec is the priest of the victor, and the Lord is seen in that capacity in Revelation 1. This is shown by noticing what particular incident of Melchisedec's history the apostle next mentions.

CHAPTER 7

THE PRIEST OF THE OVERCOMER.

'Who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings' (Heb. 7:1)

Genesis 14 gives the names of these kings, and describes the battle which they fought. Lot, type of the worldly believer, type of the one who would not 'lose his soul' as Abraham did, became involved in the fate of Sodom, becoming a prisoner.

It is suggestive that the one who escaped and came with tidings tells 'Abraham the *Hebrew*', 'Abraham the pilgrim', a title that suggests the very opposite of Lot's condition. He it was who overcame these kings, brought back the spoils and rescued Lot. It is here, at this moment of victory, that Melchisedec appears. The effect of this meeting is seen in Abraham's reply to the king of Sodom:

'I have lift up mine hand unto the LORD, the Most High God, the possessor of heaven and earth, that I will not take from a thread even to a shoelatchet, and that I will not take any thing that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich' (Gen. 14:22,23).

Hebrews 7 verses 1 and 2 does not mention this effect upon Abraham, but says:

'And blessed him; to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all'.

Both these items are expanded by the apostle in verses 4-10. We leave them for the moment to learn a little more concerning this great priesthood. The apostle now proceeds to interpret the meaning of the word Melchisedec:

'First being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace' (verse 2).

Many of the names of Old Testament characters seem to be prophetic of their place in the Divine scheme. Adam, Noah and Peleg are examples. Abraham is an example of a man's name being *changed* to fit changed circumstances. The inspired writer finds design in the order of the titles here:

First, King of righteousness

Then, King of peace.

This he repeats in another form in Hebrews 12:11, where he speaks of the peaceable fruit of righteousness, the righteousness evidently coming first:

'Without father, without mother, without descent' (verse 3).

These words cannot be taken absolutely of Melchisedec, otherwise he could have had no existence at all, but relatively, in connection with his office as priest. Those who could not prove their genealogies in the time of the return from captivity were refused admittance into the priesthood (Ezra 2:61-63). The words 'without descent' strictly rendered should read 'without genealogy'. The words of the apostle by no means teach that Melchisedec absolutely had no 'descent', but that such descent was not *recorded*, which recording is the essence of the word genealogy. Of Melchisedec it is further written that he had:

'Neither beginning of days, nor end of life' (verse 3).

The priests of the Levitical order had both the beginning and the end of their term of office fixed by law. A priest's term of ministration was called his 'days' (Luke 1:23), and the priests, the sons of Kohath, began their service at thirty years of age and ended it at fifty. Summing up these points of resemblance, the apostle says 'but being like unto the Son of God, abides a priest perpetually'. The construction of the whole sentence seems to be as follows:

'This Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God ... abides a priest perpetually'.

The remaining words are a parenthetic explanation given in order to show a series of comparisons with the Son of God. The greatness of Melchisedec himself, however, is the immediate concern, in order that the infinite greatness of Christ may be the better understood. So the context continues by enlarging on the testimony of the tithe:

'Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils' (verse 4).

The word used for *spoils* (*akrothinion*) is composed of *thin*, 'a heap of corn' and *akros*, 'the top'. The top of a heap of corn indicates *the best*, and the suggestion is that Abraham gave a tithe of the best. Not that Abraham tithed the best of the spoil only, for Hebrews 7:2 says, 'he gave him tithes of all', but that which he did give as a tithe was taken from the very best. Here therefore is one item which contributes to the impression of greatness which Scripture gives to Melchisedec. But this is not all. Not only is our attention directed to the tithe, and the fact that it was made up of the best of the spoils, but we are called upon to observe *who* it is that gave these tithes:

'Unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils'.

Dr. Owen says that the conjunction 'even' is emphatic and, though joined with 'the tenth', yet in construction it must be understood with Abraham; not 'unto whom Abraham gave *even a tenth*', but 'unto whom *even Abraham* gave a tenth'.

Abraham is here called 'the patriarch'. The Hebrews held that there were three sorts of patriarchs. The heads of the twelve tribes (that is the twelve sons of Jacob) and David also were called patriarchs (Acts 7:8,9; 2:29). Of greater dignity than these were held Isaac and Jacob, but chiefest of all was Abraham, the first father of the race. If therefore one was greater than Abraham, how great he must be! This is the argument of the apostle.

The sons of Levi in their capacity as priests received tithes from the people according to the law; yet these men, says verse 8, were mortal, but Melchisedec, in type, 'liveth'. Levi was in the loins of his father Abraham when the tithe was given, and so, in practice, the whole priesthood of Israel acknowledged the superiority of the order of Melchisedec. Not only is Melchisedec's greatness manifested in what Abraham gave to him, but also in what he, Melchisedec, gave to Abraham:

'But he whose genealogy is not reckoned from them
(1) received tithes from Abraham, and
(2) blessed him that had the promises' (verse 6).

The greater Abraham is made to appear, the greater must Melchisedec be, for 'without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better' (verse 7). Abraham is specially marked out as 'the patriarch' and 'he who received the promises'. That this receiving of the promises was no small thing Hebrews 6:13-16 bears witness. Nevertheless it was Melchisedec who blessed Abraham.

We have now passed in review the fourth of a series of comparisons instituted with the object of showing the greatness of Christ. We have in:

(1) Chapter 1. His superiority to ANGELS. He the Son. They the minsters.

(2) Chapter 3. His superiority to MOSES. He the Son. Moses the servant.

(3) Chapter 4. His superiority to JOSHUA. Jesus, the Son of God (verse 14). Joshua, the son of Nun (verse 8).

(4) Chapters 5 to 7. His superiority to AARON. The Levitical priesthood is filled by men who die. The oath consecrates the Son as priest in the power of endless life.

The way is now clear for the apostle's teaching concerning *perfection*, which has never been lost sight of, although to our lesser minds, the amount of detail and involved argument may seem to indicate a departure from the original purpose. 'If therefore perfection ...' is the writer's argument from all that has been under review, and this we must now ponder.

The changed order (Heb. 7:11-18)

Having considered together verses 1-10 of chapter 7, and having seen the greatness of the Melchisedec priesthood, we are prepared for the transference of that greatness to Christ, and for its connection with the great theme of perfection. Before attempting any further detail it will be a safeguard for us to have the broad outline of that great section which is devoted to the Priesthood and Sacrifice of Christ.

Hebrews 7:1 to 10:18

A 7:1-10.This Man (4) A priest - *eis to dienekes*
B 7:11 to 10:4. C 7:11. *No perfection* by Levitical priesthood and carnal commandment.
PERFECTION D 7:12-18. But by Melchisedec priesthood
C 7:19 *No perfection* by law
D 7:20 to 9:8. But by the oath to the Son
C 9:9,10.*No perfection* by carnal ordinances
D 9:11-28 But by perfect Tabernacle and better sacrifice
C 10:1-4.*No perfection* by sacrifices of the law
A 10:5-18. 'But this Man' (12) As Priest sat down - *eis to dienekes.*

To some minds Scriptural structures make no appeal. The subject before us is so solemn and so vital that we feel much blessed truth will lose its force if not seen as a whole. Therefore we tarry to draw attention to the lesson of the above structure. It will be noticed that the opening and closing members are to do with the Melchisedec priesthood of Christ in several important particulars.

(1) 'THIS MAN' Chapter 7:4, by using the (this ? JP) expression, draws attention to the greatness of Melchisedec above both Abraham and Levi.

(2) 'BUT THIS MAN' of chapter 10:12 takes up the theme with reference to the superiority of the Sacrifice and Priesthood of Christ.

(3) Both passages focus upon one peculiar expression, viz. *eis to dienekes*. This phrase occurs in Hebrews 7:3; 10:1,12 and 14 and nowhere else in the New Testament. It is translated twice 'continually' and twice 'for ever'. 'For a continuance' is a good rendering. In the case of the type, Melchisedec, the silence of Scripture as to his 'beginning' of days or 'end' of life sets him forth typically as a priest after the power of an endless life. In the case of Christ, the antitype, the contrast is between the priest who 'standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices which can never take away sins', and Christ, 'Who, after He had offered *one sacrifice* (in contrast with the "offering oftentimes") for sins' (in contrast with those sacrifices which could never take away sins) 'sat down for a continuance' (instead of repeatedly going over the same ritual, 'standing daily').

Things that make for perfection.

If we take note of these opening and closing sections therefore, it becomes evident that 'perfection' cannot possibly be attained under the ministry of priests who themselves needed an offering for their own sins, who were made after the law of a commandment which respected their mortal condition, and whose service stood in meats and drinks and baptisms, 'carnal ordinances', that really indicated that the way into the Holiest of all had not as then been opened. Such ordinances and sacrifices failing to touch the conscience, failed altogether, and were only 'shadows' and 'not the very image' of the good things to come.

To believers who were never brought up under the law, who never boasted in 'the glory and the covenant, and the giving of the law, and the service of God', the turning from the shadow of Aaron, his tabernacle, his priesthood and his sacrifices, to the reality Christ, heaven itself, the one great Sacrifice and the abiding Priesthood, seems a simple act of reasonable faith. To the Hebrew, cradled in the thought that of all nations the nation of Israel alone had the oracles of God, such a turning would be a wrench, a rupture, a counting 'gain' as 'loss' and as so much 'refuse' (Phil. 3:8). Therefore God in His kindness and His condescension reasons with them step by step, until the last ground of boasting in the law is destroyed and Christ is seen as all in all.

We commence therefore the new section with an argument:

'If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another Priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?' (Heb. 7:11).

In David's time the service of God's house was raised to its greatest height. If David himself did not actually build the Temple, the complete revelation was made to him of that house, exceeding magnifical with its golden vessels, its courses of priests, its wonderful psalms. Yet it is David and no other who gives us Psalm 110 saying:

'The Lord said unto my LORD, Sit thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool ... The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec' (verses 1 and 4).

The apostle, therefore, asks a pointed question, what further need for another Priest, of another order, if perfection were attainable under the Levitical priesthood? Of all the reasons that are most trenchant that which is given in parenthesis is the one, viz., 'For under it the people received the law' (verse 11).

Perfection and Legalism

It has been objected that the giving of the law from Mount Sinai preceded and did not follow the setting up of the Levitical priesthood. We do not think the expression 'received the law' refers to the giving of the law at Sinai, and that it is hardly a good translation. In chapter 4:2 we find that the people were 'evangelized', here, in 7:11, we see that with the institution of the Levitical priesthood the people were 'legalized'. They were shut up to carnal ordinances, mortal priests, and the blood of bulls and of goats, until Christ should come Who by His offering should 'take away the first, that He may establish the second' (Heb. 10:9).

'For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law' (Heb. 7:12).

This was a sore point with the Jew. Stephen was stoned to death because they said that he taught that:

'Jesus of Nazareth shall ... change the customs which Moses delivered us' (Acts 6:14).

The same charge was brought against Paul:

'Men of Israel, help: This is the man, that teacheth all men every where against the people, and the law, and this place' (the Temple) (Acts 21:28).

Those who had become believers from among Israel still retained their regard for the law:

'Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law: and they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs' (Acts 21:20,21).

It is evident that in dealing with the change of law and priesthood, the apostle had a delicate task before him, and whereas the Gentile could easily grant the whole situation without scruple, the whole constitution of the Jew rebelled against the very idea. So it is that we have so much detail, and the consideration of the subject from so many different points of view. In the section 7:11-18, the argument revolves round the fact that the Old Testament recognizes a change in the order of priesthood. In the law, priesthood is exclusively connected with one tribe, LEVI. Christ however sprang out of JUDAH, but of this 'Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood' (verse 14). 'It is evident', said the apostle, 'that our Lord sprang out of Judah'. It is more abundantly 'downright evident' (as the words may be rendered), that the priesthood and the law with it must be set aside, for the Scripture testifies:

'Thou art a Priest for ever *after the order of* Melchisedec' (Heb. 7:17).

The new Priesthood differs from that of the Levitical order in one grand particular. The Levitical priest was made:

'After the law of a carnal commandment' (verse 16),

but the Melchisedec order was made:

'After the power of an endless life' (verse 16).

One more item is added before this section concludes, and that is, not only does the change of priesthood necessitate the setting aside of the law, but the necessity to have such a change indicates the failure of that law so far as 'perfection' is concerned:

'There is, moreover, a setting aside of the preceding law, because it was inefficient and unprofitable' (verse 18 not AV JP).

In verse 16 the law was spoken of as 'carnal'. While viewed in itself the law is 'holy, just and good', that same law is 'weak through the flesh' and 'though ordained to life' will be found 'unto death' (Rom. 7). The sentiment of Hebrews 7:11 is repeated in 8:7:

7:11-18. **a** *Question* - 'If perfection were by the Levitical order -'.
b What need for another priesthood?
c The law abrogated, as weak and profitless.

8:7,8. ***a*** *Question* - 'If the first covenant were faultless -'.
b What need for seeking a second covenant?
c Finding fault, He said, 'I make a new covenant'.

The theme of the first passage (7:11-18) is the better Priesthood, the theme of the second (8:7,8) is the better Covenant.

All this was necessary to clear the way for a faith that would behold with single eye the Lord Jesus Christ as Prophet, Priest, King and Sacrifice, and the 'perfecter of faith'.

Salvation unto the uttermost, or what the law could not do (Heb. 7:19-25)

No perfection or maturity is possible under the Levitical priesthood, therefore the greater reason for thankfully believing Him Who is a Priest after the order of Melchisedec. Such is the argument and conclusion of 7:11-18. In verse 11 there is a parenthesis, viz., 'for under it the people received the law'; this parenthesis is now brought forward and dealt with in the same way as was the Levitical priesthood:

'For the law perfected nothing (or no one), but the superinduction *of* a better hope (did), through which we draw nigh to God' (verse 19 not AV JP).

The three items of this verse characterize the whole section of 7:19 to 9:8:

(1) The failure of the law.
(2) The better hope, wherewith are connected better promises and a better covenant.

(3) Access to God. Positively stated to be through Christ (7:25). Denied throughout the typical dispensation (9:8).

Hebrews 7:19 to 9:8

A 7:19-21. **a** The law perfected no one.
b The oath and the priesthood.
B 7:22. 'By so much' Jesus the surety of a better covenant.
C 7:23-27. **c** Salvation to the uttermost.
d He needeth not to offer for His own sins.
A 7:28. ***a*** The law ordains infirm men.
b The oath ordains the Son
('consecrated' - Gk. 'perfected').

Note - 8:1-5 *is parenthetical reference to true Tabernacle and ministry.*

B 8:6-13.'By how much' Mediator of the better covenant.

Note - 9:1-6 *is parenthetical reference to typical Tabernacle and ministry.*

C 9:7,8. ***d*** The high priest offered for himself as well as the people.
c The way into the holiest not made manifest.

The three items indicated in verse 19 are seen under the three letters 'A', 'B' and 'C'.

Access to God is a privilege beyond human computation, and this was not possible under the Levitical priesthood or the law, by reason of the weakness of a system that made such demands on the flesh. Throughout the dispensation of the law is the 'fear of death' which Hebrews 2:15 declared held the Old Testament saints in bondage, and the crying need for a Priest Who stood in the power of an endless life, in other words the risen Son of God.

The superinduction of the better hope

Let us now give attention to verse 19. If it says the law perfected nothing, it leads on to say that something else did. The second part of the verse is elliptical. Something is omitted which we must supply in order to get the sense. A closely parallel passage is that of Romans 8:3:

'For what the law could not do ... God (did by) sending His Own Son',

is the sequel, but the word 'did' has to be supplied.

There are some who understand Hebrews 7:19 to mean this:

'The law perfected nothing, but it *was* the bringing in of a better hope through which we draw nigh unto God'.

This is true. The law contained type and shadow that ever pointed to Christ. It did not reach the end itself, but it did bring in the better hope that attained unto it. This however, while being true, is not the teaching of the verse before us so far as we understand it. The better hope is said to have been 'superinducted', *epeisagoge* which this Greek word means. In Galatians 3:19 the law which was 'superadded' was 'for the sake of transgressions' and was to operate 'till the Seed should come', when it would be abrogated as being 'weak and unprofitable', failing as it did to touch the conscience.

When the fulness of time came and the Son of God entered into His office, there was the 'superinduction' of a better hope which set aside the types and shadows, and actually did give access to God. It is called 'a better hope'. This better hope does not look for an entrance into the land of promise, but looks for 'a better country, an heavenly'. It is connected with a 'better Covenant', in contrast with the old Covenant that was made after the exodus and before the land of promise was reached. 'Better promises' lie behind this hope, a 'better resurrection' lies ahead, and 'better sacrifices', or an infinitely better sacrifice, lie beneath.

This better hope brings us nigh unto God. This is what the law could not do, and therefore this access to God must be intimately connected with 'perfection'. That this is literally so will be found in the case of Christ:

'We* have such an High Priest, Who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens' (8:1).

As the Perfecter of faith He is:

'set down at the right hand of the throne of God' (12:2).

In the Spirit, we, through Him, draw nigh now, but this only pledges actual access when the day arrives for the redemption of the purchased possession. The superiority of this better hope lies in the superiority of its Mediator. That superiority has been shown in various ways. The particular thought before us in verses 20-22 lies in the fact that the Lord Jesus was made a Priest by oath.

The oath that perfects

The argument is found in the words:

'Inasmuch ... by so much ...' (Heb. 7:20-22).

The intervening passages give the fact of the oath, and the result, the better Covenant. The hope and the Covenant were 'better' in the same proportion that the pre-eminence of the Melchisedec priesthood was above that of Aaron. That preeminence is discovered in the 'oath'.

The force of the oath and its bearing upon the subject is found in the added words 'and will not repent'. The Priesthood of Christ was immutably secure. Not only was there this attribute of immutability connected with this Priesthood arising out of the nature of the oath sworn by God, but further, it arises out of the fact that He ever liveth:

'And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: but this Man, because He continues (as a priest) for ever (the age), hath an unchangeable (intransferable) Priesthood' (verses 23 and 24).

Note the argument in the word 'continue' or 'abide' in verse 3 which speaks of the character of the Priesthood and not of life itself. *Aparabatos* (verse 24) means something more than 'unchangeable'; it means incapable of transmission or of transference. Christ as the Melchisedec Priest has no need to secure a successor. His Priesthood is never terminated by death.

'By *so much* was Jesus made a surety of a better testament (covenant)' (verse 22).

The word 'surety' is *egguos*, and is allied to *eggizo*, 'to draw nigh' of verse 19. As we have before noted, the Old Covenant failed to 'bring us to God', the New Covenant gloriously succeeds. The 'us' and the 'we' referring to those Hebrews and not to Gentiles as described in Ephesians 2:11,12. The surety of that New Covenant is not the blood of bulls or goats, but the blood of Christ. Of such a Priest and such a Surety the apostle says:

'Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them' (verse 25).

We need to ponder these words, or else we may miss the sense.

'He is able to save'. That is a blessed fact.

'He is able *also* to save' suggests something in addition.

'He is able also to save to the UTTERMOST' reveals what that addition is.

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* While we avoid continual reminders that îweØ were never under the old covenant, and that our blessings do not flow from the New Covenant, we nevertheless stress the value to us of the teaching of Hebrews, as *parallel* but not *identical* with the place occupied by Philippians in the dispensation of the Mystery.

Salvation unto all perfection

Once more we are not concerned with initial salvation but with the 'so great salvation' which the Hebrews were in danger of letting slip (Heb. 2). This is the 'aionian salvation' connected with obedience and suffering that makes perfect (Heb. 5). To the uttermost is *eis to panteles. Panteles* is from *pan*, all, and *telos*, end, from which we obtain *teleiosis*, perfection. He is able not only to *save so* that condemnation is avoided, but He is able ALSO to save *unto all perfection* those that come unto God by Him. He accomplishes this 'uttermost' salvation by 'intercession'. This word 'intercession' is not limited to the sense of supplication, but to the extension of aid of any sort.

If this 'salvation' be taken to indicate salvation in the evangelical sense, shall we not find a difficulty in making *that* salvation depend upon the Lord's *present intercession*? He is attending to this 'uttermost' salvation in His office as High Priest:

'Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, *He is able to succour* them that are tempted' (Heb. (2:17,18).

This is salvation *eis to panteles*; the Lord not only saves all that trust in Him, but He is able also to save right through to the end, or goal, through temptation and trial. It is this that makes the 'better hope' an anchor for the soul. He Who is its sure anchorage has 'suffered being tempted':

'For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin (sin excepted)' (Heb. 4:15).

The Priest of the perfect

The reservation of the apostle manifested in 5:11 indicates that the doctrine associated with this Priesthood is by no means elementary, but can only be appreciated by those of 'full age', or as the word is, 'the perfect' (5:14).

This Priesthood is also closely associated with another aspect of 'perfection' namely, that of the 'overcomer'. This is indicated by the first appearance of Melchisedec in Scripture when he met Abraham, the overcomer, returning from the slaughter of the kings.

A comparison and a contrast

Hebrews 5 opens with a description of the service of the high priest. He offered both gifts and sacrifices, and also had compassion on the ignorant. His limitations are indicated by the fact that:

'He himself also is compassed with infirmity. And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins' (5:2,3).

The apostle proceeds to develop in some detail a comparison and a contrast.

The comparison. Chapter 5:7-9 with its reference to Gethsemane reveals in Christ a High Priest Who can have compassion, because He Himself had suffered being tempted. The glorious superiority of Christ's Melchisedec Priesthood occupies chapters 6 and 7 reaching its zenith in the record of that perfected Priest Who is able to save unto all perfection all that come unto God by Him.

The contrast. The apostle returns after this climax has been reached to point a contrast, taking up the statement made in 5:3 saying:

'For such an high Priest became us, Who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; WHO NEEDETH NOT daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for His own sins, and then for the people's: for this He did once, when He offered up Himself' (7:26,27).

This truth has already found expression in Hebrews 4:14,15; there we find reference to Christ as Priest Who has 'passed through the heavens', Who is touched 'by the feeling of infirmities', Who was nevertheless separate from sinners, 'yet without sin' or 'sin excepted', i.e. the temptations of the wilderness pilgrimage are uppermost; *choris*, 'without', is used as in Hebrews 9:28.

Sin and its relation to Christ

Scripture is never ambiguous where the personal sinlessness of the Lord is involved. If Hebrews 4:14,15 shows the Lord identifying Himself with His people in their trials, it immediately adds '*sin excepted*'. If 2 Corinthians 5:21 shows the Lord in His sacrifice was identified with sin, it immediately adds, '*Who knew no sin*'. If Romans 8:3 shows the Lord identified with flesh and blood, the sinlessness of Christ is expressed in the words '*the likeness* of sinful flesh'. As this subject is one of the first importance, let us pause to examine the words of Hebrews 7:26 concerning the sinlessness of the Lord Jesus.

A fourfold testimony

HOLY. There are three Greek words which are translated in the A.V. by the word 'holy', they are *hagios, hosios* and *hieros. Hosios* is the word used here. Its first occurrence in Acts 2:27:

'Neither wilt Thou suffer Thine *Holy One* to see corruption'.

Hosios is used in the LXX to translate the Hebrew word *chasid*, which is rendered not only by the word 'holy', but also by 'merciful'. *Hagios* implies the thought of separation, but *hosios* suggests holiness that can stoop to have mercy upon those who are in themselves defiled, without contracting defilement thereby.

The Syriac version uses a word here that means 'pure'. This blessed character was our Saviour's from birth. It is not an acquired holiness, but inherent. We can appreciate the choice of this particular word in the message of the angel to Mary in Luke 1:35:

'The power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that HOLY THING which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God'.

Such was His nature. His acts were in perfect harmony with His inherent holiness.

HARMLESS (*akakos*). This word occurs in but one other passage, viz., Romans 16:18 where it is translated 'simple'. In the LXX version of Psalm 26, *akakos* occurs in verses 1 and 11, where the A.V. reads 'integrity'. The intervening verses 2-10 are a practical expansion of the meaning of *akakos*. Reins and heart examined and tried (verse 2). No fellowship with vain persons and dissemblers, but rather hatred of all wicked works (4,5), and so throughout the Psalm. All this and more is true of the Lord Jesus.

As concerning *hosios* ('holy'), Scripture declares 'He knew no sin'; as concerning *akakos* ('harmless'), Scripture declares 'He did no sin, neither was there guile found in His mouth'. The blessed man of Psalm 1 and the Holy One of Psalms 15 and 16 is Christ.

UNDEFILED (*amiantos*). This word occurs in Hebrews 13:4, James 1:27, 1 Peter 1:4. The difference between *akakos* and *amiantos* is that in the former the truth conveyed is that the Lord *did no evil*, while in the latter the truth is that He could not be *contaminated by evil* in any one sense. He *touched* a leper, but He needed no cleansing. A woman with an issue of blood *touched* Him, and while virtue went out of Him to her, no contamination passed from her to Him. In the midst of publicans and harlots, called by the Pharisees, 'a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber, and friend of publicans and sinners', He ever remained 'the Lamb without blemish and without spot'. Without *natural* blemish (the thought in *akakos*), without *contracted* spot (*amiantos*).

In all this the Lord Jesus transcended the type. The Tabernacle needed an atonement by reason of the uncleanness of Israel (Lev. 16:16), but such cleansing was unnecessary to the Lord. The Levitical priesthood sinned and needed a sacrifice. The Lord knew no sin, did no sin, and needed no sacrifice. Earthly priesthood terminates at death. The Lord ever liveth and His Priesthood is intransmissible. In all these respects the Lord was

SEPARATE FROM SINNERS. This we may see from two points of view.

(1) *As to His manhood*. Born of a woman, yet from birth 'that holy thing', and while being made partaker of flesh and blood, nevertheless coming in the 'likeness' only of *sinful* flesh.

The verb *chorizo* 'separate', enforces the translation 'sin excepted' or 'apart from sin' in Hebrews 4:15.

(2) *As to His manner of life*. He was truly man. He ate, He drank, He slept, worked, suffered, died. To the woman of Samaria He was 'a Jew' (John 4:9). To His fellow-townsmen He was 'Joseph's son' (John 6:42), yet throughout His Life He was ever 'separate from sinners'. Even though a disciple leaned upon the bosom of the Lord at supper, never once do we find a follower of the Saviour addressing Him as 'Jesus'. Shall His condescension, His sympathy, His fellowship warrant unholy familiarity? Believers, let us remember that He is our Lord, and let us render the honour due unto His name.

Thus we have four statements, arranged in two pairs, indicating for our comfort the High Priest that 'became us'.

HOLY		UNDEFILED.	
	As to nature	SEPARATE FROM	*As to practice*.
HARMLESS		SINNERS	

Heaven itself

It is evident that this Priest could not be a minister of the earthly and typical Tabernacle. His peculiar separateness proclaims Him to be the minister of the true Tabernacle 'heaven itself'. Therefore the apostle continues, 'and made higher than the heavens'.

There is as much stress placed upon the heavenly character of the Lord's Priesthood as upon His sinlessness. It will be of service to note some of the statements of Scripture under this head:

'Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into (through) the heavens, Jesus the Son of God' (Heb. 4:14).

'We have such an High Priest, Who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens' (Heb. 8:1).

The heavenly Priesthood of Christ receives its fullest exposition in chapters 8 and 9, and reaches its climax in 9:24:

'For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into HEAVEN ITSELF, now to appear in the presence of God for us'.

The one Offering once for all

Before the apostle can proceed to the expansion of the subject of the heavenly ministry of the Lord, it is necessary that one matter shall be dealt with, which if left ambiguous might lead to deadly error. The earthly high priest not only offered up sacrifice for the sins of the people, but he was obliged also to offer a sacrifice:

'First for his own sins' (Heb. 7:27 cf, Heb. 5:3).

Here we perceive a strong contrast, for the heavenly Priest was 'holy, harmless, undefiled', and therefore needed no sacrifice for Himself. When He died, He died 'the JUST for the unjust', consequently He:

'... needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for His own sins, and then for the people's: for this He did *once*, when He offered up Himself' (Heb. 7:27).

In seeking out the argument of this epistle the reader is called upon to exercise continual watchfulness. We found that the consideration of the heavenly ministry of the Lord was postponed in order that the question of His one Offering might be dealt with, and now we shall find that the consideration of two features of that Offering mentioned in 7:27 is deferred until the heavenly ministry has been more fully opened up.

CHAPTER 8

BOLDNESS TO ENTER (Heb. 8 to 10).

We have had before us some wonderful statements concerning the office of Christ as the heavenly High Priest, and of His personal character, holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners. We must now continue the pursuit of this most important theme, and note that the two features that await exposition are:

(1) The fact that the Lord offered one Sacrifice once for all.

(2) The fact that He offered, not bulls and goats, but that He offered up Himself.

One further item is necessary to complete the list of the distinctive features of the Lord's High Priesthood, and that is:

The law and the oath

'For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, Who is consecrated for evermore (PERFECTED unto the age)' (Heb. 7:28).

There are two items here that demonstrate the superiority of the Priesthood of the Son. They are:

(1) The oath compared with the law as to immutability. The oath is more solemn, and its immutability is indicated in Hebrews 6:17.

(2) The oath and the law as to sequence. The oath was made 'since the law', and what this implies is explained in Hebrews 7:11:

'If therefore PERFECTION were by the Levitical priesthood ... what further need was there that another Priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?'

That question has now received its answer. Perfection could only come through the Priest after the order of Melchisedec whose Priesthood is not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. All truth, whether dispensational, foundational or experimental, focuses upon the Person of the risen Christ. The whole fabric of Mosaic ritual vanishes into the shadows before the face of Him Who could say, 'I am the resurrection and the life'.

With the 'perfecting of the Son' by the oath, we reach the conclusion of the lengthy comparison commenced in chapter 5. Before entering into a detailed examination of the Tabernacle and its sacrifices and seeing them as shadows of the true, a short chapter is devoted to bringing the teaching of chapters 5 to 7 to a point:'Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum' (8:1).

The principal thing

The teaching of this passage is something more than a summary. The word *kephalaion* (sum) may mean the summing up of a number as in Numbers 4:2, 'Take the sum of the sons of Kohath', or it may be the principal part as in Numbers 5:7, 'He shall recompense his trespass with the principal thereof'. The following translation seems to convey the sense of the passage.

'The principal thing, however, amongst those things of which we are speaking is that we have such a high Priest Who is seated on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary, and of the true Tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man' (Heb. 8:1,2).

A seated Priest in a heavenly Sanctuary

It will be well to prepare the reader for the necessity of a certain amount of close attention. The arguments of this central part of Hebrews are involved, and there are, as the apostle has said, some things 'hard to be understood' concerning this heavenly Priesthood. There is a wealth of detail and a formidable series of sub-divisions to exercise our patience, but at the beginning the apostle would have us look away from these and let our hearts dwell upon 'the principal thing'. We have a *seated* Priest; that tells of *a finished work*. This seated Priest is the Minister of no earthly Tabernacle; He has entered 'heaven itself'. The consideration of this finished work and this heavenly Tabernacle occupies the bulk of chapters 9 and 10.

Just as all the Tabernacle and its service revolve around the ark and mercy seat, so all that the writer has said concerning the excellence of Christ is concentrated upon His once offered Sacrifice. This is the theme that is immediately introduced in 8:3:

'For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this Man have somewhat also to offer'.

The ‘somewhat’ suggests something different from the offerings of the law, and verse 4 puts forward the argument that the Lord could have no priesthood on earth, as the prescribed offerings were already ministered by an earthly and an exclusive priesthood. Their service, however, was typical of a higher and a greater.

‘Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things’ (8:5).

The Levitical economy was one of type and shadow:

‘As Moses was admonished (or "warned") of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith He, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount’ (8:5).

The fact that Moses was ‘warned’ (see same word in Matthew 2:22 and Hebrews 11:7), suggests the importance of this typical representation, whilst the parallel in 1 Chronicles 28:11-19 concerning the pattern of the Temple confirms it. The typical teaching of the Tabernacle is enlarged upon in Hebrews 9. For the moment we are occupied with the ‘principal thing’, a seated Priest in a heavenly Sanctuary.

The Mediator of a better Covenant

The excellency of the ministry of this seated Priest is further enforced by the superiority of the Covenant which forms the sphere of His activities. The degree of this superiority is gauged ‘by how much’ the New Covenant is superior to the old. This forms a fruitful line of teaching in 2 Corinthians 3. We have, with the re-introduction of the subject of the Covenant, returned to the argument of Hebrews 7:18, but we have returned with fuller knowledge. There, in 7:18, we learned that the commandment which appointed the Levitical priesthood was ‘disannulled’ because of its ‘weakness’ and’unprofitableness’. Here, in 8:6-13, we learn that the Covenant with which the Levitical priesthood was associated was likewise set aside as being ‘not blameless’, the Lord ‘finding fault’ with it and introducing the New Covenant as the better hope founded upon better promises, ministered by a better Priest, and ratified by a better Sacrifice.

A lengthy quotation from Jeremiah 31 occupies Hebrews 8:8-12 which testifies in no uncertain way to the nature and scope of the New Covenant.

The New Covenant.

There are still quite a number of God’s children who have hazy ideas concerning this New Covenant (or testament as it is translated in Matthew 26:28), therefore it will be helpful if we set out its chief features from the passage before us, before passing on to chapter 9.

(1) The New Covenant is made with *Israel and Judah* and with no other people.
(2) It was not engraven upon stone as at Sinai, but written upon the heart.
(3) The Old Covenant was connected with the exodus from Egypt, and its commemorative feast was the Passover, whilst the New Covenant is connected with a greater and a spiritual deliverance, and its commemorative feast was instituted at the Passover by the Lord (Matt. 26:28).
(4) It is essentially connected with the national restoration of Israel (Jer. 31:35-40).
(5) The only reference to this New Covenant memorial feast, outside the three synoptic gospels (for John omits it) is in that section of 1 Corinthians, that is addressed to those whose ‘Fathers’ went through the Red Sea. This section covers chapters 10 and 11. With chapter 12 the apostle addresses those who were ‘Gentiles’ and who had been idolators (1 Cor. 12:1-2).

The apostle sums up the matter for us in Hebrews 8:13:

‘In that He saith, A new covenant, He hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away’.

But Thou remainest

In chapter 1 the present creation is said to wax old and pass away, and in contrast with this is placed the Lord of Whom it says, 'but Thou remainest'. At the end of the epistle the same truth emerges, viz., 'Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for the age'. This is the blessed truth of chapters 8 and 9. Here in 8:13 we have the waxing old and the passing away of the Old Covenant in contrast with the unchanging Priesthood and heavenly sanctuary of the New Covenant.

CHAPTER 9

A GREATER AND MORE PERFECT TABERNACLE

In the structure of Hebrews 7:1 to 10:18, it will be observed that the member governed by the title, 'The oath to the Son', extends from 7:20 to 9:8, where we reach another member entitled, 'No perfection by carnal ordinances'. Chapter 9:1-8 therefore concludes the section commenced in 7:20.

Hebrews 9:1-8

A 9:1,2. The first Covenant.
  B 9:2. The Tabernacle prepared (*kataskeuazo*).
    C 9:2-5. The contents. In the first; in the second.
  B 9:6. These things prepared (*kataskeuazo*).
    C 9:6,7. The priests. In the first; in the second.
A 9:8. The first Tabernacle.

Two features of the first Covenant are considered:

(1) Ordinances of divine service.
(2) A worldly sanctuary.

A great controversy has arisen over the meaning of 'the worldly sanctuary'. The word 'worldly' is a translation of *kosmikon*, which occurs in one other place in the New Testament viz., Titus 2:12. It does not occur in the LXX. One of the causes of diversity in translation is that the 'world' and 'worldliness' are contrary to anything to do with a 'sanctuary'. *Kosmikon* is cognate with *kosmios*, which is translated 'modest' in 1 Timothy 2:9, and with *kosmeo*, which is translated 'adorn' in the same verse. The underlying idea of both words is that of something orderly. Rotherham accordingly translates the passage in Hebrews 9:1:

'Even the holy ritual well arranged'.

Some, because of certain remarks made by Josephus and Philo, consider that the intention of the apostle was to show that the Tabernacle typified the world.

Not made with hands

The simple explanation of the word *kosmikon* ('worldly') is discovered in the purpose of the apostle, who sets the earthly type over against the heavenly reality, the true, the heavenly Tabernacle, 'which the Lord pitched and not man', and which was 'not made with hands, that is to say not of this creation'. The holy places made with hands are called 'figures of the true', the true Tabernacle being called 'heaven itself' (Heb. 9:24).

As the Priest and the Offering constitute 'the principal thing', the apostle passes over without comment for the time being the various articles of furniture used in the Tabernacle, their typical teaching not being contributory to the theme of the epistle. We must stay to observe here that the articles of furniture fall into two groups, viz., (1) those in the holy place, and (2) those in the most holy place.

(1) IN THE HOLY PLACE

(1) The candlestick
(2) The table
(3) The shewbread

(2) IN THE MOST HOLY PLACE

(1) The censer
(2) The ark
(3) The golden pot of manna
(4) Aaron's rod that budded
(5) The tables of the covenant
(6) The cherubim of glory
(7) The mercy seat

'Of which we cannot now speak particularly'.

A lesson enforced

It will be noticed that the golden altar of incense is omitted from the first list, and that a golden censer is added to the second list. If we interpret the golden censer as the golden altar, as some do, then we make the apostle to teach that the golden altar was in 'the holiest of all', which it certainly was not. The LXX uses the word *thumiaterion* ('censer') in 2 Chronicles 26:19 and Ezekiel 8:11, where both passages read 'censer' and can mean nothing else.

It seems to be the intention of the writer to enforce the lesson of the epistle by this somewhat unexpected alteration. Both the golden altar and the censer speak of intercession, and our hearts are directed upward to the right hand of God, where the great High Priest ever liveth to make intercession, having passed into the heavenly holiest of all. We read in Leviticus 16:12,13 that the high priest took a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar and made a cloud of incense to cover the mercy seat, and this type of the interceding priest penetrating beyond the veil is the feature seized upon by the apostle and emphasized in this way.

The Holy Ghost this signifying

At Hebrews 9:6 the subject is resumed, saying, 'Now when these things were thus ordained'. We have drawn attention in the structure to the fact that the words 'ordained' in verse 6 and 'made' in verse 2 are the same in the original, and should read in both cases 'prepared'. Immediately the great question of priestly service is brought forward, and contrasts the typical with the true. Into the first Tabernacle the priests had continual access, entering daily in the course of their office, but:

'Into the second went the high priest *alone once* every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people' (Heb. 9:7).

The particular period to which this passage refers is that section of Leviticus 16 which speaks of the Day of Atonement. There we read of the censer and its use (verse 13). There we read of the blood:

'Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that is for the people, and bring his blood within the vail' (verse 15).

There too we read:

'There shall be *no man* in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement' (verse 17).

From these and similar passages the apostle draws a *negative* argument, then pursuing the theme through into Hebrews 10, he rounds off the examination with a *positive* argument. It will make the line of argument clearer for us if we place the two passages together.

The Negative

'The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was *not yet* made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing' (9:8).

The Positive.

'*Having* therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way' (10:19,20).

In these two passages lies practically the whole of the argument, and if we can keep this well in mind, the details, instead of bewildering us, will lend point and force to the glorious conclusion.

A Figure for the time (Heb. 7:26 to 9:20)

Returning to chapter 9, we learn that the way into the holiest was not made manifest because of the character of the sacrifice and the service connected with that period. It is stimulating to observe the sturdy faith of the apostle in Holy Scripture - '*The Holy Ghost* this signifying'. How impossible it is for one who denies the inspiration of all Scripture really to benefit by its study! However varied and strange 'the sundry times and divers manners' may have been, the teaching of Hebrews 1:1 is that '*God* spake'. So in Hebrews 3:7, where Psalm 95 is quoted, the apostle says, 'As *the Holy Ghost* saith'.

To come now to the peculiar character of the earlier dispensation. Before the coming of Christ all were 'shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed' (Gal. 3:23). The service of the priests is called 'the example and shadow of heavenly things' (Heb. 8:5). The law is said to have 'a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image' (10:1). So here, the Tabernacle and its services are said to be 'a figure' (9:9).

The word is literally a 'parable'. A reference to Ezekiel 20:49; Psalm 49:4; 78:2; Matthew 13:10:13 and John 16:28,29 will show that an element of obscurity is connected with a parable. Hebrews 9:9 tells us that this particular parable remained 'unto the present time' (which we believe to be the true rendering of this passage). Now that Christ has come, the shadows vanish. All the offerings, sacrifices and services of the Tabernacle, while most wonderfully adapted to their purpose, could never lead to the goal of Hebrews:

'That could not make him that did the service PERFECT, as pertaining to the conscience' (Heb. 9:9).

The purpose of the parable

The dispensational truth related to the use of the parable is too important to pass over without a fuller note. A type sets forth with more or less clearness the reality which it foreshadows and demands an antitype elsewhere. A parable veils truth. It will be remembered that the parables of Matthew 13 are closely associated with the Lord's rejection (Matt. 11 and 12) and with the mysteries of the kingdom of the heavens. We have shown elsewhere that the word 'mystery' is introduced as a result of the failure of some of the agents and must be kept distinct from the original plan and will of God. When Israel came out of Egypt, they were led by Moses to Sinai. There they were assembled to enter into solemn covenant with the Lord. Here are the terms of that covenant:

'Now therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people: for all the earth is Mine: And ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation' (Exod. 19:5,6).

When Moses descended from the smoking mountain he spake no word concerning Tabernacle, Ark or Mercy Seat, but solemnly sprinkled the people with the blood of the covenant saying:

'Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words' (Exod. 24:8).

After this, Moses re-ascended the mountain in order to receive the tables of stone. During his absence the people, headed by Aaron, broke the solemn Covenant into which they had entered by worshipping the golden calf, for among the 'words' which constituted the Covenant were 'Thou shalt have no other gods before Me'. This Covenant was broken, and Moses manifested it by breaking the tables of stone (Exod. 32:15-19). When the duplicates were given, they were placed in the Ark of the covenant, which Ark was the nucleus and centre of the whole Tabernacle ritual. Strictly speaking therefore, the ten commandments were never given to Israel. Israel's destiny is to be a kingdom of priests. The attaining of that destined end is enshrined in the use of and the meaning of 'perfect' (*teleios*, which is allied with *telos*, 'end'). Israel can never be a kingdom of priests under the Old Covenant that was broken, neither can they reach their goal by the typical ritual of the Tabernacle. 'The law made nothing perfect'. Israel's 'perfection', the attaining unto that for which they had been laid hold of by the Lord (*see* for parallel thought Phil. 3:12), can only be accomplished under the New Covenant of which Christ, not Moses, is the Mediator. This New Covenant, it will be observed, is immediately introduced after the comparison between the priesthood of Christ and that of Levi has been made, and we are told that the Levitical priesthood and sacrifices:

'Could not make him that did the service PERFECT, as pertaining to the conscience' (Heb. 9:9).

Carnal ordinances

The apostle reduces the ceremonial and typical ordinances to two heads, viz. : (1) Meats and drinks; (2) Divers baptisms. A reading of Leviticus 11-15 will give some idea of his meaning. Writing to Gentile believers in another connection, he says:

'Touch not; taste not; handle not; which all are to perish with the using' (Col. 2:21,22),

showing this man-made prohibition is vain. He turns the believer's attention away from the 'shadows', for, says he, 'the body is of Christ', and directs their hearts and minds to where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. It will be observed that we do not follow the A.V. and translate 'divers washings', but use the word 'baptisms'. This brings the apostle's argument into line with that of Hebrews 5 and 6, where, in urging the reader to 'go on unto *perfection*', he says 'leave ... not laying again ... the doctrine of baptisms'. The one great reason for leaving these gifts and sacrifices, this Tabernacle service, these distinctions between meats and drinks, these washings, dippings and sprinklings, is that they were all 'carnal ordinances', and these ordinances can no more lead on unto perfection than could the 'carnal commandment' of Hebrews 7:16 'perfect the Son' (7:28) in His office as High Priest after the order of Melchisedec.

Until the time of reformation

Not only were these ordinances 'carnal', they were temporary, they were 'imposed until the time of reformation' (Heb. 9:10). The word 'imposed' suggests a burden. In Luke 5:1 it is 'to press upon' as a crowd, or 'to lay on' as a stone on a grave (John 11:38).

Peter expresses this conception when he speaks of the law as 'a yoke which neither our forefathers nor we have been able to bear' (Acts 15:10). This burden was but for a time 'until the time of reformation':

'The law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did' (Heb. 7:19).
'The law was our schoolmaster (pedagogue) unto Christ' (Gal. 3:24).

REFORMATION. This word bears two meanings:

(1) The idea of getting back to some primitive simplicity that had become obscured, or
(2) The idea of a radical change that reforms the subject.

The Greek word *diorthosis* (reformation) does not occur elsewhere in the Scriptures, but *diorthoo* comes in Jeremiah 7:3 in the command, 'amend your ways'. The time of reformation dawned when 'grace and truth' came by Jesus Christ, in contrast with the 'law that was given by Moses' (John 1:17). This reformation introduced better promises, a better hope, and had as its basis a better Covenant, ministered by Christ the Mediator of the better Covenant. The argument is designed to lead the Hebrew believer to see the temporary character of these laws, which according to the teaching of their Rabbis were eternal and unchanging (*see* Acts 6:13,14). The abiding Priest, the once offered Sacrifice, the unchanging Covenant, the sure and steadfast hope, these touched the conscience, led on to perfection and were found only in Christ.

Hebrews 9:7-12

A 9:7,8. ONCE every year 'not without blood'.
  B 9:9. The present season.
    C 9:9-. **a** Gifts and sacrifices.
      b No perfection, not touch conscience.
    C 9:10-. ***a*** Meats, drinks, baptisms.
      b Carnal ordinances.
  B 9:10 The season of reformation.
A 9:11,12. ONCE into the holy place, 'by His own blood.'

Romans 8:3 supplies the true comment 'weak because of the flesh'. But what the law could not do, God has done by sending His Son. This is equally the teaching of Hebrews as it is of Romans. The law concerning the priesthood was weak because of the flesh, and no perfection can come that way. God's answer is Christ, and Christ as the Priest in the power of an endless life. The sacrifices, both in their nature and by their repetition, failed to touch the conscience. He said, 'Lo, I come', and coming, set aside all types and shadows by the offering of Himself.

A blessed change

A new section is introduced with verse 11 and opens with the words '*But Christ*'. Dispensational and doctrinal changes are introduced by some such expression in other places. For example, in Acts 17:30:

'And the times of this ignorance God winked at; BUT NOW commandeth all men every where to repent'.

So, in Romans 3:21, when the apostle had brought the whole world in guilty before God, with no hope of righteousness in themselves, he then introduces the wondrous provision of grace with the words:

'BUT NOW the righteousness of God without the law is manifested'.

Both the doctrinal and dispensational portions of Ephesians 2 are marked in the same way:

'BUT GOD Who is rich in mercy ... hath quickened us (made us alive)' (4,5).
'BUT NOW in Christ Jesus ... made nigh' (13).

When the apostle had clearly shown both the weakness and unprofitableness of the dispensation of type and shadow, he swings the door of the new dispensation upon the same hinges, 'BUT CHRIST:

'But Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come' (Heb. 9:11).

The good things to come must not be interpreted only of the new life and the glory yet to be; they include, and perhaps principally refer to, the dispensational change which set aside the types and shadows, and provide the antitype, Christ. This may be seen by consulting Hebrews 10:1:

'For the law having *a shadow of good things to come*, and not the very image of the things'.

We remember the opening words of chapter 8, and that the 'principal thing' is a seated Priest in a heavenly sanctuary. This important fact is again prominent. We have such an High Priest of good things to come, in contrast with those priests whose ministry was confined to shadows. At 9:11 we have the subject of 9:1-5 resumed in the words, 'By a greater and more perfect Tabernacle'. Not only is this Tabernacle 'greater and more perfect', it is 'not of this creation', for so the word rendered 'building' should be translated. The use of this word 'creation' is noteworthy, for in 2 Corinthians 3-5 the *New Covenant* is linked with the *new creation*, and both with the *reconciliation*. Israel were a people of types, and in this they foreshadow the purpose of the ages.

The blood of Christ

We noted in Hebrews 9:6 and 7, that the high priest entered into the holiest of all once every year, 'not without blood'. This therefore is the next item to be developed in the argument. Verse 12 continues:

'Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained *aeonian* redemption for us'.

Negatively, Christ entered 'NOT with blood of goats and calves'. Positively, Christ entered 'by His own blood'. As to time Christ entered 'once', in contrast with the type of verse 7, 'once every year'. The 'aeonian redemption' finds expansion in the succeeding verses.

The importance of the Ascension

While many are aware of the essential character of the death and resurrection of Christ, all are not so impressed with the importance of His Ascension. Ephesians 1:19-23 stresses the ascension of Christ in connection with His present headship of the church which is His Body, and Ephesians 4:8-10 sets forth the triumphant character of His ascension when He led captivity captive. The present dispensation with its fourfold ministry is also essentially

related with the ascended Lord (Eph. 4:11,12). The high privilege of the believer who has been 'made to sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus' (Eph. 2:6), and also the power to walk in newness of life, are related to the fact that Christ now 'sitteth at the right hand of God' (Col. 3:1).

Not only do the epistles of the Mystery stress the fact of the Lord's ascension, but the epistle to the Hebrews does also. Let us notice some of the references:

'When He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high' (Heb. 1:3).

'We have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God' (Heb. 4-14).

'We have such an High Priest, Who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens' (Heb. 8:1).

'Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us' (Heb. 9.24)

'But this man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God' (Heb. 10:12).

'Looking unto Jesus ... Who ... is set down at the right hand of the throne of God' (Heb. 12:2).

These, and all passages which speak of the Lord's heavenly ministry and intercession necessitate the Ascension. We shall understand our calling the better if we keep this fact before us.

Israel, the aeonian people

lt is necessary to remember that the apostle makes pointed allusion to the great day of atonement in Hebrews 9. To this solemn day refer the statements concerning the blood of bulls and goats, as also the entry into the holiest of the high priest alone once every year. The mediation of the high priest on the day of atonement accomplished a reconciliation for the year. In vivid contrast, the effect of Christ's one Offering is called an aeonian redemption, and as it touched the conscience needs no repetition.

Israel are the aeonian people (Isa. 44:7)

Christ is the author of aeonian salvation (Heb. 5:9).

By His blood He obtained aeonian redemption (Heb. 9:12).

This blood of the New Covenant ensures the aeonian inheritance (Heb. 9:15).

The New Covenant itself is called the aeonian covenant (Heb. 13:20).

Israel are a typical people, and foreshadow in their calling and history the wider dealings of God with man during the course of the ages.

It now becomes necessary to the argument of the apostle that he should establish the superiority of the offering of Christ, and this he does by a series of comparisons. The first comparison is drawn between the offerings that were provided by the law to sanctify those who had become unclean, and the cleansing power of the blood of Christ.

Hebrews 9:13,14

A 13. For if. The fact assumed
  B 13. The blood, and ashes of heifer
    C 13. Sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh
A 14. How much more. Superiority assumed
  B 14. The blood of Christ
    C 14. Purge conscience from dead works.

The argument cannot be appreciated fully without a knowledge of Numbers 19. There the Lord commands Israel to bring:

(1) A red heifer without spot, wherein is no blemish and upon which never yoke came.

(2) The heifer was slain, and the blood sprinkled before the Tabernacle.

(3) The remaining carcase, together with cedar wood, hyssop and scarlet, was burned, and the ashes gathered and laid up without the camp, with which the water of separation was made.

(4) The defilement which necessitated the application of this water of separation is particularly connected with death.

(5) A person was rendered unclean by touching a dead body, being in a tent wherein a man died, touching a bone or a grave.

It will be seen that some defilement was socially unavoidable. God would not have been pleased with that man who for the avoidance of ceremonial defilement withdrew himself from the dead or the dying. Yet this presses upon us the absolute necessity for the provision for uncleanness, for at times our very duties carry with them defilement, and though 'not of the world' we are nevertheless still 'in the world', and though we are cleansed completely in one sense, we shall, till our pilgrimage is over, be under the necessity to 'wash the feet' continually (John 13:10). The emphasis upon death and the dead in Numbers 19 provides the argument of Hebrews 9:14.

Covenant or Testament

While it is a truth worthy of the fullest emphasis that the cleansing power of the blood of Christ excelled the types and shadows as conscience is greater than ceremony and dead works more defiling than dead bodies, yet this truth is placed here to lead on to another which is vital to the argument of the epistle:

'And because of this, He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that death having taken place for a redemption of the transgressions against the first covenant, those having been called might receive the promise of aeonian inheritance. For where a covenant exists, it is necessary to bring in the death of the covenant victim, because a covenant is confirmed over dead victims, since it is never valid when the covenant victim is living' (Heb. 9:15-17).

This, it will be observed, is not a quotation, but a more literal rendering now to be considered.

To introduce the word 'testament' here, with its associated ideas of a 'will' and the death of the 'testator', is foreign both to Hebrew thought and the design of this epistle.

Diatheke occurs in Hebrews seventeen times, and in every occurrence other than those of 9:15-18 it is used of either the Old or the New Covenant. Hebrews 9:20 reads 'the blood of the *testament*'. The passage is a quotation from Exodus 24:8, where the same version reads 'the blood of the *covenant*'. The A.V. is obliged to introduce the word 'men' into Hebrews 9:17; we translate instead 'dead victims', referring to the sacrifices that accompanied the making of the covenant. In Hebrews 7:22 we read:

'By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament (*covenant*)'.

In 8:6:

'By how much also He is the mediator of a better *covenant*'.

In 12:24, in contrast with Mount Sinai and the Old Covenant, is placed Mount Sion and the New Covenant:

'And to Jesus the mediator of the new *covenant*, and to *the blood of sprinkling*, that speaketh better things than that of Abel'.

It is clear from these passages that Hebrews 9:15 speaks not of a testament, but of a covenant in the Hebrew sense of the word. In Hebrews 8:8-12 we have a long quotation from Jeremiah 31 concerning the Old and New Covenants.

In Hebrews 10:15-17 this selfsame chapter is quoted again. Hebrews 9, which comes in between these two quotations, is written expressly to show that Christ is the Mediator of that very covenant of prophecy, and the word 'testament' therefore, instead of helping forward the apostle's argument, tends to hinder it. After speaking of the sprinkling of the Tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry, he adds:

'And almost all things are by the law cleansed by blood; and apart from the shedding of blood is no forgiveness' (Heb. 9:22 not AV JP).

Having come so far we shall now be able to appreciate the general structure of the chapter, which will be found to be chiefly concerned with:

The Old and the New Covenants

Hebrews 9:1-20

A 9:1. The First Covenant.
B 9:1-10. **a** 1-7. The Tabernacle. *Worldly.*
b 8-10. Its significance. *No way in.*
Conscience untouched.
B 9:11-14 ***a*** 11 Greater and more perfect.
Tabernacle *Not of this creation.*
b 12-14. Its significance. *He entered in.*
Conscience purged.
A 9:15-20. The New Covenant.

We shall have to extend this structure to include 9:21 to 10:18, but this is a member too large and too important to be introduced here. May the Lord Who is magnified in this epistle to the Hebrews be magnified also in the daily life and spiritual conception of those who are blessed under other terms than those of this New Covenant, which forms so important a feature of the epistle to the Hebrews.

One sacrifice for sins for ever (Heb. 9:23-10:18)

The section of this epistle that lies before us is the last of the series that, step by step, sets aside the Old Covenant with its types and shadows, and leads on unto perfection, and opens with the words:

'Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus ... and having an High Priest over the house of God; let us draw near' (Heb. 10:19-22).

This reverses the order in which the subject has been dealt with.

(1) The perfect Priest (5-8).
(2) The Heavenly Sanctuary (9:1-24).
(3) The once offered Sacrifice (9:25 to 10:18).

We are now to review the teaching of the apostle on the last and perhaps most critical element of both Old and New Covenants, viz., the sacrifice. The section 9:23 to 10:18 bases its teaching upon the contrast that exists between the repeated sacrifices of the law and the once offered sacrifice of the New Covenant, the one a shadow, the other the very image.

Hebrews 9:23 to 10:18

A 9:23,24. Patterns and figures of heaven itself.
B 9:25. The offering 'often', 'annually'.
C 9:26-28. The offering ONCE.
A 10:1. A shadow.
B 10:1. The offering 'annually'.
C 10:2-18. The offering ONCE.

In what sense are we to understand that 'it was necessary' that the 'heavenly things themselves' should be purified? The difficulty arises from the fact that we are not Hebrews and have had no personal contact with the Mosaic economy. In verse 22 we read that 'almost all things are by the law purified by blood', and it will be observed in verses 19-21 that inanimate and consequently unsinning things as 'the book', 'the Tabernacle' and the 'vessels of the ministry' were purified by the sprinkling of blood. The dedication to God likewise of the heavenly realities can only be by blood, but this time by the precious blood of Christ. The Tabernacle needed purifying on account of the people (Lev. 16:16). So 'heaven itself' needed to be cleansed, not only because of those who have heavenly destiny (Eph. 1:10; Col. 1:20), but also because of those who by sin forfeited their heavenly abode (2 Pet. 2:4).

Better sacrifices

Seeing that the apostle's argument in this section finds its strength in the fact that Christ offered *one* Sacrifice for sin, as contrasted with the repeated sacrifices of the law, why does he speak of Christ's Offering in the plural, 'better sacrifices'? There is a recognized figure of speech in the Hebrew Old Testament called *Heterosis* or 'Exchange'. It has a wide range into which we will not enter here, the section which includes our difficulty being the *Heterosis* of number. A few examples will suffice:

Genesis 4:10.	'Bloods'	=	life's blood.
Genesis 19:11.	'Blindnesses'	=	intense blindness.
Psalm 51:17.	'Sacrifices'	=	the great sacrifice.

This last reference is practically identical with Hebrews 9:23. The apostle, using a recognized figure of speech, must be understood to mean 'the infinitely better sacrifice'. While we are dealing with this figure we might observe that in verse 24 'holy places' means 'the most holy place', as it is translated in 9:8.

The end of the world

In contrasting the offerings made under the law with the Offering of Christ, the writer makes much of the fact that the law offered sacrifices continually, but that Christ offered but one Sacrifice, and one only. Otherwise it would be necessary that Christ should suffer often since the foundation of the world. We know from Hebrews 9:15 that the Sacrifice of Christ was retrospective, and was 'for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant', and also from Romans 3:25 we learn that the Offering of Christ declared God's righteousness in remitting the sins of the past. The apostle makes a statement in Hebrews 9:26, 'But now once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself' (*epi sunteleia ton aionon*), 'upon an ending together of the ages'. This needs some careful study. The LXX uses the word *sunteleia* in Exodus 23:1-16 in a way which may help us. 'Three times thou shalt keep a feast unto Me in the year':

(1) The feast of unleavened bread.
(2) The feast of the harvest.
(3) The feast of the ingathering (*sunteleia*) which is in the end of the year.

Once again may we be permitted to say that those to whom the apostle wrote knew the law and much of its significance? The instructed Hebrew saw in the feasts of Israel, as set out in Leviticus 23, the plan of the ages. He saw that Christ was the true Passover and the true Firstfruits. The feast of the seventh month, the *sunteleia*, would vividly bring to mind the *sunteleia* of the ages. It has been objected that the 'consummation of the ages' has not arrived, and therefore this passage as it stands in the A.V. is not true. The same objection can be lodged again in Hebrews 1:1, for the period called 'these last days' was over 1,900 years ago.

When Christ was born, Galatians 4:4 declares that it was the *fulness of time*. We must avoid the error of introducing truth that belongs to another dispensation to confuse the teaching of earlier revelations. Paul's prison ministry is, so far as time is concerned, a parenthesis. During the Acts period the coming of the Lord was expected to take place during the lifetime of the believer then living. Peter had no difficulty when he joined together the 'blood and fire and pillars of smoke' that have not yet come with the Pentecostal gifts that are long past. Moreover, the objection to the application of the *sunteleia* of the ages to the time of the Offering of Christ robs the passage of another vital connection, viz., the Day of Atonement.

The Day of Atonement, like the feast of *sunteleia*, took place in the seventh month, after the interval that provides a typical anticipation of the parenthesis that has actually come. Yet at the time of writing the apostle finds no difficulty in speaking of Christ's Sacrifice in the terms of the Day of Atonement. The condition of things during the Acts is likened to the time when the high priest had entered into the holiest of all, during which time the people waited for his second appearing, when they were assured of forgiveness and acceptance. The fact that this second appearing did not take place, that Israel's forgiveness and acceptance is deferred, that it was all anticipated, deferment as well, in the plan of the feasts of Leviticus 23, does not alter the teaching of Hebrews chapter 9. A somewhat similar expression occurs in 1 Corinthians 10:11, 'They are written for our admonition, unto whom the *ends of the ages have reached*' (*ta tele ton aionon*).

The typical happenings to Israel in the wilderness foreshadowed the state of things that would be true at the end, and the Corinthians were living at the time of the end, for so the Scripture of their calling and dispensation declares. The Jews divided all time into three great ages: (1) Before the law; (2) Under the law; (3) After the law. The age after the law they naturally thought of as the Millennium, not knowing that the elective period, when Gentiles were being called, must also be reckoned with.

To put away sin

What are we to understand by this expression? It is usually taken to mean just what the A.V. says. The word 'to put away' in the original is *athetesis* from *atheteo*. Let us examine the usage of these words; we shall then have positive evidence, and moreover the reader will be made independent of the opinions of others.

Atheteo

Mark 6:26.	'Reject her'.
Mark 7.9.	'Full well ye reject the commandment', margin.
Luke 7:30.	'Rejected the counsel of God', margin 'frustrated'.
Luke 10:16.	'He that despiseth' (four times).
John 12:48.	'He that rejecteth Me'.
1 Corinthians 1:19.	'I will bring to nothing the under standing'.
Galatians 2:21.	'I do not frustrate the grace of God'.
Galatians 3:15.	'No man disannulleth'.
1 Thessalonians 4:8.	'He therefore that despiseth' (twice), margin' rejecteth'.
1 Timothy 5:12.	'Have cast off their first faith'.
Hebrews 10:28.	'He that despised Moses' law'.
Jude 8.	'These ... despise dominion'.

We believe that no one after pondering this list of occurrences can avoid the conclusion that *atheteo* means 'to set aside' or 'to annul' as a covenant or a commandment. The word occurs 57 times in the LXX, and in order that no phase of the meaning should be left unconsidered we have consulted every reference. We cannot spare the space to give them here, and it is not necessary. Every occurrence deals either with rebellion, treachery or the setting aside of covenant obligations. Indeed, in one of the cases the word stands alone, the word covenant being implied. The same remarks are true also of *athetema* (LXX) and *athetesis.*

Athetesis, this word actually occurring in Hebrews 9:26, occurs nowhere else but in Hebrews 7:18. There the passage is rendered:

'For there is verily a DISANNULLING of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God'.

Chapter 7 is dealing with the failure of *Israel's priesthood*; the law concerning priesthood 'perfected nothing'. Only in the virtue of a 'better hope' can any draw nigh unto God. Chapter 9:19-28 is dealing with the failure of Israel's sacrifices; the law concerning sacrifices was a shadow and could not 'perfect' those who drew nigh. Only in the virtue of a 'better sacrifice' can any draw nigh to God. The parallel is complete. Moreover both sections deal with the removal and failure of the Old Covenant:

A	7:18.	The setting aside (*athetesis*) of the commandment concerning the priests.
B	8:8.	Finding fault with the first Covenant.
A	9:26.	The setting aside (*athetesis*) of the sin offering.
B	10:9.	Taking away the first Covenant.

It may be objected that where we have inserted 'sin-offering' the A.V. says 'sin', but it is recognized by students of Scripture that the word 'sin' often stands for the 'offering for sin', and consequently may be so understood here. Hebrews 9:26 is not dealing with the forgiveness or the putting away of sin, it deals with the *abrogation of the sin-offering*, a fact absolutely necessary if Israel were to believe on the Son of God, and to leave the shadows of the Old Covenant. 'He appeared to set aside the sin-offering by the sacrifice of Himself.' The reader has only to read Hebrews 10:4-9 to find abundant confirmation of this interpretation.

The idea that has been read into this verse by the advocates of Universal Reconciliation that the offering of Christ was 'for the repudiation of sin at the conclusion of the aeons' does violence to the order of the words in the original and fails to give the true meaning of *athetesis.* There is not one single instance in either the New Testament or the LXX where the word is used in connection with 'putting away sin', whereas the consistent usage compels us to see that here, in Hebrews 9 as in Hebrews 7, the disannulling of a weak and profitless symbol is entirely in harmony with the context and aim of the epistle. Verses 27 and 28 must be read together, as they are two members of one simile indicated by the words 'as' and 'so'. Some intended likeness must be discovered, for if a contrast were intended we should get the expression used in Romans 5:15.

Now what is the intention of the writer when he says, 'and as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment'? The majority of commentators take it to refer to mankind in general, and that the offering of Christ 'once' is set over against the dying 'once' of verse 27. While this contains truth, we are not persuaded that it is the true meaning of the passage. For one thing there is hardly a deviation from the one great theme discernible in the whole of chapters 7, 8 and 9. Every effort and argument is brought to bear upon the one absorbing theme, the superiority of the Priesthood and Offering of Christ, and the typical teaching of the types and shadows of the law.

Who are 'the men'?

'It is appointed to 'the men' once to die'. The priests of the order of Aaron are definitely called '*dying men*' (Heb. 7:8), and 'men having weakness' (Heb. 7:28). So that, to say the least, we may admit the probability that in the context that speaks of the typical Tabernacle priesthood and offerings, 'the men' may refer to these same dying priests. It occurred to us at this point to consult the LXX for the usage of 'judgment', knowing that in many cases the word judgment is synonymous with salvation in the Old Testament. Turning up the word *krisis* we found the list too formidable for the time at our disposal but believing that the key to Hebrews 9:27,28 lies in the law concerning the cities of refuge, and knowing that Numbers chapter 35 contains a full statement concerning these cities, we looked to see whether *krisis* occurs in that chapter. It does:

'And they shall be unto you cities for refuge from the avenger; that the manslayer die not, until he stand before the congregation in judgment (*krisis*)' (Numb. 35:12).

This statement is followed by a law making a distinction between a wilful murder and a manslayer, and when these distinctions have been made the Scripture continues:

'Then the congregation shall judge between the slayer and the revenger of blood according to these judgments (*krimata*): and the congregation shall deliver the slayer out of the hand of the revenger of blood, and the congregation shall restore him to the city of his refuge, whither he was fled (*katapheugo*): and he shall abide in it unto the DEATH of the high priest, which was anointed with the holy oil ... after the death of the high priest the slayer shall return into the land of his possession' (Numb. 35:24-28).

This is the 'judgment' equivalent to salvation that was to be pronounced by the congregation, and hinged upon the death of the anointed high priest. It will be seen that such an interpretation harmonizes with the simile here intended:

A 27. And as.
B 27. The men die once.
C 27. Judgment.
A 28. So also.
B 28. Christ was offered once.
C 28. Salvation.

Judgment and Salvation

In Judges 2:16-19 we have the close connection established between the judge and deliverance:

'And when the LORD raised them up judges, then the LORD was with the judge, and delivered (*saved*) them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge ... when the judge was dead, they returned (turned back) ...' (Judges 2:18,19).

The judges of Israel were first of all saviours. This is seen in the judgeship of Othniel and Ehud 'The Lord raised up a *saviour* to the children of Israel' (Judg. 3:9-15). The reader will doubtless call to mind the many passages where the poor, the needy and the righteous call upon God to 'judge' them, and such passages as Psalms 1:5 where the ungodly are excluded from 'judgment'. It is this Old Testament conception of judgment and the particular exercise of it seen in Numbers chapter 35 that must be kept to the fore as we read Hebrews 9:27.

One Sacrifice for sins for ever (Heb. 9:23 to 10:18).

The Day of Atonement.

The type of the city of refuge is now dropped and the great Day of Atonement is in view. The return of the Lord 'the second time' is to be understood in the light of the action of the high priest on the Day of Atonement. There in the holiest of all the high priest appeared in the presence of God for the people (Lev. 16:23,24); then putting on his gorgeous robes he came out to bless the waiting congregation. The apostle could hardly find a grander and more impressive moment in the whole Levitical ritual with which to impress a Jew than this. He, however, refers to it but to draw attention even here to the surpassing excellence of Christ. When the high priest came out from the presence of God, he made a fresh atonement for himself and for the people (Lev. 16:24). This shows once more the failure of the type, for when Christ, the true High Priest, appears the second time it will be 'apart from a sin offering' - 'Christ ... dieth no more'.

The second appearing of the Lord, in fulfilment of the type of Leviticus 16, will also be His Second Coming, and as we have already indicated, at the time of the writing of Hebrews that Second Coming was imminent. The Lord had ascended, had entered into the presence of God, and had Israel repented and 'looked for Him', He would have returned in His robes of glory and beauty without sin unto salvation. Israel, however, failed. The Second Coming was deferred. A parenthetical dispensation must now run its course before that typical seventh month is fulfilled, and before every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him.

CHAPTER 10

PERFECTED FOR EVER.

The structural outline of Hebrews 10:1-18 is as follows:

Hebrews 10:1-18.

A 1-4. **a** The yearly offerings.
b Not able to *perfect for ever*.
c Those that draw nigh.
d Argument from cessation of offerings.
e Argument from remembrance of sins.
B 5-10. **f** The prepared *body*.
g No pleasure in sacrifices.
h I come to do Thy will.

i The first taken away.
i The second established.
h By the which will.
g Sanctified through one offering.
f The *body* of Jesus Christ.
B 11-13. **f** The priest *standing.*
g The repeated sacrifice.
h Never take away sins.
g Christ's one Sacrifice.
h For sins.
f He *sat down.*
A 14-18. ***a*** By one Offering.
b *Perfected for ever.*
c Them that are sanctified.
d Argument from remembrance of sins.
e Argument from cessation of offerings.

We have already had brought before us the solemn fact that 'the law made nothing perfect', and this statement was not allowed to remain merely as a general remark, it was particularized. The priesthood made nothing perfect; the Tabernacle services made nothing perfect, and now we are to have the final argument to show that the sacrifices of the law made nothing perfect. The teaching of this epistle is not a threefold negative, but is a glorious positive that the one Offering of Christ did make perfect in its fullest sense. Chapter 10:1-18 is devoted to this theme.

'For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things' (10:1).

The Syriac version interprets this clause, 'For the law, a shadow was in it, not the substance itself'. Just as in Colossians 2:17 'the shadow' is in antithesis to the 'body of Christ', so here the 'shadow' is in contrast with the 'very image', the reality itself. That which cast its shadow in the law is the real thing. Every sacrifice offered upon Israel's altar was a foreshadowing of the one and only acceptable Offering of Christ.

'Can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year' (10:1).

The inability of the sacrifices of the law is associated with their repetition, a feature which is enlarged upon in the next verse. The feature that is most important in this verse and which shows up prominently in the structure, viz. A b, is hidden in the A.V. word 'continually'. The English reader sees in it but an extension of the words 'year by year'. The Greek reads *eis to dienekes*, 'unto the unbroken continuance'. The phrase does not occur outside the epistle to the Hebrews, and in that epistle it occurs four times:

'Abideth a priest *continually*' (7:3).

'They offered year by year *continually*' (10:1).

'One sacrifice for sins for *ever*' (10:12).

'For by one offering He hath perfected for *ever*' (10:14).

It will be seen that the phrase is used in connection with the vital theme of the epistle. The Melchisedec Priesthood is 'for unbroken continuance', unbroken by death, as was in the case with every other priest. In connection with 10:1 a complete balance is discovered in verse 14, 'perfected unto unbroken continuance'. Verse 1, therefore, reads thus:

'For the law having a shadow of the good things about to be, not the very image of the things, can never with those annual sacrifices which they offer, *perfect unto unbroken continuance* those who draw near'.

The English word 'continually' bears two distinct meanings. (1) Frequently, repeatedly; (2) permanently. The translation given in the A.V. of 10:1 uses the word 'continually' in the sense of 'repeatedly' year by year. This rendering has only to be used in the other passages to demonstrate its unsuitability. 'Christ abideth a Priest *repeatedly*' is opposed to both sense and truth. 'One sacrifice for sins *repeatedly*' has no meaning.

We have been misled here in 10:1 by the twofold meaning of an English word, and this is not by any means an isolated case. Let us translate *eis to dienekes*, 'unto perpetuity', which phrase is less cumbersome than the more literal rendering given above.

The next verse exposes the fatal failure of every sacrifice offered under the law. *They never touched the conscience.*

This feature has been enlarged upon in 9:12-14, where the 'blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of an heifer' are seen in their typical 'purifying of the *flesh*', and the blood of Christ Who offered Himself without spot to God is seen as the great antitype purging the conscience from dead works, that those thus cleansed may serve the living God. Likewise in the same chapter the apostle, speaking of the gifts, sacrifices, meats, drinks and divers baptisms, says they were imposed until the time of reformation and could never make those who did the service 'perfect as pertaining to the conscience'. Further in 10:22 when the controversy is over, the apostle exhorts his readers to:

'Draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience'.

Had the sacrifice once perfected the offerer as pertaining to the conscience, no further offering would have been necessary or tolerated. The law was a shadow, it purified the flesh, and its repeated offerings testify to its insufficiency. Further, the very repetition is a continual remembrance of sin, whereas when the New Covenant is in force God says, 'Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more'.

The final setting aside of the sacrifices of the law is made in verse 4:

'For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins'.

The argument now rests upon the very nature of things. Nothing more can be said. Can a shadow save us? Will a ceremonial, an external cleansing satisfy us? Can the blood of an animal make reconciliation for a man? The answer is *No*, and that answer Scripture has already anticipated in the fortieth Psalm.

The prepared body

In brushing aside the last remaining hope of Israel under the law, and in shutting down any future argument by the word 'impossible', the apostle was but reaching forward to the glorious fact that 'what the law could not do, God did by sending His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh' (Rom. 8:3). The quotation from Psalm 40 is prefaced by the words, 'Wherefore when He cometh into the world'. This can only refer to His first coming in the flesh. He is yet to be brought into the world again, when all the angels of God shall worship Him (Heb. 1:6). We are permitted (let us remember what holy ground is here) to learn the words that the Son of God breathed when the moment came for His birth at Bethlehem. His name was to be called Jesus, for He was coming into the flesh to save His people from their sins by the sacrifice of Himself:

'Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldst not, but a body hast Thou prepared Me' (Heb. 10:5).

When we turn to the Psalm quoted we read:

'Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire; mine ears hast Thou opened' (Psa. 40:6).

It is a fact unquestioned that Psalm 40 gives a translation of the Hebrew, yet the LXX which purports to translate the Hebrew reads as the Greek New Testament it is too wide a subject to discuss here as to how the LXX came by its present rendering; what we may do is to realize that the twofold statement of Psalm 40 and Hebrews 10 present two versions of one truth. Just as Matthew and Luke, both recording one utterance of the Lord, use slightly different words to express their phase of the utterance, yet without fully exhausting it, so we must take both Old Testament and New Testament records as supplying a full quotation of the utterance of the Word immediately before He became flesh and tabernacled among us. The Hebrew word 'opened' is *karah* and is usually translated 'dig', as a grave, a pit, or a well. The feminine form of the noun, however, *mekurah*, is translated 'birth' in Ezekiel 16:3, and 'nativity' in Ezekiel 21:30. Compare the two references following:

'Thy birth (margin *cutting out or habitation*) and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan; thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother an Hittite' (Ezek. 16:3).

'The place where thou wast created, in the land of *thy nativity*' (Ezek. 21:30).

This use of the word to *dig* for birth or nativity is parallel with the words of Isaiah 51:1,2:

'Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye *are digged*. Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah *that bare you*'.

This strange (to us) use of the word makes the meaning of Psalm 40 clearer. 'The ear' being 'digged' is by an easy transition 'the body' that was 'prepared'. The ear standing as it does for obedience, as in Isaiah 50:5,6:

'The Lord GOD hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spiting'.

Some expositors see in this expression 'mine ears hast thou opened' a reference to Exodus 21:6, where the willing servant is taken and his ear bored with an awl as a sign of obedience 'for ever', an act largely the result of love for wife and children who would otherwise be left behind had the man gone free. The word 'bore' is entirely different from the word 'dig' or 'open', nevertheless the type is too beautiful to ignore, and aptly sets forth that One Who voluntarily laid aside His glory, 'and took upon Him the form of a slave ... and became obedient unto death' (Phil. 2:7,8). This body prepared for the Lord set aside all sacrifice and offering, gathering into one Offering the varied phases and aspects of sacrifice and obedience, as it is written in the volume of the book:

'Lo, I come to do Thy Will, O God'.

The four kinds of sacrifices that were ordained by the law, and which were shadows of the one Offering of Christ, are divided into two groups - burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin. The former are a sweet savour to God, the latter for the sins of His people. Both aspects are combined in the one sacrifice of Christ.

By the which will

It is important when seeking the Scriptural meaning of sacrifice that we bear in mind the teaching of this passage. 'Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God' is equivalent to 'Lo, I come to do all that burnt offering and sacrifice for sins typified'. By so doing the first Covenant was taken away and the second established (10:9):

'For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second' (8:7).

The first Covenant was faulty because it was a shadow, it was weak because of the flesh. It was impossible because its sacrifices were of bulls and goats; it was a failure because it did not touch the conscience. All this has found rectification in Christ. His blood has ratified the New Covenant, His Offering touches the conscience and makes a way into the true holiest of all:

'By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all' (Heb. 10:10).

lt will help us if we carefully analyse the statements of this verse:

(1) What is the will of God intended by - 'The which will?'
(2) What is the meaning of the consequence? - 'We are sanctified'.
(3) What means were used to accomplish this will? - 'The offering of the body'.
(4) What constitutes its eternal efficacy? - 'Once for all'.

The strange expression 'by the *which* will' must mean the 'done will' accomplished by Christ. This will done by Christ cannot be confined to the earthly life and perfect obedience of those sinless years, for the very accomplishment of that will is found in 'the offering of the body of Jesus Christ' and that as a sacrifice which involved:

(1) Suffering (Heb. 9:26; 13:12).
(2) Crucifixion (Heb. 6:6; 12:2).
(3) Shedding of blood (Heb. 9:14; 10:19).
(4) Death (Heb. 2:9; 9:15).
(5) An Altar (Heb. 13:10).
(6) A Priest (Heb. 8:1; 9:11).

(7) A Sanctuary (Heb. 9:24; 10:19).

It is utterly impossible to avoid the sacrificial character of the work of Christ when thinking of His accomplishment of the Divine will. *That* was the will of God in its essence. The purpose of this will is 'sanctification'. Sanctification involves a complete heart dedication to God and His service, set forth typically by the sprinkling of the blood of the Covenant, the people, and the vessels of ministry (Heb. 9:18-22). Sanctification involves cleansing from both external and internal defilement, set forth typically in the 'divers washings' 'the ashes of the heifer sprinkling the unclean' (Heb. 9:10,13). Sanctification involves access, and sonship (Heb. 10:22; 2:11-13). Sanctification is the will of God for all His children irrespective of the differences of dispensations under which they have been called.

'Will of God'

This is seen in Ephesians 1:4:

'According as He hath chosen us ... that we should be holy and without blame'.

And it is accomplished, as in Hebrews 10, by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ, for in Ephesians 5:26,27 and Colossians 1:22 we read:

'That He might sanctify ... that it should be holy and without blemish'.

'In the body of His flesh (nothing could be more definite) through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreproveable (irreproachable) in His sight'.

The eternal efficacy of the Offering of Christ is expressed in the fact that it was offered 'once for all'. Over and over again, first from this angle, then from that, the apostle brings to view the repeated offerings of the law and contrasts them with the once offered Sacrifice of Christ. Where there is remission of sin no more offering is necessary. It may be of service to remark that the words 'once for all' mean 'once for all time' and have no reference to the number for whom the sacrifice was made.

We now come to the close of the long argument that has gathered round the Lord as High Priest and Sacrifice supreme. By way of recapitulation the apostle reminds us that the typical priest 'standeth daily offering oftentimes the same sacrifices', whereas Christ 'sat down on the right hand of God'. The sacrifices repeatedly offered were such that they:

'Can never take away sins' (10:11).

'But this Man, after He had offered one Sacrifice for sins for ever (unto perpetuity)' (10:12).

His sacrifice is finished, He now awaits the end, 'Expecting till His enemies be made His footstool'. Then emerges the last word of the argument, embodying in itself the essence of chapters 7 to 9:

'For by one offering He hath perfected for ever (unto perpetuity) them that are sanctified' (10:14).

This 'will' being in absolute contrast with the Old Covenant (*see* 10:1-3 and structure), is in entire conformity with the New Covenant as set forth in verses 15-18.

The effect of sanctification is seen in the laws written in the heart and the mind. The fulness of the sanctification is seen in the fact that 'their sins and iniquities will I remember no more'. The completeness, the 'perfecting unto perpetuity' of the sanctified is expressed in the words, 'there is no more offering for sins'.

'The comers' have been made perfect.

The conscience has been purged.

There is no more remembrance.

There is no need for annual or daily repetition (10:1,2).

We now stand at the opening of a new, a practical, section which urges the believer to draw near, to endure, to live by faith, to run with patience.

Perdition, or the saving of the soul (Heb. 10:19-39)

Doctrine has held sway over the reader of this epistle for a long period, but however involved the argument may be, and however multiplied the proofs, it must certainly somewhere before the close, give place to practical teaching and exhortation. To that we have arrived, and it is introduced by the words of verses 19-22, 'Having therefore ... Let us'. The exhortation 'let us' is valueless without the 'having therefore', but so also is the 'having' without the practical issue. What does the apostle say these believers have?

Boldness to enter into the holiest. Under the law this was restricted to the high priest, and to the day of atonement. 'The high priest *alone once*' (9:7). 'With the blood of others' (9:25). The case is now different. Boldness to enter is the privilege of all believers by the blood of Jesus.

By a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us. The legal way was old. 'Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away' (8:13). This way is new. *Prosphatos* means primarily 'newly slain'; the legal way was dead. 'Priests ... were not suffered to continue by reason of death' (7:23). The entrance is 'by the blood of Jesus' (10:19) and 'His flesh' (10:20). The New Covenant demands a new way.

The Lord's flesh is likened to the veil. Of all the many and wonderful suggestions that have been made by commentators as to the meaning here of the veil, none seem worth a second thought that have no place for that historic fact that 'the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom' (Matt. 27:51) when the Lord Jesus died. The second veil barred the entrance to the holiest of all, 'the Holy Ghost thus signifying that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest'. The newly-slain and living way means a rent veil.

And having an High Priest over the house of God. As chapter 8 puts it, New Covenant believers have a seated Priest in a heavenly sanctuary. So far the summary of the doctrine, what they 'have'. Now follows the summary of the practice 'let us'.

Let us draw near with a true heart. To draw near expresses the full privilege of those who are sanctified. It is a word used nowhere else in the epistles of Paul except 1 Timothy 6:3 where 'consent' translates the word and shows an entirely different usage. So special a word we would expect to be stamped with the hallmark 'seven', for that is the number of its occurrences in Hebrews.

The true heart means the heart of the New Covenant realities in contrast with the old Covenant shadows (8:10). So we read of the 'true' Tabernacle (8:2), and of the antitypes of the 'true' (9:24).

In full assurance of faith. Hebrews 6:11 speaks of a full assurance of hope, and both hope and faith find anchor 'within the veil' (Heb. 6:19; 10:20).

To draw near (*proserchomai*)

A	4:14-16.	Having a great High Priest, let us hold fast our profession and *draw near* boldly.
	B 7:25.	Saved unto all perfection those who *draw near.*
	10:1.	Could not perfect unto perpetuity those who *draw near*
A	10:19-23.	Having an High Priest, let us *draw near* with boldness, and let us hold fast our profession.
	B 11:6.	Those who *draw near* to God must believe that He is.
	12:18	*Sinai.* Blackness, Darkness.
	12:22	Zion. Spirit of perfected righteous ones.

Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. The sprinkling here refers to the 'ashes of the heifer sprinkling the unclean', which set forth in type that cleansing of the conscience from dead works, which was only possible through the blood of Christ (9:13,14). The washing of the bodies with pure water refers to the spiritual reality set forth in the typical 'divers washings' of the law (9:10).

Let us ... let us ... let us. Three times over comes the beseeching command, let us draw near, let us hold fast, let us consider one another. *The first is God-ward, the second is personal, the third is for others.*

Let us hold fast the profession of our hope without wavering. The word here (*elpis*) is hope, not faith, and refers to 'that better hope whereby we draw near to God' (7:19). This must be held at all costs 'without wavering'. This firm hold of the hope and its profession is in view in Hebrews 3:6 and 14, and to this all the exhortations to endure are directed. Without wavering (*aklimes*) may be translated 'without bending'. It is the exact opposite of *klino* 'turned to flight' (Heb. 11:34).

For He is faithful that promised. Much is made of the promises in this epistle, indeed *epaggelia* occurs therein fourteen times. Much is made too of the faithfulness of the Promiser, especially in Hebrews 6:13-19.

Let us consider one another. There is a false piety that believes that God is well pleased with a monastic isolation, that God only wrote four commandments and not ten, and that has no room for the love of neighbour, as a corollary to the love of God. This is a travesty of truth. 'He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God Whom he hath not seen?' (1 John 4:20). The special 'provoking' here is to 'love and to good works'. The word 'good' here is not *agathos*, but *kalos* as in Hebrews 5:14; 6:5.

Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is. The usual interpretation of this passage associates it with attendance at a Christian place of worship.

The word 'assembling' (*episunagoge*), and its cognate (*episunago*), are never used of an 'assembling' in the sense of attending service at church. *Epislmago* is used in Matthew 23:37 and its parallel passage for the Lord's desire to gather the children of Jerusalem to Himself as a hen does her chickens. It is used in Matthew 24:31 and its parallel passage of the gathering together of the elect by the angels. It is used in Mark 1:33 and Luke 12:1, for the crowd who gathered for healing or interest. The only other place where *episunagoge* occurs is 2 Thessalonians 2:1, 'The coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our *gathering together* unto Him'. The apostle by the use of the word 'forsaking' evidently glances back to such passages as 2 Chronicles 24:18, where the 'forsaking' of the house of the Lord meant *apostasy*, and was visited with wrath, and also to Nehemiah 10:39 and 13:11, where adherence to the house of God indicated loyalty. The 'gathering together of ourselves' has value only as it foreshadows the hope of 'our gathering together unto Him'. At the present time faithfulness to truth and to the blessed hope sometimes cuts us off from Christian assemblies, and this passage must never be used to justify compromise. The present dispensation knows no 'place of worship' except where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God, for God dwelleth not in temples made with hands. Churches and chapels are conveniences, not essentials.

Hope, the anchor of the soul

The added words, 'so much the more, as ye see the day approaching', confirms the thought that the hope and its gathering together is all the while in view.

A further confirmation of this higher and fuller meaning is found in the argument that immediately follows. The forsaking of the assembly is called a 'wilful sin after the reception of the truth', and for such 'there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins'. Under the law sins were placed under two heads:

(1) Sins of omission, ignorance, and inadvertence (Lev. 4:2, etc.).
(2) Sins of presumption, high hand, malice aforethought (Num. 15:30,31).

Apostasy from the profession of the hope had the character of presumptuous sin, for which the law made no provision. That David (as in Psa. 51), for example, could be forgiven, shows that a fuller Sacrifice is found under the gospel than under the law, but the apostle does not bring this forward, neither does he mitigate the severity of the judgment that is pronounced against such. 'Fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries', 'died without mercy', 'of how much sorer punishment', 'vengeance is Mine', 'it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God', all stress the extreme severity of the penalty. 'Trodden under foot the Son of God', 'counting the blood of the Covenant unholy', 'doing despite to the Spirit of grace', these terms reveal the enormity of the sin of turning back to Judaism. In this light, Hebrews 6:1-8 is to be read, to which the word 'illuminated' of 10:32 evidently refers. These are the only occurrences of *photizo* in Hebrews.

Things that accompany salvation

Just as the apostle in Hebrews 6, after speaking in severe terms of apostates, turns to the Hebrew believers saying, 'But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak' (6:9), so here in Hebrews 10:32 he continues:

'But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions'.

There is also blessed condescension to the frail and the weaker faith. Not only does he call to remembrance the conspicuous hero of the fight, but the more reticent and less observed partner in the fight. Some were made a 'gazing stock'. Not so much is said of violence, or of actual suffering, but this reference shows that the Lord enters into that shrinking which most of us have of being pilloried for our faith. Blessed truth, He knows, and weighs these things in the balance of the Sanctuary. They might have gone free from observation. They might have remained quietly shielded, but they are remembered in that they became 'companions' of them that were so used. Instead of the reading, 'Ye had compassion of me in my bonds' the texts read, 'of those in bonds'. This epistle to the Hebrews does not teach that the writer (Paul as we believe) was a prisoner at the time of writing. They also took with joy the spoiling of their possessions, probably by 'extortion' as the words are rendered in Matthew 23:25.

'Knowing that you have for yourselves a better and enduring possession' (Heb. 10:34 not AV JP).

The text omits the words 'in' and 'in heaven'. Upon this series of admonitions the apostle rests his exhortation:

'Cast not away therefore your confidence (boldness, 10:19), which hath great recompence of reward' (10:35).

What they did need was patience. Patience is essential for perfecting. The epistle of James is written around that thought. The first chapter opens with it (verses 3, 4 and 12), and the fifth chapter closes with it, 'Ye have heard of the *patience* of Job, and have seen the *end* of the Lord' (James 5:11). 'The day' was approaching. That day was the coming of the Lord, 'for *yet a little*, and He that shall come will come, *and will not tarry*' (Heb. 10:37). This coming was a possibility at this time, conditional on Israel's repentance (Acts 3:19-26).

The quotation from Habakkuk.

This introduces the quotation from Habakkuk which figures so prominently in the epistles to the Romans and Galatians. The words 'The just shall live by faith' are divisible under three heads and the apostle has taken this course with the verse.

'*The just* by faith shall live' (Rom. 1:17). The argument of Romans 1 is concerning the provision of righteousness. 'The just *by faith* shall live' (Gal. 3:11). The argument of Galatians 3 revolves around works of law, and faith. 'The just by faith *shall liv*' (Heb. 10: 38). The argument of Hebrews chapters 10 and 11 is entirely devoted to '*living* by faith'. Here we have a splendid example of exhortation, where doctrine and practice are both given their place. Referring once again to Hebrews 6:12 we read of 'faith and patience' inheriting the promises. Out of the thirty-two occurrences of *pistis* ('faith') in Hebrews, 29 are found in this practical section 10:19-13:25.

The essence of the test of Habakkuk (2:3,4) seems to be found in the words 'though it tarry, wait!' The delay, the silence of God (Hab. 1:1-4) is solved by the assurance that 'the vision is yet for an *appointed time*'. The waiting does not mean that God is indifferent. All the details of His purpose have an appointed time. This fact of itself should enable us to wait. Further, 'at the end it shall speak and not lie'. When the time does come, nothing can prevent God from speaking, acting, delivering, or doing whatever is particularly required. Yet further, the feeling of delay is merely human. 'Though it tarry ... it will surely come, it will not tarry' It is here that the prophet writes the words which are repeated and interpreted with such fulness by the apostle Paul, 'the just shall live by his faith'.

The Hebrew believers had suffered the spoiling of their goods, and a reference to Habakkuk 3:17, with its sixfold failure of fig, vine, olive, field, fold and stall, places them in the goodly fellowship of the prophets. The better and enduring possessions that they had are found in Habakkuk 3:19, 'The Lord God is my strength, and He will make my feet like hinds' feet, and He will make me to walk upon mine high places'. Living by faith is placed in contrast with 'drawing back unto perdition', and this drawing back is in its turn contrasted with 'believing unto the acquiring (not "saving") of the soul'.

Perfection or Perdition

We are here confronted with a group of problems which will repay all the time devoted to their solution. The two words that provide the key to the difficulty are *perdition* and *saving*. What is perdition? Does this passage teach that a believer who does not hold fast the profession of his hope can draw back and finally be cast into *hell*? However we may object to the phrasing, that, bluntly, is the difficulty before us. In searching for an answer which would satisfy the demands of all Scripture, we discovered that there are three sets of passages in which *perdition* is used as the alternative to *perfection*, and this relationship of the words is of itself illuminating. The first Scripture is this epistle to the Hebrews. It hardly needs demonstrating that the epistle is summed up in the words of chapter 6:1, 'Let us go on unto perfection', and that 10:39 provides the alternative, 'draw back to perdition'. It may be objected that as this emphasizes the very verse we seek to understand, our use of it is biased and unfair. We therefore turn to the second passage (Phil. 3), where 'Let us go on unto perfection' is expressed by the words, 'Not as though I were already perfect, but I follow after' (Phil. 3:12).

'As many as would be perfect' (Phil. 3:15) are exhorted *positively* to follow the example of Paul; and *negatively* to avoid the example of those whose end is *perdition*. Now it does not seem possible that a church that had reached such a height of spiritual experience as that attained by the Philippians should need to be solemnly warned not to follow the example of the ungodly. Those who were more likely to cause a slip and possibly a forfeiture were those believers who were following the policy expressed in the words, 'making the best of both worlds'. These caused the apostle to weep as he spoke of their walk, and summarized it as the walk of those who were:

'The enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is *perdition* (A.V. destruction), whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, *who mind earthly things*' (Phil. 3:18,19).

The last statement proves that those enemies are not the unsaved, for how can an unsaved man mind anything else but earthly things? To believers Paul can write, 'Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth' (Col. 3:2). Such believers as those Philippians referred to in 3:18,19 constitute themselves the enemies of the *cross* of Christ, for that cross speaks of separation from the things of the flesh and the world.

Keeping this passage in mind we look at the third, viz. The Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5 to 7). The exhortation to endure, to suffer with the reward of the earthly kingdom in view, has only to be mentioned to be accepted as the main theme of this sermon. Its goal is expressed in Matthew 5:48, 'Be ye therefore *perfect*, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect'. The *word perdition* comes later, in Matthew 7:13, 'Broad is the way, that leadeth to *perdition* (A.V. destruction)'. The passage immediately goes on to say, 'by their fruits ye shall know them' (verse 20).

Here we have three occasions where these words occurs as the two poles of their respective contexts. Still the question remains, What is intended by the word *perdition*? Perdition, as some of its contexts indicate, can mean utter destruction, as of the Man of Sin, but if we could only find a passage where the word is used without any doctrinal or theological meaning we could then understand how such a word could be used of so vastly different subjects. In the providence of God such a passage exists, and moreover is used by Matthew who has provided one of the sets already:

'There came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment ... To what purpose is this WASTE (perdition)?' (Matt. 26:7,8).

Before proceeding, let us be sure we understand the meaning of the alternative, 'perfection'. *Teleios* is cognate with *telos*, and *telos* means the end, the goal. To go on unto perfection is to reach one's goal. That this is innate in the word, two passages will show. In Philippians 3:12 Paul explains what he means by being perfect, by adding, 'That I may apprehend that for which I am also apprehended of Christ Jesus', and in Galatians 3:3 he places 'perfected' in antithesis to 'begin': 'Having *begun* in the spirit, are ye now *made perfect* (ended, as it were, finished) by the flesh?' Perdition set over against perfectness then means to end in *waste* instead of in triumph. Therein lies the tragedy of drawing back. The foundation is laid, the builder will be saved, but he may be saved yet 'so as by fire'. He may not himself be *lost*, but he may 'suffer loss', and see his life's work turn to smoke (1 Cor. 3). This was the dreadful possibility before the Hebrews.

Saving (purchasing) the soul

Peripoiesis translated 'saving' occurs but five times in the New Testament, viz.:

'The redemption of the *purchased possession*' (Eph. 1:14).

'To *obtain* salvation' (1 Thess. 5:9).

'To the *obtaining* of the glory' (2 Thess. 2:14).

'The *saving* of the soul' (Heb. 10:39).

'*A peculiar* people' (1 Pet. 2:9).

Peripoieomai is translated 'purchased' in Acts 20:28, and 'purchase' in 1 Timothy 3:13.

Not only must we have the true conception of this word 'saving', but we must also be sure that we have no traditional warp regarding the expression saving the 'soul'. It is used in evangelical preaching and literature as though it means the salvation of the sinner, but the striking thing is that Paul has no use for the expression. Peter uses the words 'the salvation (*soterian*, not *peripoiesis*) of your souls', but not in the sense usually employed, for he speaks of it as the *end* of their faith and of 'salvation ready to be revealed in the *last time* ... at the *revelation of Jesus Christ*' (1 Pet. 1:5-9). So far as the present is concerned, believers are exhorted rather to *lose their souls* than to save them; which, however, is not a popular expression today. The moment we see this we are on the track of the truth of Hebrews 10, and Matthew 16 supplies the key:

'If any man will come after Me, let him *deny* himself, and take up his *cross*, and follow Me. For whosoever will *save his life* (*soul*) shall *lose it*: and whosoever will *lose his soul* for My sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall *gain* the whole world, and *lose his own soul*? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and *then* He shall *reward* every man according to his works' (Matt. 16:24-27). (Soul and life translate the one Greek word *psuche*).

The man who denies himself, and takes up his cross, *loses his soul* in this life. If he turns back to the good things that he has relinquished, making his belly his god, and finding his glory in his shame, *he saves his soul* in this life, but becomes the enemy of the cross, for he has refused to bear it. The one who is willing to lose his soul for Christ's sake will find it when the Lord gives *reward* at His Coming. All this is intended by the words of Hebrews 10:39. Here, as in Hebrews 6, hope is the anchor of the soul, is connected with the obtaining of the promises, enters within the veil, and belongs to those once 'enlightened'. Hebrews 11 which immediately follows contains a list of Old Testament saints who *lost their souls* for Christ's sake, to find them in the better resurrection.

We trust that the close parallel that is observable between Matthew, Philippians and Hebrews will not be without salutary effect upon us all. Let us go on unto perfection; let us remember the awful *waste* of precious opportunities that will be ours if we 'neglect so great salvation', if we neglect to 'work out our own salvation'. The body of our humiliation is soon to be fashioned like unto the body of His glory. A little while and the time will come, 'the appointed time' for which we wait. Let us then take heart. We have need of patience. Let patience have her *perfect* work, that we may be perfect and entire, *lacking nothing*.

Let us draw near ... not draw back (Heb. 10:19-39)

We have seen that the whole teaching and exhortation of the epistle to the Hebrews may be summed up under two phrases:

(1) Let us go on unto perfection, or

(2) Draw back unto perdition.

The examples of those that draw back to perdition are those whose carcases fell in the wilderness (Heb. 3), those who are 'dull of hearing' and never advance from being 'babes' (Heb. 5), or who like Esau despise their birthright (Heb. 12), or prefer Sinai to Sion (Heb. 12). Here we find such alternatives as:

SHADOW	and	VERY IMAGE
FIGURE	and	TRUE
WORLDLY SANCTUARY	and	HEAVENLY HOLLIEST OF ALL
OLD COVENANT	and	NEW COVENANT
FLESH CLEANSED	and	CONSCIENCE CLEANSED
MOUNT SINAI	and	MOUNT SION
VANISHING	and	REMAINING,

all set forth, with earnest instruction and entreaty, to urge along the upward path to perfection, and to shun apostasy and perdition. Hebrews 10:19-39, the passage before us, takes up this double exhortation. Doctrine has reached its zenith at verse 18, and from verse 19 to the end of the epistle it is largely a matter of exhortation. The double theme sets the bounds of the section before us.

A 22. Let us *draw near*
In full assurance of faith.
A 38,39. We are not of them who *draw back* but
Believe to the saving of the soul.

Having ... let us

No exhortation in Scripture stands alone. Beneath the feet of practice stands privilege. The fruit of good works derives its nourishment from the root of grace. If the apostle says, 'Let us', he will also say, 'Having therefore'.

	Let us draw near
'Having therefore boldness ... High Priest'	Let us hold fast
	Let us consider one another (10:19-24).
'Seeing we are encompassed'	Let us lay aside
	Let us run with patience (12:1,2).
'Wherefore we receiving a kingdom'	Let us have grace
	Let brotherly love continue (12:28 to 13:1).
'Wherefore Jesus suffered without the gate'	Let us go forth therefore
	Unto Him without the camp (13:12,13).

Here are four groups of teaching which space out the remainder of the epistle, and each group manifests the same feature. The strongest preventative against 'drawing back' is evidently to 'draw near', and we have every reason to draw near seeing that we 'have therefore' boldness of access. and a great High Priest.

The new and living way

The old typical way into the holiest is not the way that one must pass who desires to go on unto perfection.

'The way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service PERFECT, as pertaining to the conscience' (Heb. 9:8,9).

In place of the old and typical way stands the new and living way, 'newly slain', as the word *prosphatos* means etymologically, although we cannot discover any example of its usage that will warrant the doctrine that appears to lie in this suggestive word. The second element evidently became superfluous in New Testament times. This new and living way has been consecrated, or dedicated, for us. Hebrews 9:18, using the word, reads, 'Neither was the first covenant dedicated without blood'. Consecration or dedication here includes the idea of something 'new' or as we might say 'initiation'. Consecration in Hebrews 7:28 has the entirely opposite thought of attaining an 'end'.

Teleioo	Heb. 7:28	To perfect, bring to full *end.*
Egkainizo	Heb. 10:20	To initiate, bring in *new.*

Here is the introduction of something new in its consecration, new in its constitution, a new way, newly dedicated.

Reconciliation by Incarnation?

The way into the holiest of all is 'through the veil, that is to say His flesh'. The connection between the Incarnation and reconciliation is a theme that attracts many believers and teachers. The fact that Christ became man, and, as they express it, brought His Godhead down to our humanity that He might lift our humanity up to God, is not the Scriptural basis for reconciliation. Hebrews 2:14 most surely reveals the absolute necessity for the Lord to partake of flesh and blood, but it as surely declares the purpose to be:

'That THROUGH DEATH He might destroy ... and deliver' (Heb. 2:14,15).

Or again, in Hebrews 10, if we read in verse 5 of a 'body prepared', we read in verse 10 of that body 'offered'. Not by Incarnation but by His one Sacrifice are we saved and sanctified. Calvary and not Bethlehem is the place of redemption, and though the crib at Bethlehem was necessarily the first step, it is the cross of Calvary that is the consummation. There could be no access into the holiest of all until 'the veil, that is to say His flesh' was rent in twain from top to bottom (Matt. 27:50,51).

The three-fold exhortation

Let us *draw near*. Let us *hold fast*. Let us *consider*. The true heart with which we are exhorted to draw near is consonant with the fact that Christ is the minister of the *true* Tabernacle (Heb. 8:2; 9:24). Instead of external washings, this heart is sprinkled from an evil *conscience*. The bodies washed with pure water seems to be a reference to the washing of the high priest and the Levites (Lev. 16:4; Num. 8:7), which type is fulfilled in the heart sprinkled from an evil conscience.

Side by side with this three-fold exhortation is seen the abiding three 'Faith, hope and love' (Heb. 10:22-24). As we see these graces in their context we realize that to the Hebrews, as to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 13), and to the Thessalonians (1 Thess. 1:3). 'these three' are the true antidote to apostasy.

Drawing back into perdition

'There is an evident parallel between Hebrews chapters 2 to 4 and Hebrews 10:19 to 12:3. In both passages we see the evil heart of unbelief that departs from the living God. In both the true antidote is 'Let us draw near'. In both there is the holding fast of the 'confession'. In chapter 3 we have stressed those who failed to enter in because of unbelief. In chapter 11 we have those who 'through faith' obtained promises and triumphed. The two-fold title of Christ, 'The apostle and High Priest of our profession' (Heb. 3:1) is parallel with the two-fold title of Hebrews 12:2, 'The Captain and Perfecter of faith'. The key to the character of the apostasy that is in view is found in Hebrews 10:30:

'Vengeance belongeth unto Me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge His people'.

These words are a quotation from Deuteronomy 32, the great prophetic forecast of Israel's history given by Moses just before his end. This song of forty-three verses traverses the whole of prophetic times. It reveals the failure of Israel and their setting aside, the period while they are *Lo-ammi*, 'not My people', and provoked to

jealousy, and the mercy of the Lord that gathers them back again with rejoicing. Dr. Ginsburg reads Deuteronomy 32:34,35 as follows:

'Is not this laid up in store with Me, Sealed up in My treasuries? *For the day* of vengeance and recompense, For the time when their foot shall slip',

and this is evidently 'the day approaching' of Hebrews 10:25. The apostasy foretold by Moses is manifestly at hand in Hebrews 10, and explains Hebrews 6 as well.

Ye have need of patience

While Israel as a nation were fast slipping away, the apostle turns with renewed earnestness to the tried and tested remnant with words of encouragement and exhortation. He bids them to call to remembrance the former days, in which, after they were illuminated, they endured a great fight of afflictions. Among the elements of endurance that he enumerates are:

Being made a gazing stock.

Being a fellow-partaker of those so used.

There is something very gracious in this recognition. To be a 'gazing stock', a 'spectacle', may not seem half so heroic as some other forms of martyrdom, yet the Lord knows the intensity of mental suffering that some natures may endure. Then, further, the Lord takes note of those who simply stand by and share the sufferings of others. The suffering of 'reproaches' associated them with Christ Himself (Heb. 13:13), and the 'enduring possession' with the 'enduring city' (13:14). Early Christians were called by their enemies, atheists, their places of assembly were misrepresented as being convened for most immoral purposes, all of which misrepresentations would constitute a very real suffering of reproach for Christ.

The words 'goods' and 'substance' should be rendered by the same word, and perhaps 'possession' is the most suitable. The words in the original being *huparchonta* and *huparxin.*

'And submitted to the seizure of your possessions with joy knowing in yourselves that you have in heaven, a better and an enduring possession' (Heb. 10:34 not AV JP).

The case of Moses in Hebrews 11:24-26 supplies a very full example of the meaning of the apostle here. He esteemed this 'reproach' as greater than all the treasures of Egypt. He too looked unto the recompense of the reward. So he urges these Hebrew saints:

'Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise' (Heb. 10:35,36).

A chapter could well be devoted to the words, 'Ye have need of patience' It is the 'patience of hope', the patience that James speaks of when he says:

'My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her PERFECT work' (James 1:2-4).

It is evident that the words, 'ye might receive the promise', indicate a long wait and a patient endurance, by the conclusion of the matter in Hebrews 11:39;

'And these all, having obtained (received ? JP) a good report through faith, received NOT the promise'.

What does the apostle bring forward to encourage these tried and tested believers?

The Early Coming of the Lord

The Coming of the Lord which dominates the Acts period is here brought forward as the crowning argument in the writer's testimony:

'For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul' (Heb. 10:37-39).

CHAPTER 11

'THE SUBSTANCE OF THINGS HOPED FOR' (Heb. 11:1).

Chapter 10, as we have seen, ends on the exhortation to live by faith. The words 'we are not of them who draw back unto *perdition*' imply the alternative, 'we are of them who go on unto *perfection*'.

For those who have a desire to 'go on unto perfection', here in Christ is the supreme Example. Even as we say the words, however, we are conscious of a great gulf between the Lord and ourselves. It is just here that Hebrews 11 so wonderfully fits in and comes to our aid. In this chapter, living by faith is subdivided for us, and we see one phase in one example, and another phase in another, and are gently led on to contemplate the *Perfecter* Himself in Whom all faith was resident in its fulness.

Light from the works of God

It will be profitable for us to turn aside for a moment from the written Word that we may obtain help from an analogy in the works of God. The light of the sun untinted by the atmosphere through which it comes is pure white. If falling rain or water-mist intercepts the rays of sunlight, we have the phenomenon called the rainbow. We have all seen with pleasure in our childhood the colours of the rainbow caused by a decanter of water standing on a white table-cloth, or by the prism-shaped pendant ornaments that our grandparents had upon the mantle-shelf. These are but demonstrations of the fact that pure white light is made up of the three primary colours, red, yellow, and blue, and these mingling form the secondaries, orange, green, and violet. For reasons the explanation of which lies outside the scope of this book, the actual spectrum or rainbow is found to contain bands of seven colours, always in the following order: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet.

All colour in nature is dependent upon the fact that sunlight contains in itself the whole range of colour that exists. The red rose is called red because the petals have the power of absorbing the blue and the yellow rays of light, and throwing back to our eye the red. A leaf is green because it lays hold upon the red rays and throws back the blue and the yellow. A white chalk cliff throws back all the rays, while a black felt hat retains all the rays. Hence, a white dress is cooler than a black one as the light and heat rays are in measure treated alike. Now it is not our intention to attempt to give a discourse upon the spectrum, wonderful though that may be, but to use the spectrum as an illustration of the place of Hebrews 11.

The pure white light of the sun, as representing perfect light, composed of the perfect number of colours, will represent Christ, as set forth in Hebrews 12:2. Hebrews 11 will then represent the prism of glass which has the power of splitting up the perfect light of the sun, and so will split up the perfect faith of Christ, and focus a ray of each colour, as it were, upon one or more examples, enabling us to see the better the sevenfold splendour of the perfection of faith in Christ, after having seen the seven aspects of it separately in the lives of others.

Before we go further we must make certain that there are these sets of 'sevens', and so taking nothing for granted we begin to count, (1) Abel, (2) Enoch, (3) Noah, (4) Abraham, (5) Isaac, (6) Jacob, and (7) Sarah. Here the record comes to an end for a time, while verses 12-16 speak of the pilgrim character of faith. lt will be observed that a woman ends the series. We commence counting again in verse 17, (1) Abraham, (2) Isaac, (3) Jacob, (4) Joseph, (5) Moses, (6) Israel, and (7) Rahab. We have another set of seven, again ending with a woman. In verse 32 the apostle says that time would fail to tell of all that could be brought forward, but nevertheless the apparently haphazard list that is assembled in this verse still presents the spectrum, (1) Gideon, (2) Barak, (3) Samson, (4) Jephthae, (5) David, (6) Samuel, and (7) the prophets.

The seven-fold division of Hebrews 11 being an established fact, we can now proceed to a further examination. How are these lists related to each other? It seems to be a Scriptural principle that truth is confirmed by two or more witnesses. Believing this to be the case, we approached the double list of names that are mentioned in detail, and found that they were arranged in pairs. For example, Abel and Enoch are both connected with death:

'He being *dead* yet speaketh' (verse 4).

'Enoch was translated that he should not see *death*' (verse 5).

The next pair, Noah and Abraham, are related to an inheritance:

Noah 'became *heir of* the righteousness which is by faith' (verse 7).

Abraham 'was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an *inheritance'* (verse 8).

Isaac and Jacob are mentioned as dwelling in *tents*, heirs with Abraham of the same promise, and looking for a city which hath foundations, so emphasizing their pilgrim character. Sarah and Abraham are by this arrangement brought together in the centre. Here *resurrection* is the theme.

Sarah 'received strength to conceive seed ... of ... him as good as *dead*' (verses 11,12).

Abraham 'offered up his only begotten son ... accounting that God was able to *raise him up*, even *from the dead*; from whence also he received him in a figure' (verses 17-19).

Isaac and Jacob are both mentioned together in connection with blessing that overruled the flesh.

Isaac '*blessed* Jacob and Esau concerning things to come' (verse 20).

Jacob '*blessed* both the sons of Joseph' (verse 21).

Joseph and Moses are both closely associated with Egypt. Joseph spoke of the *exodus* of the children of Israel (verse 22). Moses turned his back upon the treasures of *Egypt* (verse 26). Israel and Rahab conclude the series. Both are associated with the fall of Jericho and with being spared during judgment. Israel were saved, while Egypt's firstborn perished and the Egyptians were drowned in the Red Sea (verse 29). Rahab 'perished not with them that believed not' (verse 31). Thus we have the perfect white light of faith split up into its seven parts:

A Faith in connection with DEATH - Abel and Enoch.
  B Faith in connection with INHERITANCE - Noah and Abraham.
    C Faith in connection with PILGRIMAGE - Isaac and Jacob.
      D Faith in connection with RESURRECTION - Sarah and Abraham.
    C Faith in connection with BLESSING - Isaac and Jacob.
  B Faith in connection with EGYPT - Joseph and Moses.
A Faith in connection with DELIVERANCE - Israel and Rahab.

The three chief features, viz., beginning, middle, and end, emphasize death, resurrection, and deliverance.

A principle of interpretation.

The way in which we are to interpret this series is suggested in Hebrews 12:24. Concerning Abel's faith Hebrews 11:4 says, 'he being dead yet speaketh' and in Hebrews 12:24 we read of the blood of sprinkling that 'speaketh *better things* than Abel'. Here is a principle of interpretation. Hebrews 11 are types; 'the better things' are found in Christ. We can say that Christ's well-pleasing walk speaketh 'better things' than that of Enoch, and so of all the rest. It is helpful to see the rays of light separated and set forth in this example, but their chief good is that they enable us the better to appreciate the fulness that there is in Christ.

The seven-fold analysis of perfected faith that occupies the bulk of Hebrews 11 is introduced by a statement that reveals the underlying and essential character of this faith in all and every one of its manifestations; 'Now faith is the SUBSTANCE of things hoped for, the EVIDENCE of things not seen' This passage may be taken apart from its context as a general definition of faith, but its real force can only be appreciated as it is seen at the head of this seven-fold exposition of perfected faith.

Moreover, viewing the statement in its context, it cannot be separated from the closing words of chapter 10. There the believer is seen 'losing' in this life, but sustained by the consciousness of that 'possession of a better and more lasting nature' (10:34), which was held in faith and prospect. The words immediately preceding the definition of faith in Hebrews 11:1 speak of a future day when those who have 'lost their soul' for Christ's sake shall 'gain' or

'acquire it'. Now it is evident that if these believers were really to take joyfully the spoiling of their goods, they must have had very vividly before them 'the better and more lasting possessions' that awaited them in glory.

Substance and evidence

As we examine the testimony of this chapter to the faith of Abel, Abraham, Moses and others, we shall see how much and how readily they gave up life, home, and wealth for the Lord's sake, and of them all it could be said that they were sustained by that faith which is the substance of things hoped for. Moses 'endured, as seeing Him Who is invisible'. What therefore are we to understand by the words 'substance' and 'evidence'?

In preparation for this, we covered a fairly wide circle in the examination of this word 'substance' and its usage, but nothing revealed the intention of the apostle so well as the way in which it is used in the LXX or Greek version of the Old Testament. *Hupostasis*, the word translated 'substance', is found in a number of passages in the Old Testament, a few of them being given hereafter as illuminating Hebrews 11:1, 'And now, Lord, what wait I for? my (*ground of*) hope is in Thee' (Psa. 39:7). Where the Hebrew had the simple word 'hope', the LXX had 'My *hupostasis* (or ground of hope) is in Thee'. 'I sink in deep mire where there is no *standing*' (Psa. 69:2). In the next reference it is difficult to avoid a lengthy explanation if a literal rendering, together with the LXX parallels, is demanded. It so happens that in the A.V. the two adjoining verses contain the word 'substance' as a rendering of other words. We think, however, that sufficient for our purpose will be provided by ignoring the surrounding difficulties, and lifting out the word translated by *hupostasis.* Spurrell's translation avoids some of the pitfalls.

'My own person was not concealed from Thee, *when I was formed in a secret manner; curiously wrought* in the lower bowels of the earth. Thine eyes beheld me in embryo; and my members, each one of them was recorded in the book' (Psa. 139:15,16 - Spurrell's Version).

'My bones which Thou hast made in secret were not hidden from Thee, nor my SUBSTANCE, in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes saw my unwrought (substance)' (LXX translation).

There is much in the passage for meditation. Faith is to the things hoped for as the unborn embryo is to the fully formed and living child. There is much that is secret, dark and mysterious, but the whole presses forward to fulness of life. Such is the underlying thought of Hebrews 11:1. The things hoped for were at the moment 'not seen', they were as yet 'unborn' yet very real to faith. As we watch the expectant mother lovingly and quietly preparing the little garments for the life that is not yet manifest, we have God's own illustration of that faith which is the substance of things hoped for. Let us now examine the second statement:

'Faith is ... the *evidence* of things not seen'.

Elengchos occurs but twice in the New Testament, Hebrews 11:1 and 2 Timothy 3:16. The A.V. translates it once 'evidence' and once 'reproof'. When we turn to the verb *elengcho* we have a wider field for investigation. The following are the renderings in the A.V., convict, convince, rebuke, reprove, tell one's fault. In no one place is it ever translated 'prove' or 'demonstrate', or by any such word that is parallel to 'evidence'. We find the word in Hebrews 12:5 where it is translated 'to be rebuked'. Now structurally this passage balances Hebrews 11:1 thus:

A	Heb. 11:1	Faith	Substance and *elengchos.* A.V. 'evidence'.
	B Heb. 11:2-40.		The cloud of witnesses.
	B Heb. 12:1,2.		The cloud of witnesses.
A	Heb. 12:3-5.	Faith	The *elengchos.* A.V. 'rebuked'.

Now if the last passage is rightly rendered 'rebuke', how can the only other occurrence of the word in Hebrews, bound as it is by all the ties of structure and consistent argument, be rightly translated 'evidence'? The reader may by this time be ready to consult the LXX again, and the first passage we note will be Habakkuk 2:1, 'I will stand upon my watch ... what I shall answer upon my *reproof*', which is in the immediate context of the quotation, 'the just shall live by his faith'. Instead of 'proof' we find 'reproof'. Let us search this matter further. Now *elengchos* occurs some 21 times, and *elengcho* some 53 times. It is manifestly impossible to provide a concordance of the occurrences here. We will give a few, but would here assure the reader that every one of these 74 occurrences has

been investigated, and that all point in one direction, namely, that *elengchos* does not mean 'evidence' but 'rebuke'. Let us see a few examples:

'And Abraham REPROVED Abimelech because of a well of water' (Gen. 21:25).

'Thou shalt in any wise REBUKE thy neighbour' (Lev. 19:17).

'The Lord had REBUKED him' (2 Chron. 26:20).

'Behold, happy is the man whom God CORRECTETH' (Job. 5:17).

'My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of HIS CORRECTION: for whom the 'LORD loveth He CORRECTETH' (Prov. 3:11,12).

The apostle *has quoted* this passage of Proverbs 3:11,12 in Hebrews 12:5,6 and there, instead of giving the word 'correction' twice as does the LXX, he uses the word 'chasteneth'. For confirmation of this synonym we may turn to Revelation 3:19, 'As many as I love, I *rebuke* and *chasten*'. Those desirous of searching out this matter more fully will doubtless find opportunity. Sufficient has been here noted to show that the primary idea of Hebrews 11:1 is 'Faith is a substance of things hoped for, a reproof of things not seen'. This, however, does not convey sense to English ears, so we must consider the matter further. As the verse stands in the A.V. we have a repetition. Faith is a substance and an evidence. When we look at the actual thing in progress and in fact, we find that faith has a two-fold association: (1) It looks forward to a future glory (2) It endures present suffering. The two are linked 'For the joy ... He endured the Cross'.

The Hebrew believers would readily believe that faith was the substance of things hoped for. They would rejoice in Enoch's *translation*; but would they so readily rejoice in Abel's *death*? They would rejoice in Noah's *preservation* and *inheritance*, but would they so readily rejoice in Abraham's surrender? Were they ready for the fact to be applied to themselves that these examples of faith all died 'NOT HAVING RECEIVED the promise'? Were they ready to follow Moses not only for the *future* reward, but in the reproach and suffering of the *present*? What is this 'reproof' then? lt is the Lord's discipline meted out in love to every son, to every one of the 'many sons' who by this very selfsame Author, Captain, and Perfecter of faith are being led as He Himself was led through suffering to glory (Heb. 2:10). It is the Gethsemane experience of Hebrews 5:7-9, for there in the garden, the Lord sweat as it were great drops of blood, and in Hebrews 12:4 is the application to 'every son': 'Ye have not yet resisted *unto blood*'. Here then is the twofold character of perfected faith. A hand that reaches out on either side to join together suffering and glory. No one can fail to see the tremendous value of such a word to those who were passing through the experiences of these Hebrews at the time of writing the epistle. Here then, in this present time, faith is hope in embryo, with its accompanying sorrows; it is both substance and reproof, both crown and cross.

In attempting the translation of Hebrews 11:1 and retaining the rendering 'reproof', care must be exercised in ascertaining the meaning of the genitive case expressed by 'of'. It may be the genitive of *character*, like 'the bond *of* perfectness'; or of *origin*, 'the gift *of* God'; or of *possession*, 'the sword *of* the Spirit', i.e., 'the Spirit's sword'; or of *apposition*, 'the firstfruits *of* the spirit', i.e., 'the firstfruits (*of our inheritance*), *that is to say*, the spirit'; or *of relation*, 'the reproach *of* Christ', i.e., reproach in connection with Christ. Of all these the last appears nearest to the meaning of Hebrews 11:1, 'The reproof in connection with faith' being very parallel with 'The reproach in connection with Christ', and in this way we should translate the passage. Faith assumes the invisible. Every believer should be able to say, though with purer intent than she who first uttered the words,

'Thy letters have transported me beyond
This ignorant present, and I feel now
The future in the instant'.

This faith characterized the elders who received a good report. Report is *martureo*, and this constitutes them the great cloud of witnesses (*martur* of Heb. 12:1). These elders come before us again at the end of the chapter, 'These all, having obtained a *good report* through faith, received not the promise' (Heb. 11:39), but although they received it not, 'These all died in faith, not having received the promises, *but having seen them afar* off, and were *persuaded* of them' (Heb. 11:13). They had both the substance and the discipline, and these alone will enable the believer to go on unto perfection.

Dispensational truth and faith

According to the A.V., verse 3 turns aside to speak of the creation of 'the worlds'. It is reserved for the speculative mind of man to conceive of 'worlds'. Scripture speaks of the 'world'. Material creation, however, is not in view here. An 'age' was drawing to an end. A dispensation that was secret was about to be introduced. The Hebrew believer could see nothing tangible; things were being shaken, and the apostle draws attention to the fact that:

'By faith we understand that the ages were readjusted by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things that do appear' (Heb. 11:3 not AV JP).

The word translated 'framed' in the A.V., and which we render 'readjust' is *katartizo*, and occurs in Hebrews 10:5, where it is translated 'prepared'; also in 13:21, where it is translated 'perfect'. In both passages 'adapt' seems the best translation. That there is a sense of repairing or readjustment in the word can be seen in Matthew 4:21, the first occurrence, where it is translated 'mending', and in Galatians 6:1 where it reads 'restore'. The peculiar work of the gifts of the ascended Lord at the inauguration of the new dispensation seems to combine both words. The apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers of Ephesians 4 were to 'readjust and adapt the saints' owing to the cleavage that had come at Acts 28.

The Hebrew believers were being shown that a change was imminent. The setting aside of Israel involved a change in the economy of the ages. Not only had these Hebrew believers to have a faith that could grasp the realities while the types and shadows passed away, but they must be prepared to exercise a faith that would appear to have nothing substantial beneath it, except the bare Word of God, and the blessed hope of resurrection. This faith saw no immediate 'land' or accessible 'city', saw no evident prosperity, no 'milk and honey' as a reward for faithfulness and obedience. All its possessions were afar off, and those who were exhorted to 'live by faith' were also told of those who 'died in faith' without having received the promises, but who saw them 'afar off'.

These words, weighty in themselves, introduce the seven-fold series of those who each in their turn set forth some one aspect of that faith which in its perfection was exhibited in Christ.

The Perfecting of Faith - Abel and Enoch

The first of the series of examples of perfected faith that is given in Hebrews 11 is the two-fold witness of Abel and Enoch, who, though unlike in some respects, are alike in this that they both have to do specifically with death in connection with their faith. Let us give attention in the first instance to the witness of Abel.

The first feature of perfected faith emphasizes the Atonement. Elsewhere we have drawn attention to the two words that mark the difference between Redemption (*exodus* = a leading out), and Atonement (*eisodos* = a leading in). Abel does not speak so much of redemption from sin, as access and acceptance. There are many things that belong to the life of faith, but all service, witness, suffering or warfare are secondary when compared with Abel's initial witness, which gives first place to the recognition of the claims and provision of the holiness of God. Enoch's faith corresponds with this in the fact that it emphasizes both the walk that is pleasing to God, and further that 'he that cometh to God must believe that He is'.

The faith of Abel

'By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous God testifying of his gifts; and by it he being dead yet speaketh' (Heb. 11:4).

Here the good *report* becomes both 'witness' and 'testifying', and the correction should be made in our translation of the passage. We must turn to Genesis in order to see for ourselves the record that is referred to here:

'And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: but unto Cain and to his offering He had not respect ... If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him' (Gen. 4:3-7).

'In process of time'. Literally, 'At or after the end of some days', 'some' being often expressed by the plural form alone. Nothing is certain as to what days are intended.

Some think the sabbath is meant, some the end of the year, or at some set time like harvest. The important fact to observe is that there was some recognition of appointed time, and hence the implication is that Abel's faith was connected with 'a word of God', as all faith has ever been.

'An offering' (*minchall*). This word is often used as a contrast to *zebah*, a sacrifice with blood, but standing alone it is often used for sacrifice in general. As the passage stands in the A.V. the word 'also' in verse 4 ('And Abel, he also') simply adds the action of Abel to that of Cain. If, however, the word 'also' be read after the verb, as it actually stands in both the Hebrew and in the LXX, there is a possibility that a deeper lesson is intended. There is something suggestive in the Greek of Hebrews 11:4 too. There is no word for 'excellent' there, which is supplied. Translating the words just as they come we read, 'By faith more sacrifice Abel than Cain offered'. Is it possible that in this simple and literal statement we have fuller light on Genesis 4 than the A.V. gives us there? In what way did Abel offer 'more sacrifice'?

Coming back to this chapter and reading the 'also' after the verb we have, 'And Abel he brought also of the firstlings of his flock', and this at least opens the way for the implied thought that Abel brought a bloodless gift even as Cain did, but that he 'brought also' the lamb which alone made any other offering acceptable. This at least is exactly the teaching of the epistle to the Hebrews. All the typical offerings, even though they were of bulls and goats and ordained by God, were in measure but the offering of Cain in this sense, that they sought to render the offerer accepted without the precious blood of Christ which alone cleanses and gives access. On the other hand a bloodless sacrifice was acceptable (see Heb. 13:15), but only when sanctified by the blood of Christ.

The LXX rendering of Genesis 4:7 is somewhat strange, and the relation of the existing Hebrew text with the Greek is too complicated to be dealt with here. We give it, however, for what it may be worth, for it seems to suggest that the mistake of Cain was not so much in the offering that he *did bring*, as in the offering that he *refused*:

'If thou hast brought rightly, but not rightly divided it, hast thou not sinned?'

However difficult it may be for us at this date to reconcile such a rendering with the Hebrew of Genesis 4:7, we must give the credit of common sense to the translators of the LXX that they felt that such a translation expressed the teaching of the passage. Cain sinned through a failure to discern the difference between the offering of fruit, which had in it no confession of human unworthiness, and the offering which involved the shedding of blood, which pointed to the one Sacrifice for sin and acceptance which was to be offered by the Lord Himself.

If we understand the word 'sin' in verse 7 to mean Cain's own transgression, the sense is not very clear. 'If thou doest not well' indicates sin, and the statement resolves itself into, 'If thou art a sinner - thou art a sinner'. But 'sin' (i.e. the same Hebrew word) is spoken of in Exodus 29:14 as having flesh, and skin, and capable of being 'burnt with fire'; it has 'blood' according to Exodus 30:10; the worshipper could 'lay his hand' upon its head according to Leviticus 4:29, and it could be 'eaten' according to Leviticus 10:17. This is sufficient to prove that 'a sin offering' in the shape of a bullock, a goat, or a lamb could be the true meaning of the word 'sin' in Genesis 4:7. The statement 'sin lieth at the door' is today a proverb, but a proverb that has arisen from this very translation, and therefore not a proof that such would be the interpretation which Cain would give to the term. The idea that sin was typified as in the act of springing upon Cain is hardly justified by the usage of the word 'lieth'.

When we read in Psalm 23:2, 'He maketh me to *lie down* in green pastures', we certainly have no thought of a beast of prey in the act of taking a spring. We are not to suppose that when Jacob saw the flocks of sheep 'lying' by the well that they were preparing to spring at him, or at one another (Gen. 29:2). The word is indeed spoken of a leopard, but not in the act of springing on its prey, but the very reverse: 'the leopard shall *lie down* with the kid' (Isa. 11:6). The word is spoken of the couching of sheep, and wild beasts, lions, leopards and asses, of the needy that shall 'lie down' in safety (Isa. 14:30); of flocks that 'rest' (Song of Sol. 1:7), but not one passage can bear the meaning often read into Genesis 4:7. The door belongs neither to Cain or to Abel. So far as the Scriptures actually state it can just as well be the door of the primal tabernacle mentioned in Genesis 3:24. Over 40 times in the Pentateuch is this word used of the 'door' of the tabernacle. The sense therefore of Genesis 4:7 seems clearly to be:

'If thou doest not well, a sin offering coucheth at the door of the tabernacle'.

Cain was without excuse, inasmuch as faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, Abel must have 'heard'. Cain also would have heard likewise, and even if he had misunderstood, the Lord graciously pointed out his error, and gave him full opportunity for repentance and acceptance. Cain, Korah, and Balaam make up a terrible trio that fitly prefigure the state of things at the time of the end (Jude 11). The hymnology of Cain's successors harps upon the string:

'Something in my hand I bring',

while the language of faith is expressed by:

'Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling'.

We must not lose sight of the theme of the epistle to the Hebrews, nor the fact that Abel is mentioned as one of a series that sets forth the need that the just shall *live* by faith. Abel's example is given here as an encouragement to the Hebrews who were losing heart, were in danger of drawing back, and to whom it is written in the sequel of Hebrews 11:

'For consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted *unto blood*, striving against sin' (Heb. 12:3,4).

The rock upon which faith rests is the Offering of Christ and that is the rock upon which unbelief is broken to pieces. A principle of interpretation is supplied by Hebrews 12:24. Whatever is good in Abel is better in Christ. Whatever will be found good in Enoch, or Noah, or Abraham, or the rest, will likewise be found better in the Saviour. He is the perfecter of faith. In Him the whole spectrum meets; all others are so many broken facets reflecting something only of His ineffable perfection:

'By faith Abel offered unto God more sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God bearing witness of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh' (Heb. 1:4 not AV JP).

'The blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than Abel' (Heb. 12:24).

Enoch, or the faith that transfers (Heb. 11:5,6)

While it is misleading as a rule to speak in generalities, it seems clear from Scripture that, so far as the human side of the purpose of the ages is concerned, all doctrine may be reduced under two heads, (1) Adam, (2) Christ. As practice flows from doctrine, practical teaching will also have reference to these two heads of mankind. With this thought in mind it will not be difficult to see that each successive witness to faith in Hebrews 11 in some way reverses the action and attitude of Adam.

For example, Adam's refuge in the covering of figleaves is reversed in Abel's refuge in the atonement by blood. That fellowship which Adam enjoyed was spoiled by sin when it could be written, 'I heard Thy voice ... and I was afraid'. This is reversed in Enoch's walk with God. Adam's sin involved his house in death, and his heritage in a curse, whereas Noah's faith prepared an ark to the saving of his house, and he became the heir of the righteousness of faith. The reader may continue the parallel. Enoch was the seventh from Adam; he lived 365 years, which evidently suggests a complete typical cycle of time. In Enoch we have full restoration typified.

We see moreover that Enoch and Abel make one dual witness, showing that man's restoration can come only along the lines of the great Sacrifice for sin.

ADAM *walked* with God.
ADAM *covered* himself with leaves.
ABEL *covered* by the atonement.
ENOCH *walked* with God.

Not only do the numbers 'the seventh' from Adam, and the 365 years point out Enoch as the end of a cycle, but his name means 'Initiated', and his translation appears to have left its mark upon the old world, for it is highly probable that the *Phoenix*, is simply *Pa-phenoch*, 'The house of Enoch'.

Enoch, the perfected

We are apt to forget in our studies that all Scripture, though universal in its application and true for all time, nevertheless had a primary and restricted origin. Hebrews 11 is so full, each character so great, that we forget that the writer was addressing 'Hebrews', and urging them to 'go on unto perfection', and that every item of this chapter has been divinely selected with that fact in mind. Abel showed the absolute necessity for the 'one Sacrifice' of Christ, and the danger of going in the way of Cain should that one Offering be despised or rejected. Enoch's case sets forth the goal, summed up in the 'walk', and the 'translation'. Towards the close of Hebrews 11 the apostle speaks of:

'Others (who) were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a BETTER RESURRECTION' (Heb. 11:35).

lt must be observed here that the obtaining of a better resurrection is directly connected with *not* accepting deliverance, and the question arises, How can Enoch's example have any bearing upon this, or upon the Hebrews, seeing that Enoch apparently *did not die*? It is time therefore to search and see. The sources of direct information are the following. The passage in Genesis 5, the LXX translation, and the passage in Hebrews 11. These we must give first.

'And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him' (Hebrew of Gen. 5:24).

'And Enoch pleased God: and he was not found, for God translated him' (LXX version of Gen. 5:24).

'By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God' (Heb. 11:5).

It will be noticed that the record grows as we proceed. The Hebrew is the shortest statement. Paul does not quote the Hebrew original, but quotes the LXX version as more suitable to his purpose, and more familiar to his readers, who used that version daily.

Did Enoch die?

Let us examine the actual statements used before we come to any conclusion. '*He was not*'. Identical words are used in Jeremiah 31:15, 'Rachel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they *were not*'. There is no ambiguity in Reuben's meaning when he cried, 'The child *is not*' (Gen. 37:30), or of Jacob's lament 'Joseph *is not*, and Simeon *is not*' (Gen. 42:36), indeed Jacob said, 'Me have ye *bereaved*'.

'*For God took him*'. The Hebrew word *laqach* is used both of death and of translation:

'Behold, I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke' (Ezek. 24:16).

'Knowest thou that the 'LORD will take away thy master from thy head to day?' (2 Kings 2:3).

The case of Elijah is somewhat parallel with that of Enoch. Elijah is taken up to heaven by a whirlwind, and Elisha 'saw him no more' (verse 12). When the sons of the prophets urged Elisha to send the fifty men to look for Elijah, the result is recorded, 'They sought three days, but found him not' (verse 17). It is the LXX that adds the word 'found' in Genesis 5:24. While this reference to Elijah strengthens the conception that Enoch did not die, Psalm 37:35,36 shows that the avoidance of death is not necessarily implied by the word, 'I have seen the wicked ... yet he passed away, and, lo, *he was not*;, yea, I sought him, but he could not *be found*'.

By faith Enoch was translated. It is usual to suppose that the use of the word 'translation' is the end of all controversy, and that such a word could not apply to any who had died. Yet, notice the first occurrence of the word in the New Testament:

'So Jacob went down into Egypt, and DIED, he, and our fathers, and were carried over (TRANSLATED) into Sychem, and laid in the sepulchre ...' (Acts 7:15,16).

It is evident that the word 'translation' of itself does not necessitate escape from death. Hebrews 7:12 has already used the word to speak of the change of the priesthood and the law.

That he should not see death. The fifth chapter of Genesis is punctuated by the words, 'and he died', eight times. Enoch's translation breaks the sad sequence of mortality and provides the exception. Hebrews 11:5 does not say

simply, 'Enoch was translated that he should not die', but 'that he should not *see* death'. We found that in the words of Hebrews 2:9 and Matthew 16:28 'tasting death' was not exactly synonymous with dying. May there not be a reason for the choice of the expression 'see death' here? In John 8:51 we have a parallel expression, though a different word is used for 'to see'. Verse 52 in most MSS. paraphrases the expression by the words 'taste death', although the Vatican MS. here retains the word 'see'. The idiom is explained for us in Acts 2:26,27.

'My flesh shall rest in hope: because Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell (Hades), neither wilt Thou suffer Thine holy One to SEE corruption'.

It will be observed that death is contemplated here, but not corruption. In verse 29 Peter expands the idea: 'The patriarch David ... is both dead and buried, *and his sepulchre* is with us unto this day' To this add Acts 13:36,37:

'David ... fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and SAW corruption'.

Peter's further remark, 'David is not ascended into the heavens' (Acts 2:34), shows that the idea involved in 'not seeing corruption' was not so much that of dying, or of even being buried, but of *being left in the tomb*, of not ascending into the heavens. We venture nothing in speculations upon the holy nature of the Son of God. We know not what would have taken place had He remained in the tomb for a long period. What we do know is that He was raised on the third day, 'was not left in Hades, neither suffered to see corruption' which says as much as we can bear.

Leaving ... the resurrection of dead ones

The ambiguity that surrounds the translation of Enoch serves a good purpose. While we cannot say with certainty that Enoch did die, or that he was taken away by God without dying, this very uncertainty enabled the apostle to use the example of Enoch to encourage the Hebrews 'to go on unto perfection'. We may be better prepared to follow the teaching of Hebrews 6, having come so far. Among the items that were to be 'left' as they pressed on to 'perfection' is included, strangely, 'the resurrection of dead ones'. This does not mean a denial of the resurrection, but the giving up of the hope of a general resurrection of dead ones, for a special and prior hope of 'a better resurrection' of those who, though dying, should not 'see' death, who in other words should attain unto an 'out-resurrection'. The parallel with Philippians is apparent and instructive. This 'better resurrection' which could be illustrated by Enoch's translation is seen in Hebrews 11:40 compared with 12:22,23:

'God having provided (foreseen) some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect (*perfected*)'.

'But ye are come ... to the spirits of just men made perfect (*perfected*)'.

Just as the blood of Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant, speaks better things than that of Abel, so the resurrection that awaited those who pressed toward the mark, and who laid aside every weight and ran with patience, surpassed the translation of Enoch. The parallel with Philippians is found even in the word 'better'. Hebrews speaks of a resurrection that was 'better', while Paul in Philippians 1:23 says, 'To depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better'.

Metathesis occurs three times in Hebrews, so also does *metatithemi*. It will be wise to allow these references a place before concluding. Hebrews 7:12 speaks of a 'change' of both priesthood and law. Hebrews 11:5 speaks of the translation of Enoch, and Hebrews 12:27 says:

'Yet once more, signifieth the removing (*translation*) of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain'.

Apart from inspiration altogether we should expect that so important a word would be used with judgment, and that the reference to Enoch's translation was not made in forgetfulness of the presence of the word in chapter 7, nor of its appearance in chapter 12. It is evident that 'translation' does not express the meaning in 12:27 or 7:12, but 'transfer' does. The important point in the interpretation of this epistle is that a change had come, bringing with it the *possibility of a transfer*. Hebrews 11 opens with the fact that the ages were framed or adjusted by God, and seeing that some things had become shaken, and were set aside upon the failure of Israel, *a transfer* was held out to faith, whereby the 'word of the beginning' could be left for 'better things'. Abel will stand for the 'better sacrifice', and

Enoch for the 'better resurrection', and while these Hebrews may indeed die in faith, not having received the promise, they may nevertheless be able to entertain a better hope, founded upon better promises, embracing a better country, that is a heavenly.

The closing down, for the time being, of the earthly section of the purpose of the ages, opened for the believing Hebrew the prospect of a *transfer* to a heavenly country or city more fully detailed in Hebrews 12:22-29, and being in some degree a secret. This, while being by no means the same either in sphere, calling, or character as the dispensation of the Mystery, did hold out to those who believed the added revelation, a *prize* connected with this heavenly calling, which could be attained only by 'going on unto perfection'. The subject will not be dropped until we reach the end of chapter 12. It may be helpful as a sidelight upon this theme to note what the wisest King of Israel is alleged to have said:

'For honourable age is not that which standeth in length of time, nor is it measured by number of years. But wisdom is the gray hair unto men, and an unspotted life is old age. *He pleased God*, and was beloved of Him: so that living among sinners *he was translated*. Yea speedily was he caught away, lest the wickedness should alter his understanding, or deceit beguile his soul ... He, *being made perfect* in a short time, fulfilled a long time' (Wisdom of Solomon 4:8-13).

The reader may have missed the familiar comment which sees in Enoch's translation the rapture of the church, but we trust he will have gained by having attention drawn both to the difficulties of the case, and of its fitness with the theme of the Hebrews:

'Let us go unto perfection ... leaving ... a resurrection of dead ones ... for a better resurrection ... and the spirits of just men made perfect'.

That the prize of Philippians 3 may be considered parallel, the reference to 'reward' in Hebrews 11:6 will show, and that 'to walk and please God' is the high goal of faith, Hebrews 11 and the bulk of the epistles testify.

Noah and Abraham Inheritors (Heb. 11:7,8).

However personally we may feel the application of this or any other Scripture, we deprive ourselves of much that is helpful in its interpretation when we lose sight of the original purpose of its writing, and the conditions under which it was written. Hebrews 11 is so full of teaching that we are apt to isolate it from its context in the appreciation of its present application. The aspect of faith that we are to consider under the names of Noah and Abraham, while containing much that has a direct personal application *to ourselves*, was nevertheless written in the first place to the *Hebrews*, and written to them in circumstances that make the examples cited of supreme importance in the process of the apostle's instruction to them.

The faith that inherits

Among the items of prominence in the message to the Hebrews is that which deals with the relation of faith to *inheritance*. Chapters 3 and 4 are devoted to the idea of the necessity of faith in connection with inheriting. 'So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief' (3:19). It is time, however, that we saw for ourselves that *inheritance* is the connecting theme of this second pair of examples:

'By faith Noah ... became HEIR of the righteousness which is by faith' (11:7).

'By faith Abraham ... went out ... to the place he should afterwards receive for an INHERITANCE' (11:8 not AV JP).

Without the Scripture before us, we should doubtless assign the position of 'heir of the *righteousness by faith*' to Abraham, rather than to Noah, as so much is said of him in that connection in Romans and Galatians as well as in Genesis 15. The fact that Noah is also associated with righteousness by faith, shows that from earliest days this principle has been in operation, and but the more emphasizes that unpalatable fact, that 'the law made nothing perfect'; that Sinai is a transition, not a goal (Heb. 12:18-24), and that the gospel committed to Paul, which reaches back as far as Adam, and as wide as the ends of the earth, is *the* gospel that carries with it age-lasting issues. It operated in Eden, and was believed by Abel.

The epistle to the Hebrews looks at righteousness by faith from a different angle from that of Romans. In Hebrews we see faith at work. 'By faith Noah ... prepared an ark'. Such is the simple statement. We must, however, not omit the moving causes that assisted Noah's faith to prepare, against all reason, an ark on dry land. Noah's act is the result of (1) a divine warning, and (2) a pious fear.

A divine warning

We are not allowed to forget the important truth that 'faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God'. Noah was doubtless wise in consequence of his 600 years of experience, his fellowship with God, and his purity of life, which would all be in favour of enabling him to foresee the goal toward which the ungodliness of his day was fast heading, but this wisdom would never have evolved 'an ark'. *Chrematizo*, to warn, is used in the New Testament to indicate a warning given by means of a dream (Matt. 2:12,22); by the Holy Spirit (Luke 2:26); or by an angel (Acts 10:22). Its direct connection with the body of the epistle to the Hebrews will be seen by looking at Hebrews 8:5 and 12:25. Moses was 'warned' by God in connection with the Tabernacle which he 'prepared' (see Heb. 9:2). Hebrews 12:25 applies this 'warning':

'See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused Him who WARNED them on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from Him that WARNS us from heaven' (not AV JP).

The verse following reveals that the two warnings, the one so much greater than the other, were the voices of Sinai and Calvary. Hebrews 2:1-4 is here repeated with solemn emphasis and *with the same sequence*. The warning of Hebrews 2:1-4 is followed by a reference to the 'world to come' and its dominion. The warning of Hebrews 12:25 is followed by a reference to a kingdom that abides the terrific 'shaking' of the last days. So, to come back to Noah, we have the warning, the Flood (parallel with the shaking), and the world to come, the dominion restored after the Flood, called in Hebrews 11:7 'the inheritance of the righteousness which is by faith'. Though we may have passed these close parallels lightly by, the originally exercised readers of this epistle would have found them very pointed.

Both Noah and Abraham received a message from God that put a great test upon faith, for Noah was warned of things 'not seen as yet', and Abraham went out 'not knowing' whither he went. What they *did* know was the faithfulness of Him Who spake. So these Hebrews, taught from infancy to believe the law of Sinai to be eternal and unalterable, to believe their ritual to be not only of divine appointing, but to be as lasting as God's throne, found an almost insuperable difficulty in the teaching of the apostle that such things were waxing old and *vanishing away*, that God Himself found fault with the first Covenant and had set it aside for the aionian Covenant sealed by the blood of Christ Himself.

A pious fear

The second motive that is revealed is that Noah was 'moved with fear'. The English word 'fear' has to stand for (1) *phobos*, a 'fear that flees', from *phebomai* to flee; for (2) *deilos*, a 'fear that shrinks'; and for (3) *eulabeia*, a 'fear that worships'. This last is the word used of Noah in Hebrews 11:7. He certainly did not have the fear that flees, nor the fear that 'draws back unto perdition', but the fear that reverently acquiesces in the will of God. We find the word, or its cognates, translated 'devout' in Luke 2:25; Acts 2:5 and 8:2. The true translation of Hebrews 5:7 is 'He was heard for His piety' (or godly fear), and so it is translated in Hebrews 12:28, adding one more link to the record of Noah that we have already seen exists. *Phobos* and *eulabeia* are definitely contrasted in Hebrews 11, so that we need make no mistake. Moses was NOT moved with *phobos* (Heb. 11:23-27); Noah WAS moved with *eulabeia* (Heb. 11:7), and both acted 'by faith'.

The apostle makes no reference to 'the sons of God', 'the daughters of men' or 'the giants' of Genesis 6, not because the subject was unimportant, but because, out of a wealth of material (like John 20:30,31), he selected his examples with a specific object: to help these Hebrews 'to leave ... and go on.

'Noah ... prepared an ark to the saving of his house' (Heb. 11:7).

We have already seen that the chapter of UNBELIEF (Heb. 3), is in structural correspondence with the chapter of FAITH (Heb. 11), but it may not be fully realized how many items in these two chapters link them together. For

instance where Hebrews 11 says 'Faith is the SUBSTANCE of things hoped for' (Heb. 11:1), Hebrews 3 says 'For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our CONFIDENCE stedfast unto the end' (Heb. 3:14); in each case 'substance' and 'confidence' translate the one Greek word *hupostasis.* In Hebrews 3:6 this truth is expressed by using a synonymous word:

'Whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end'.

This brings into prominence the figure of a house. Noah is said to have saved his 'house', and Genesis 7 opens with the words 'Come thou and all thy house'. The nation of Israel is repeatedly spoken of as 'the house of Israel', in a sense that is unique, for no such term is applied to any company of redeemed Gentiles. It is with the 'house of Israel' that the Lord will make the New Covenant (Heb. 8:10), and Paul has a particular reason to stress the saving of the 'house' in Hebrews 11, because he has used a special word in both Hebrews 3 and 11 to enforce his teaching. That word is the Greek *kataskeuazo*, prepare.

'For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded (*kataskeuazo*) the house hath more honour than the house. For every house is builded (*kataskeuazo*) by some man; but He that built (*kataskeuazo*) all things is God' (3:3,4).

Now the point of the example in Hebrews 11:7 seems to be that Moses after all was a servant, it is Christ Who is the Son. Moses 'prepared' the house, but could do no more. Noah PREPARED AN ARK, and saved 'the house'. So, said the apostle, will you not be prepared to 'leave' the work of Moses the servant, who can do nothing more than condemn you, and enter into the provision made by Christ, whose one Offering is typified by the use of the Hebrew word *kopher* 'pitch' which later in the law is translated 'atonement':

'Christ as a Son (is) over His own house; Whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end' (3:6).

Saved ... condemned

Noah's faith moved him to prepare an ark 'to the *saving* of his house, by the which he *condemned* the world'. While from one point of view Christian charity knows no bounds, from another point of view Christianity is very drastic and provoking. This is not limited to the Christian faith. It belongs to all propositions and to all issues. The man who is convinced that the teetotaller is right cannot avoid the alternative that the drinker is wrong. The man who sees in Socialism the panacea for all evil cannot avoid condemning Conservatism and Capitalism by his very conviction. The church by its very constitution condemns the world. There is no justification for bitterness, for wrangling, for strife, but even among professing Christians it is not possible to hold certain vital doctrines without condemning those who deny them. Christian charity is a lovely thing, but it does not enable us to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds.

The inheritance

All that we have seen concerning Noah has been leading to this last clause, 'He became the HEIR of the righteousness which is by faith'. The warning, the preparing, the saving of his house had one thing in view - the inheritance. Noah was not moved to construct an ark either to demonstrate his own prowess, or even his faith, but as a means to an end. *Redemption is for a purpose, it is not an end in itself.* So marvellous is that redemption, that we often speak of it as though it were the end itself of the purpose of God. Ephesians 1:1-14 shows as clearly as any passage the intermediate position of redemption, with the will of God stated *first*, the inheritance reached at the *last*, and the 'mystery of His will' which involves redemption coming in between.

The blessing of God upon Noah, when he stood upon the restored earth with his saved house, was practically a repetition of the dominion given to Adam, modified by the changed circumstances (Gen. 9:1-7).

'In the six hundredth and FIRST year, in the FIRST month, the FIRST day of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth' (Gen. 8:13).

Thus Noah and his inheritance anticipates that day when He that sits upon the throne shall say, 'Behold, I make all things new', faintly suggested also by the 'no more curse' of Genesis 8:21.

Abraham. The obedience that inherits. (Heb. 11:8)

The association of faith and inheritance is set forth by the two great examples of Noah and Abraham. In our last example the great contributing motives were a divine warning, a godly fear, and a preparation. Abraham's example supplies other facets of this jewel of truth.

The obedience of faith

'By faith Abraham ... obeyed'. This simple statement is supplemented by illuminating clauses which we must earnestly consider.

A_1 He was called to GO OUT.
B_1 Unto a place ... an inheritance.
A_2 And he WENT OUT.
B_2 Not knowing whither he went.

First let us observe, 'He was called to go out ... and he went out'. Such is the record on the tables of faith. Abraham's actual record is not so simple. His obedience was partial and in stages; this we can read in Genesis. A comparison with Hebrews 11:8 indicates how many seasons of our lives may be blanks in the roll of faith. The story of Abraham's obedience is written for our learning. Let us seek grace to be humble disciples in this school of grace. The *first* movement is indicated by Stephen:

'The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, *when* he was in Mesopotamia, *before* he dwelt in Charran, and said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew thee' (Acts 7:2,3).

The *second* movement is revealed in Genesis 12:1:

'Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee'.

The *third* movement is given in Genesis 13:14,15:

'And the LORD said unto Abram, *after that Lot was separated from him,* Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever'.

The *fourth* and crowning movement is given in Genesis 22:12-18:

'Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from Me ... in blessing I will bless thee ... because thou hast obeyed My voice'.

The old man

It is very evident when we compare Acts 7:2,3 with Genesis 12:1 that the Lord spoke to Abram twice. Genesis 12 adds to Acts 7 by saying not only 'country' and 'kindred', but 'thy father's house'. In the first movement, instead of leaving his father's house we find Terah, his father, accompanying Abram.

'And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai his daughter in law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there' (Gen. 11:31).

Here Abram is seen leaving his native land, and Stephen declares that 'he came out of the land of the Chaldeans', but we feel a little uneasy about the presence of Terah and Lot in the face of the command 'from thy kindred'. Notice the failure also in the abortive effort suggested in the words:

'And they went forth with them ... *to go into* the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and *dwelt there*'.

If the map is consulted it will be seen that Abram and Terah made a journey of some 600 miles, but when they stayed at Haran they were still on *the same side of the Euphrates.* The lesson is repeated at the time of the Exodus.

Nothing but a 'three days journey' could satisfy the command of God, and Pharaoh, it will be remembered, tried to play the part of Terah by suggesting first that Israel should worship God 'in the land', and then, this being rejected, that Israel should go 'not very far off', *anything* except that which set forth resurrection ground. In spite of the 600 miles journey, Abram was no nearer entering the inheritance. He must cross the river. He must become 'Abram the *Hebrew*', the one who 'crossed over'. This, however, could not take place while Terah lived. Stephen's words echo the doctrine of Romans 6 when he said, 'When his father *was dead*, he removed him into this land'. Terah stands for the old man, and the old man is a hinderer. Not until we can realize that our old man has been crucified, and that we are alive unto God, can we proceed.

The flesh

The second movement sees Abram leaving Haran and his father's house, and actually entering the land of Canaan. Then to him is made the great seven-fold covenant. Famine, however, soon puts Abram to the test. A question which perhaps cannot be answered presents itself. Had Lot not been with Abram, would Abram have stood true? The analogy of Israel in the wilderness gives light. Just as Abram took Lot with him across the Euphrates, so we read in Exodus 12:38. 'A mixed multitude went up also with them'. And just as trouble with Lot and the latter's inability to resist the well-watered plain of Sodom was directly connected with flocks and herds, so with this mixed multitude is enumerated 'flocks, and herds, even very much cattle'. Numbers 11:4,5 reveals the evil effect of this company:

'And the mixed multitude that was among them fell a lusting: and the children of Israel ALSO ... we remember the fish, which we did eat in EGYPT'.

Famine tested Abram while Lot was with him, 'and Abram went down into Egypt' (Gen. 12:10). All this period in Egypt was so much waste of time. Abram returned with Lot (Gen. 13:1) unto the place of the altar which he had made there at the *first*, and *there* Abram called on the name of the Lord. Lot stands for the flesh which clogs and trips the true child of God. So far as Terah was concerned, Abram did not move from Haran until *Terah was dead*. With Lot, however, it was different. Abram began to realize the need of separation, and the moment the trouble arose about the flocks and the herds, Abram seemed to seize the opportunity:'Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me' (Gen. 13:9). Lot 'lifted up his eyes' and chose the plain of Jordan. The Lord spoke to Abram *after* that Lot was separated from him, 'Lift up now *thine* eyes'. Lot had lifted up his and seen Sodom. Abram, when separated from Lot, saw his inheritance. Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom - odious name! Abram removed his tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron, and built there an altar unto the Lord. Hebron means *fellowship*. Abram's fellowship with God was impossible while Lot remained with him. How would the Hebrews, to whom this epistle was written, understand all this? Would not some of them begin to see the need for the separation from the 'Lots' of their profession? Would they not perceive the true Abrahamic spirit in the call to go outside the camp?

Faith perfected

It was after Abram's victory (where Lot met with such humiliating defeat) that he met the high priest whose name so fills the epistle to the Hebrews (Melchisedec), and it is immediately after the meeting with Melchisedec that we arrive at the inheritance and righteousness of faith. This close association of righteousness and inheritance is a feature lost sight of by too many for us to pass it by. Genesis 15:6, the great passage concerning justification by faith, is introduced by Abram's question concerning his *heir*, and the Lord's answer concerning this is the groundwork of Abram's faith. Romans chapters 1 to 3 lay the foundation of justification by faith, and are followed by chapter 4, which is nothing more nor less than an exposition of Genesis 15:6. In the midst of this chapter we read:

'The promise, that he should be the HEIR of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be HEIRS, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect' (Rom. 4:13,14).

In like manner Galatians 3:29 concludes with the words:

'If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and *heirs* according to the promise ... if a son, then an *heir* of God through Christ ... the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman' (Gal. 3:29, 4:7,30).

Titus 3:7 also testifies to the same truth:

'That being justified by His grace, we should be made *heirs* according to the hope of *aionian* life'.

The perfecting of Abraham's faith, however, is seen in Genesis 22. There he not only stood before God, having left his native land, his kindred, his father's house, but he had also foregone his rights in the matter of Lot, and now he goes to the full limits and voluntarily gives his best, his beloved son in whom all the promises of God were vested. The Hebrews were exhorted to:

'Be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience INHERIT the promises. For when God made promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, He sware by Himself' (Heb. 6:12,13).

Abraham 'patiently endured' and 'obtained the promise'. So, continues the epistle to these tried Hebrews:

'Ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise' (Heb. 10:36).

James 2:22 declares that in the offering of Isaac Abraham's faith was 'perfected', brought to its true end, the keyword of Hebrews. Translated into terms of doctrine, the several steps in Abraham's faith are seen to be so many approximations of the cross of Christ:

(1) The step that followed the death of Terah stands for the crucifixion of the old man (Rom. 6:6).
(2) The separation from Lot, and the vision that followed with the dwelling at Hebron, the place of fellowship, stands for the crucifixion of the flesh (Gal. 5:24).
(3) The repudiation of all reward from the king of Sodom 'lest he should say, I have made Abraham rich', stands for the crucifixion of the world (Gal. 6:14).
(4) The offering up of Isaac, the beloved son, is the fellowship of His sufferings, the conformity to His death, which is on the one hand intimately connected with the perfecting, the prize, and the heavenly citizenship, and on the other is strongly contrasted with those who mind earthly things, and constitute themselves 'enemies of the cross of Christ' (Phil. 3:10-21; Heb. 6:6).

So far we have traced the meaning of the statement 'By faith Abraham ... obeyed'. Looking to the opening paragraph of this section we see that there is another pair of statements to consider. The obedience of faith is found in the words, 'Go out', 'he went out'. As we read Hebrews 11:8 it *might appear* that the fact that Abraham knew all about the inheritance, enabled him to step out in faith. 'By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed'. This, however, is not the meaning. When he obeyed he did not have the inheritance so definitely revealed, for the verse continues, 'and he went out, *not knowing* whither he went'. This brings Abraham into line with the other examples of faith. 'Faith is the substance ... of things *not seen*'. Noah was warned of the things *not seen* as yet. Abraham knew that he was to go into a land of the Lord's providing, and he knew that it was to be his inheritance, but the revelation of that inheritance grew with his obedience.

Is there no parallel experience suggested in Ephesians 1:18? 'That ye may know what is ... the riches of the glory of His *inheritance* in the saints'. Is there no parallel in 1 Corinthians 2:9,10? We shall learn presently that Abraham received a higher call and a fuller revelation that eclipsed the original inheritance of the land, but this we must deal with in its true place. For the time being we must stop. The thread is taken up in the record of the next pair, Isaac and Jacob.

Let us not set aside this word 'obey'. True, we are of faith; true, we are not under law, but under grace; true we are sons, not servants. Does this mean that obedience, the obedience of faith, is not for us? 'Though He were a Son, yet learned He *obedience* ... all them that *obey Him*' (Heb. 5:8,9). The words obedience and obey mean 'to hear with submission'. It is translated simply 'hearken' in Acts 12:13. It is incipient in Hebrews 3 and 4 in the words, 'Today if ye will *hear* His voice'. Faith comes out of hearing (Rom. 10:17), and the obedience of faith is simply that hearing and practical response continued throughout the walk of life.

Faith, Pilgrimage and Earnest (Heb. 11:9-19)

Abraham's faith is too great, his example too full, to be circumscribed within the space of one verse, or one phrase. His example blends with that of Isaac and Jacob, and reappears in verses 11 and 12 in connection with

Sarah. Not only is Abraham the greatest example of faith's obedience, but, together with Isaac and Jacob, he is the example of the faith that waits, that leads outside the camp, that makes the child of God a pilgrim and a stranger. It will be seen that after Sarah's faith is recorded, the pilgrim character of faith is resumed and amplified in verses 14-16:

'By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God' (Heb. 11:9,10).

'These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for He hath prepared for them a city' (Heb. 11:13-16).

Strangers and pilgrims

A glance at these two sets will reveal the fact that in verses 13-16 the theme of verses 9 and 10 is developed and filled out. This is made clear in the following structure:

A 9. By faith Sojourn in land of promise.
B 9. Dwelling in tents.
C 10. For he looked for a city.
(Sarah and resurrection).
A 13. According to faith died, not having received the promises.
B 13. Confessed they were strangers and pilgrims.
C 14-16. For they seek a country and a city.

It is a common mistake to speak of the early fathers of Israel as nomads, wandering sheiks of the desert, little better than Gypsies. Such they became by *faith*, not by birth. Recent excavations have confirmed the opinion that Ur of the Chaldees was no mean city. The trend of archaeological investigation goes to prove that the culture of Egypt came from Chaldea, so that Abraham, the man of *the city*, voluntarily becomes the man of *the tent* by reason of his faith.

'To sojourn' means to dwell as a stranger, as *paroikia* is translated in Acts 13:17. In Hebrews 11:13 the structure reveals that the thought corresponding to sojourning is dying. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country (9). According to faith these all died, not having received the promises (13). There is something about faith, and the God in Whom that faith rests, that has this separating effect. It made a martyr of Abel, and potentially one of Enoch; it separated Noah from his fellows, and Abraham from his country. Faith has to do with things 'hoped for', and the reproach and reproof connected with faith is for things 'not seen'. We need to be more fully alive to the fact that faith operates *only* in the sphere of resurrection. But, one may interpose, are we not to exercise faith in matters of daily life here? Do we not believe that the very daily bread that perishes is a gift of God? Most assuredly, but how much richer to believe that these are not ours in the course of ordinary providence, or on the same plane as the feeding of sparrows, but that all such blessings are wilderness provisions coming to us by reason of the risen Christ, and to enable us to cover the distance, shall we say, between our Red Sea and the Jordan. Paul's testimony in Galatians should be the normal experience:

'I have been crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me' (Gal. 2:20).

That it appears so very unusual is to our shame. It is impossible to read of Abraham in the epistles without being made conscious of the resurrection. Romans 4:17 tells us that when he believed God, Who made the promise to him that he should be the father of many nations, he believed *God Who quickeneth the dead*. Hebrews 11:19 tells us that when Abraham offered up Isaac on the mountain, he did so accounting that God was able to raise him up, *even from*

the dead. When the child of God can receive the daily supply, the opportunity to earn a living, the gift of health and strength, as directly flowing from the risen Lord, then he is experiencing something of the true nature of faith.

Those who died, not having received the promises, 'saw them afar off'. This principle runs throughout the Word. Heavy trials may be called 'light afflictions that are but for a moment', if it can be added, '*while* we look not at the things which are *seen*' (2 Cor. 4:17,18). While Abraham is not mentioned in 2 Corinthians 4, we have but to read on into chapter 5:1,2 to find the 'tent' contrasted with the 'building of God in the heavens', exactly as we have the 'tent' and 'the city' of God in Hebrews 11. Without resurrection, Hebrews 11:13 would surely read, 'These all died in *despair*, not having received the promises'. When one hears children of God 'claiming' here and now all sorts of blessings because of the victory of Calvary, one wonders what the effect of this passage suddenly brought home by the Spirit of God would be. Do we not see that faith can contentedly *go without* rather than 'claim' all now, simply because faith has to do with resurrection and new life? How many children of God press the question of bodily healing on these lines! They teach and believe that, had we all sufficient faith, sickness among saints would be unknown. Why they do not pursue this to its logical conclusion and say that, were there Sufficient faith among saints, *death* would be unknown, we cannot tell, except it be that facts are too stubborn. Christ has not purchased for the saint either immunity from sickness or from death; He does give 'the *power* of His resurrection' now, and He will give incorruptible life after this present life has been laid down.

These saints of God, who according to faith died *not having received the promises* were not thereby rendered miserable; they 'embraced' or 'saluted' these far-off promises, and patiently waited that good time when their inheritance could be enjoyed unspoiled by sin and death.

Tent and city

The outward symbol of the pilgrim is the tent. Before this epistle closes the apostle presses this fact upon the Hebrews in very solemn terms:

'Wherefore Jesus also ... suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach. For here have we NO CONTINUING CITY, but we SEEK one to come' (Heb. 13:12-14).

Christ Himself is a stranger in this world. The only dwelling place of God that Hebrews mentions is a 'tent' or 'tabernacle'. Not until the new heavens and new earth, wherein dwells righteousness, shall come, will it be right for 'tent' and 'city' to come together (Rev. 21:2,3). Hebrews 12:27,28 stresses this same truth. The unshaken kingdom 'abides', and is closely connected with the 'heavenly Jerusalem' (12:22). This 'prepared' city that 'abides' is seen in John 14:2,3 'In My Father's house are many *abiding places* ... I go to *prepare* a place for you'. And just as the Lord reveals Himself in John 14:6 as 'the true and living Way', so in Hebrews 10:20 He is revealed as 'the new and living way', while John 1:14 tells us that 'the Word was made flesh and *tabernacled* among us'.

Are the saints of God alone to exercise patience? Is not God Himself called 'the God of *patience*' and 'the God of *hope*' in Romans 15:5 and 13? Is not Christ spoken of as 'henceforth *expecting*' (Heb. 10:13)? and shall we therefore murmur that our inheritance is not yet here? Members of the Body of Christ would do well to remember that, though 'blessed with *all* spiritual blessings', those blessings are 'in the heavenlies in Christ', and the selfsame chapter of Ephesians tells us that what we have here and now is 'the *earnest* of the inheritance *until* the redemption of the purchased possession'. Is it not truer faith to bear the reproach of Christ, and be a mere tentdweller with this 'earnest', than to look upon the city and the plain of Jordan, making oneself believe that it is like the 'garden of the Lord' (Gen. 13:10)? Since the events of Genesis 3, should we not view any appearance of Eden with suspicion? A paradise this side of resurrection is but the devil's millennium that has captivated preacher and politician throughout the ages. The dwelling in tents was a 'confession':

They 'confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth' (verse Heb. 11:13).

'They that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country' (verse 14).

Here we have two sides of the story. Merely to become strangers and pilgrims may indicate that we are but moral Ishmaels, and prefer the desert to human society, but to be strangers and pilgrims because we seek that city and country of God is the true thing. For the member of the Body of Christ, all this teaching of Hebrews 11 is found in doctrinal language in Philippians. The Hebrews were exhorted concerning the things that accompany salvation

(Heb. 6:9), as the Philippians were to 'work out their own salvation' (Phil. 2:12). The Philippians were assured that it was God Who 'worked in them both to will and to do of His good pleasure' (Phil. 2:13), even as the Hebrews were told to rest in the God of peace, Who 'worked in them that which was well-pleasing in His sight' (Heb. 13:21). Paul was confident that God would 'perfect' the good thing He had begun in the Philippians (1:6), as in the Hebrews (13:21). Philippians 3 speaks of Paul, the Hebrew, and his loss for Christ's sake, and the Hebrews are given both example (11:26) and precept (10:34-36) to the same end. The Philippians were exhorted to press toward the mark (3:14), and the Hebrews were exhorted to run the race (12:1-3), and both with the personal example of Christ before them. Both Philippians and Hebrews were warned concerning those who were enemies of the cross of Christ (Phil. 3:18; Heb. 10:29), the great incentive in Philippians being the 'citizenship which is in heaven' (3:20), with a like incentive of the heavenly Jerusalem before the Hebrews (11:10). The *cities* are not identical, the *prizes* are not the same, but the *principles* are exactly parallel in their outworking. The tent-dwelling, the sojourning, the pilgrimage, are re-interpreted for us in Philippians chapters 2 and 3.

The heavenly country and city

We now come to the incentive that was operative in Abraham:'He *looked* for a city' built by God. He had no faith to *build* a city for himself. It is the Cains, the Nimrods and the Hiels that found cities rather than the Abrahams of Faith. Abraham was concerned about the city's 'foundations'. He looked for the city having 'the foundations'. The order of words in the original is suggestive:'He looked for the foundations-having city' 'To look for' is strictly 'to expect', as the only other reference in Hebrews is translated (10:13). Abraham shared the same spirit of patient waiting as his Lord manifested. 'The foundations' are described in Revelation 21:14,19,20; they bear the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, and like the whole purpose of the ages, rest upon the unimpeachable righteousness of God.

These tent-dwellers had no need to make loud professions; their actions spoke for them:'for they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country'. This was their 'confession'; they confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims in the land. As 'partakers of the heavenly calling' they had this 'confession' of which the Lord was both apostle and High Priest (3:1; 4:14, where *homologia* is translated 'profession'). The whole of the intervening passages of chapters 3 and 4 are taken up with Israel in the wilderness, and the rest that 'remaineth'. Israel in the wilderness not only remembered the fish and the cucumbers, etc., of Egypt (Numb. 11:5), but went so far as to say: 'Let us make a *captain*, and let us return into Egypt' (Numb. 14:4). This word 'captain' is *archegos* in the LXX, and occurs in Hebrews 2:10 ('Captain') and 12:2 ('Author'). The lesson is plain. These Hebrew believers would be readers of the LXX, and the connection between the passages would be obvious. This temptation is recognized in Hebrews 11:15:

'And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned'.

The word 'mindful' means 'to remember', and is the same verb as is used in the LXX of Numbers 11:5. 'We remember'. Can there be any possible doubt but that the words of Philippians 3:13, '*forgetting* those things which are behind', are used in true contrast? We need a holy forgetfulness of some things. Why had these saints no opportunity afforded them of returning to Chaldea? They were not 'mindful'. Have you never had your interest in a particular subject quickened, and then, the next day perhaps, have seen a newspaper article or heard a conversation upon the very subject? You say, how strange! But is it? You would have seen the article or heard the conversation even though the subject had never come before your notice, yet it would have left no impression because you were not interested. Jonah will always find a ship ready for Tarshish (Jonah 1:3), but such a circumstance will be no evidence of the will of the Lord. The only way to live, if we would walk worthy of our calling is to remember the exhortation, 'Seek those things which are above ... set your mind on things above ... for ye died' (Col. 3:1-3).

The positive is resumed in Hebrews 11:16:'But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly' The word country is strictly 'the fatherland'. It is one of the 'better' things of Hebrews, and is balanced in this chapter by the better resurrection and provision of 11:35 and 40. Now, just as the true followers of the Captain of salvation - are all one, 'for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren' (2:11), so here, these have followed the true Captain, and have not appointed a captain to lead them back to Egypt, 'wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He hath prepared for them a city'. These pilgrims of faith will find their inheritance in that day, when the voice

out of heaven shall say: 'Behold, the Tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and *be their God*' (Rev. 21:3). Among those who will have no part in that city are 'the fearful'. Throughout the epistle to the Hebrews the apostle's eye seems to be upon that word. These saints were in danger of 'drawing back unto perdition', of failing to hold fast the confidence of their hope to the end. Such could not be renewed again unto repentance. Such drawing back could only end in loss.

Hebrews 11 does not minimize the pilgrim journey or its accompanying reproach, but it does point to a way to the better things, the city which has the foundations, for which Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were content to be labelled strangers and pilgrims in the land of promise. If you do not presume, as some would have you do, and 'claim' blessings now that belong to the 'far off' city, remember that it is a part of faith now to 'not receive' the promises, and that the *earnest* of the inheritance is all that the tent-dweller may legitimately hope to enjoy.

The faith of Sarah and Abraham in relation to Israel comes centrally in the set of seven pairs that occupy the bulk of Hebrews 11. Its great theme is resurrection. This is true not only by reason of its pre-eminent place in *their* faith, but resurrection, in some phase or other, appears closely connected with *all* the examples of this chapter; so much so, that it brings forward the challenging inquiry, Is *there any faith recognized in Scripture that is not actively or passively associated with resurrection*? Both Sarah and Abraham exhibited a faith in 'God Who quickeneth the dead' (Rom. 4:17), in relation to Isaac; Sarah at his birth, and Abraham at his great trial. The faith of Abraham concerning the birth of Isaac is omitted in chapter 11 of Hebrews.

Whether it be Abraham and Sarah respecting the birth of Isaac, or Abraham alone at the offering of Isaac, standing out as a beacon of light through all the darkness of human doubt and incredulity, one feature is emphasized: *the promise and the Promiser*. Taking the testimony of Romans 4 to Abraham's faith we read:

'Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end *the promise* might be sure to all the seed'.

'He staggered not at *the promise of* God through unbelief ... being fully persuaded that, what He had *promised*, He was able also to perform'.

'Now it was not written for his sake alone ... but for us also ... if we believe on Him that *raised up* Jesus our Lord from the dead' (Rom. 4:16-25).

Here we have Abraham's faith concerning the birth of Isaac most intimately connected with the promise and the resurrection. Now let us consider the testimony concerning Sarah:

'Through faith also Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged Him faithful Who had promised' (Heb. 11:11).

The words 'as good as dead' of Romans 4:19 are parallel with 'past age' of this passage, and stress the figure of resurrection. Abraham's trial of faith recorded in Hebrews 11:17-19 revolves around these same features of faith and promise and resurrection:

'By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received *the promises* offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: accounting that God was able to *raise him up, even from the dead*; from whence also he received him in a figure' (Heb. 11:17-19).

As at the beginning, so here in a greater degree, Abraham:

'against (natural) hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, *according to that which was spoken*, So shall thy seed be' (Rom. 4:18).

It is very evident that the faith of Abraham and Sarah in the Promiser was such that they believed He was the One Who quickeneth the dead. Therefore Abraham could believe this when all human hope had long passed. Sarah could receive strength when she was as good as dead, and Abraham, without knowing exactly how it would be accomplished, was confident that He Who had vested the promises in Isaac would, if needs be, raise him from the dead in order that His promise might be fulfilled. This appears to be an essential element of faith. It is surely significant that we do not read the word 'promise' (*epangelia*) in the Gospels, until *after the resurrection of the Lord* (Luke 24:49). This has reference to the Holy Spirit which came upon the apostles on the day of Pentecost. The shedding forth of the Holy Spirit and His miraculous gifts was directly connected with the resurrection of Christ, as Acts 2:29-33 will show:

'He ... spake of the *resurrection* of Christ ... therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father *the promise* of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth *this*, which ye now see and hear'.

The noun 'promise' is an important word in Hebrews, occurring as it does fourteen times, as follows:

'Let us therefore fear, lest, a *promise* being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it' (4:1).

'Be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit *the promises*' (6:12).

'After he had patiently endured, he obtained the *promise*' (6:15).

'To shew unto the heirs of *promise* the immutability of His counsel' (6:17).

'He (Melchisedec) ... blessed him that had the *promises*' (7:6).

'A better covenant ... established upon better *promises*' (8:6).

'The new testament (covenant) ... receive the *promise* of eternal inheritance' (9:15).

'Ye have need of patience, that ... ye might receive the *promise*' (10:36).

'By faith he sojourned in the land of *promise*' (11:9).

'Heirs with him of the same *promise*' (11:9).

'These all died in faith, not having received the *promises*' (11:13).

'He that had received the *promises* offered up his only begotten son' (11:17).

'Through faith ... obtained *promises*' (11:33).

'Received not the *promise*: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect' (11:39,40).

It will be seen that the example of Abraham would clinch, as it were, the exhortations dealing with the promise that had been given earlier in the epistle. Some of these Hebrew believers were shrinking back under a great trial of faith. Abraham's trial and triumph would encourage them to persevere. Perhaps the fact that these blessings were reserved for resurrection had not been fully grasped by them. Abraham's confidence would tend to reassure them.

The miracle and the marvel of resurrection

Sarah's unbelief was rebuked by the word:'Is anything too hard for the Lord'? (Gen. 18:14), and these words have a fuller message than the English translation supplies. The word 'hard' is *pala*, and is rendered 'wonderful', 'marvel', and the like. It is used of the plagues of Egypt and the future day of restoration (Psa. 78:12; Zech. 8:6); it is associated with the wonder of child-birth (Psa. 139:14,15); it enters into the name of the Angel who appeared to Samson's mother (Judg. 13:18), and above all in the name of that 'Child born and Son given' of whom Isaac was but a type - 'His name shall be called *Wonderful*' (Isa. 9:6). Is anything too wonderful for the Lord of resurrection?

Have we not allowed ourselves to be robbed of a full apprehension of God's grace and power by reason of the limits imposed by translation? The word usually rendered 'miracle' is *dunamis*. This word occurs twice in Hebrews 11, viz., 'Sarah received *strength*, (11), and 'quenched the *violence* of fire' (34). The only reference therefore to God's power in this chapter has to do with resurrection. When Paul said: 'That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection' he actually said, 'the *miracle* of His resurrection'. Sarah knew this miracle, Abraham knew it, Jonah experienced it, and Israel anticipated it (Hos. 6:2). This miraculous power of resurrection lies behind every promise of God, and however dark and apparently contrary to all reasonable expectation the present path may be, faith (as in the trial of Abraham) goes on beyond even the power of death, and believes in *God Who quickeneth the dead*.

When Abraham heard the call the first time, he obeyed and went out not *knowing*. When he responded the second time, he obeyed, still not knowing, but assured that God was faithful that promised. He obtained promises, he patiently endured, and could like Paul say, 'I know Whom I have believed, and am persuaded'. Sarah 'judged Him faithful Who had promised'. Abraham 'accounted Him able to raise up Isaac, even from the dead'. These are but variants of the same act of faith.

Members of the One Body too, have a promise to keep in mind, a promise made before age times (Tit. 1:2), a promise sealed, for which an earnest has been given (Eph. 1:13), a promise which forms a precious feature of their

peculiar calling (Eph. 3:6), a promise which likewise looks forward to the day of resurrection, the day of redemption, for its fulfilment, and which they may anticipate as they walk in the power that is to usward who believe, a power which is nothing short of the power of His resurrection.

'For all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us' (2 Cor. 1:20).

Crossed Hands or Restoration (Heb. 11:20-22).

The insistence of Hebrews 11 upon the peculiar characteristics of faith, brings into prominence some incidents in the lives of the patriarchs that might otherwise have remained in the background. This is specially the case with Joseph, for who, unguided by God, would have picked out of that wonderful life the commandment concerning his bones? In the verse before us we have a pair of witnesses that have to do with 'blessing', but blessing given with some rather unusual accompaniment or in some rather unusual circumstance:

'By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff' (Heb. 11:20,21).

It is very evident to the most casual reader that these two acts form a pair. In both cases the old man, the father, is partially blind. 'His eyes were dim, so that he could not see' (Gen. 27:1). 'Now the eyes of Israel were dim for age, so that he could not see' (Gen. 48:10). In both cases, two sons are connected with the blessing; in the first Jacob and Esau, in the second Ephraim and Manasseh. In both, the younger is blessed above the elder, and in both there is an attempt to interfere with the Divine purpose by the fondness of the parent for the firstborn. We have already demonstrated that Hebrews 11 is occupied with a series of seven pairs, and this close parallel is but added confirmation.

Grace not law

We take it that the reader is sufficiently acquainted with the narrative of the two passages of Genesis, to enable us to proceed at once to the lesson intended by the apostle when writing to the Hebrews. One of the stumbling-blocks in the path of the early church was the necessity to set aside generations of racial pride and the privileges of circumcision. The Hebrew section could not readily relinquish their connection with the law and their position as the firstborn, and around this difficulty a great deal of the argument of Galatians and Romans is written:

'And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise' (Gal. 3:17,18).

'Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all' (Rom. 4:16).

These two passages make it very clear that the promises of God do not move along the line of works, law or race, but that the promises originally made to Abraham and his seed included both the Jew and Gentile in their embrace. Romans 9:7-12 throws further light upon the question, revealing that deeper motives and purposes are involved:

'In Isaac shall thy seed be called ... And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; (for the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of Him that calleth;) it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger'.

Ishmael the firstborn is set aside, and Isaac is seen as the child of promise. Esau the firstborn is set aside, and the younger, Jacob, is the true seed, a 'supplanter', by Divine intention. Manasseh the firstborn is passed over, that Ephraim the younger may receive the blessing, and so on down the ages.

We believe that we are not alone in experiencing considerable difficulty when asked to believe that when Isaac was deceived into blessing Jacob in the place of Esau, that Isaac acted 'by faith'. If *that is* faith what is credulity, or unbelief or disobedience? For observe, in Genesis 27 we have the following statements, and are not left to our own deductions:

(1) Isaac most pointedly intended to bless Esau.
(2) Rebekah as definitely intended Jacob to be blessed.

Rebekah's *methods* are to be condemned, but at least she sought, even by questionable means, that the revealed purpose of God at the birth of Esau and Jacob should be carried out. We cannot suppose that Isaac had lived in ignorance of this prophecy given at the birth of the children, and therefore his direct choice of Esau can scarcely be called 'the obedience of faith'.

(3) When Esau returned we read, 'And Isaac trembled very exceedingly, and said, Who? where is he?' etc. This trembling and questioning are no evidence of faith. Yet it still stands written, 'By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come'.

The turning point of the narrative where faith begins to operate appears to be at the moment when Isaac realized the deception that had been practised upon him. The words 'And Isaac trembled with a great trembling greatly' (Gen. 27:33 margin) appear too strong if they simply indicate Isaac's fear of Esau's anger. May they not rather indicate that with the revelation of Jacob's deception came also the consciousness of his own failure to seek first the will of the Lord? And so at the end of the very same verse that sees him 'trembling greatly', we find him suddenly resolute: 'Yea, and he shall be blessed'. So we find the vacillating Pilate suddenly adamant, when the purpose of God shall so require: 'What I have written, I have written'.

The blessing intended in unbelief for Esau is confirmed to Jacob 'by faith'. Strange overruling, yet can we not see some parallels in our own wayward wanderings? Esau was blessed concerning things to come, and the blessing is recorded in verses 39 and 40. Jacob's full blessing, freely and by faith, however, is not given until the 28 chapter: 'And Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him' (Gen. 28:1). There is no deception now, no compulsion; faith sees clearly the path to tread. The blessing evidently has intimate relation to the great promise of God to Abraham concerning a Seed and a land, for Isaac immediately adds: 'Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan'. Here Jacob follows in line with Isaac, as Isaac with Abraham (see Gen. 24:37). Then follows that blessing which Rebekah had schemed in vain to hear, and Jacob had deceived in vain to receive:

'And God Almighty (El Shaddai, as in 17:1) bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people' (Gen. 28:3).

The margin renders 'multitude' by 'assembly'. The LXX translates the word *kahal* by *sunagoge*, 'synagogue'. This also is a peculiar item in the great promise to Abraham, for it reappears as the change of Jacob's name to Israel:

'I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a *company* (*kahal*, LXX *sunagoge*) of nations shall be of thee' (Gen. 35:11).

It occurs yet again in the passage where Jacob blesses Ephraim and Manasseh (Gen. 48:4). We do not know whether the note to the word 'multitude' (Gen. 48:19) in *The Companion Bible* has been or will be corrected in later editions, but the student should remember that in this verse the word is quite different from the above, being the Hebrew *melo*, and involves a different idea. This is but an expansion of the original promise:'In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed' (Gen. 12:3).

Genesis 28:4 continues:

'And give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham'.

Here, without the shadow of doubt, is the promise of Abraham, and given by faith to Jacob by Isaac. If we contrast the blessing of Genesis 28:1-4 with that of 27:28,29 we shall find that the former blessing, received by deception, was the firstborn's blessing, while the latter, given freely and by faith, was the one for which Jacob had seized the chance of birthright, and Rebekah had plotted in vain; for this promise was by grace, and did not necessarily descend to the natural firstborn. This lesson is repeated in the second instance given in Hebrews 11. When the moment came for the two sons of Joseph to be blessed, Joseph placed the firstborn at the right hand of Jacob:

'And Israel stretched out his right hand, and laid it upon Ephraim's head, who was the younger, and his left hand upon Manasseh's head, guiding his hands wittingly; for Manasseh was the firstborn ... and he set Ephraim before Manasseh' (Gen. 48:14-20).

It is not our object to attempt an exposition here of these two blessings, which include within their terms practically all that belongs to the purpose of God for the earth until the end of the Millennium. Our purpose is rather to gather the lesson that may be learned for ourselves, and to see how it is related to the need of the Hebrew believer and the theme of the epistle.

The blessing of the crossed hands

This would be but one more blow at the passing system of law and Jewish privilege. Already the Aaronic and Levitical priesthood had given place to that after the order of Melchisedec. Already the sacrifices of bulls and goats had passed away in view of the one great Sacrifice for sin. Already the old Covenant had been set aside for the new. We have read of a better Covenant, better sacrifices, a better hope, and now we are to realize that there are 'better promises' than those of the law. When the twelfth chapter is concluded we shall find a better 'Firstborn' connected with Mount Sion, than was connected with Mount Sinai (Heb. 12:18-23), and we shall perhaps believe that it is not accident but design that places Hebrews 12:16,17 immediately before these verses, and introduces Esau, as a profane person, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. With all Jacob's manifold faults, and we are not called upon to gloss them over, Jacob schemed and plotted *for the blessing*. He did not, like his profane brother, hold it cheap and barter it away. Jacob, though the younger, was the recipient of blessing; who, when he was most blessed, halted upon his thigh. His blessing at the end was deliberately contrary to law and expectation, and this, together with Jacob's crosshand blessing and Isaac's previous blessing, bring forward one more important feature in the constitution of faith, namely, that it sets aside the flesh. This is but another way of saying that faith is ever associated with resurrection, as we have already seen. May we rejoice that 'all spiritual blessings' are not given as deserts, but in pure grace, and that the highest of all inheritances has been bestowed upon those who by nature and practice seemed the least likely. A blessing of crossed hands indeed!

'Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed' (Rom. 4:16).

Among the characters of the Old Testament that are outstanding types of Christ, Joseph takes a prominent place. His separate position in the family of Jacob, his betrayal, his imprisonment, his exaltation to the throne, all provide food for holy wonder as we see the Messiah, Who was to come after many years, so clearly anticipated by God and recorded in His Word. Hebrews 11:22, however, is not so much concerned with Joseph as a type, as with Joseph as the man of faith. Moreover we must never lose sight of the fact that the apostle, when writing this chapter, had the Hebrews in mind, and was guided in the selection of his examples so as to afford to these saints all the help possible in their difficult path.

'By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones' (Heb. 11:22).

The expression 'when he died' is the rendering of the Greek verb *teleutao*, which suggests the end or close of life. Earlier on we have found that one of the key words of Hebrews is the word 'perfect' and its variants. We have:

teleios in 9:11, the 'more perfect tabernacle';
teleiotes (6:1), 'let us go on unto perfection';
teleioo (10:14), 'perfected for ever';
teleiosis (7:11), 'if ... perfection were by the Levitical priesthood';
teleiotes (12:2), 'the Author and Finisher (Perfecter) of faith';
teleutao (11:22), 'Joseph when he died';
telos (6:11), 'hope unto the end'.

It would not be true to say that *teleutao* necessarily carries with it the idea of perfecting, for it is used of the death of Herod (Matt. 2:19), and the punishment of the law-breaker (Matt. 15:4), as well as of the death of David (Acts 2:29),

Jacob (Acts 7:15) and Joseph (Heb. 11:22). Yet, seeing how closely the theme of Hebrews is interwoven with this word, it is possible that it was used with intent, because of what was to be written immediately afterward.

The exodus

What Joseph particularly remembered when near the close of his life, was the 'departing of the children of Israel', or, as the original has it, 'the exodus'. 'Made mention' is perhaps better rendered 'remembered' as the margin suggests. In what way could Joseph have 'remembered' the exodus of Israel? The actual deliverance at the Passover did not take place for nearly two centuries after his death. He is said to have remembered this exodus 'by faith', and therefore must have known and believed some 'word of God' (Rom. 10:17). It is very evident that the promise of Genesis 15 was believed by Joseph, and he realized that his own imprisonment and elevation **to** the throne, the coming of his brethren and their settlement in Egypt were all parts of one great whole. The basis of Joseph's faith reads as follows:

'And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge; and afterward shall they come out with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full' (Gen. 15:13-16).

Joseph, surely, was one of those witnesses who 'died in faith, not having received the promise', but who nevertheless saw it afar off and was persuaded of it. There is no murmuring when his time comes to die, but just a confident assurance that God will keep His word:

'And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which He sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence' (Gen. 50:24,25).

Twice in this small compass we have the expression 'visiting He will visit', the Hebrew figure denoting emphasis and certainty. Joseph knew that bondage and affliction awaited Israel, yet who more fitted to speak confidently than himself? Had not Joseph endured sorrow and reproach? Is it not written of him: 'Whose feet they hurt with fetters; he was laid in iron'? (Psa. 105:18). Nevertheless, the Lord had kept His word of promise to Joseph, and so He would keep His covenant with His servant Abraham also. In the exodus Joseph would have no *conscious* part, for he knew that his hour had come.

Resurrection

Joseph, however, did not only remember the exodus of Israel; he gave commandment concerning his bones. Why was this? He certainly did not intend Israel to hold them in reverence as the church of Rome does the bones of martyrs. There is something distinctly personal in Joseph's desire. If we compare the statements of Scripture concerning Jacob and Joseph we shall realize that there is some important lesson involved in their concern about their bones and their burial. We will continue first the record of Joseph:

'And the bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem, in a parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for an hundred pieces of silver: and it became the inheritance of the children of Joseph' (Josh. 24:32).

This parcel of ground was bought by Jacob, as recorded in Genesis 33:19, and there he had erected an altar and called it *El-elohe-Israel*, God - the God of Israel. When Jacob came to die, after blessing the twelve tribes, he too makes special arrangements for his burial in the land of Canaan:

'I am to be gathered unto my people: bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite for a possession of a buryingplace. There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife; and there I buried Leah' (Gen. 49:29-31).

It is suggestive that it is in the passages where we read that Joseph and Jacob 'died' (*teleutao*) that we read of this special burial. Stephen in his speech before the Sanhedrin spoke to men who were not only his opponents, and so not likely to allow any mistake to pass unnoticed, but who were also well versed in the history of the fathers. Consequently we must accept Acts 7:15,16 as added light and not attempt to explain it away:

'So Jacob went down into Egypt, and died (*teleutao*), he, and our fathers, and were carried over into Sychem, and laid in the sepulchre that Abraham bought for a sum of money of the sons of Emmor the father of Sychem'.

Here we learn that not only were Jacob and Joseph buried in purchased burial places in the land of promise, but that the parcel of land that Jacob had bought (Josh. 24:32) had originally belonged to Abraham, and had been secured by Jacob, after his long absence, by the payment of the added one hundred pieces of silver**.** Further, it will be seen that the fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, were buried together in the one place, the cave of Machpelah, while Joseph and his brethren, the heads of the tribes of Israel, were all buried together in the other place, purchased both by Abraham and by Jacob for this very purpose. Who can doubt the meaning? There, in that land of pilgrimage, a land that was promised but not enjoyed, faith saw afar off the promise fulfilled in resurrection. The burying places secured from the inhabitants were just so many pledges of undying faith, and the holy dead, lying together in solemn stillness, spoke of the quiet confidence of faith awaiting the day when in resurrection glory all should come into their own.

There is one more passage that must be noted, viz., Genesis 48:21,22:

'And Israel said unto Joseph, Behold, I die: but God shall be with you, and bring you again unto the land of your fathers. Moreover I have given to thee one portion above thy brethren, which I took out of the hand of the Amorite with my sword and with my bow'.

Here we have a portion of the promised land not bought with money, but taken by the sword. This was 'a double portion', a portion above his brethren, the portion of the victor, the overcomer. It is surely something more than coincidence that the word 'portion' in this passage should be the very word 'shechem', which occurs as a place name in the record of Joshua 24:32. It would appear that the complete story is somewhat as follows:

(1) Abraham purchased the field of Machpelah, and there Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Rebekah and Leah were buried (Gen. 23:4-20; 49:29-31).
(2) Abraham also purchased a portion of land in Shechem of the sons of Emmor, as a burying place for the twelve patriarchs (Acts 7:16).
(3) This piece of land was apparently seized by the Amorites, and delivered from them by Jacob's sword and bow, and doubly secured by the further payment of a sum of money to the sons of Emmor (Gen. 48:21,22 and Josh. 24:32).

The glorious truth of Ephesians was a mystery, or secret, unknown when Abraham, Jacob and Joseph lived. Certain underlying principles, however, receive a little light from the Old Testament records. We can surely see how strong the hope of resurrection was, how intimately it was associated with the inheritance and restoration. Here, in these typical transactions, we can see the 'redemption of the purchased possession', and in the very possession of these sacred spots of earth, an 'earnest of the inheritance', and in Jacob's fight with the Amorite for this precious pledge the conflict with principalities and powers in Ephesians 6.

Jacob undertook no campaign against the Canaanites. In fact he was strongly opposed to such a spirit (Gen. 34:25-30). But when it was necessary to fight for the sacred pledge of the inheritance for which he was willing to wait, then he did not hesitate to enter into battle. This is the true overcoming for the present time. Many dear servants of God are being persuaded to adopt an attitude that is alike dangerous and undispensational. We must not forget that dominion over the Canaanite was not granted to Israel until, under Joshua, they crossed over Jordan. No walls of Jericho fell down flat before either Abraham, Isaac or Jacob. Such is not the condition of pilgrimage but of conquest, and the day of redemption, the day of entry into our inheritance, though near, is not actually present.

This precious lesson of faith would come with quickening force to the Hebrew who read it, and, under God, it was calculated to strengthen the afflicted and persecuted believer by the simple grandeur of its example:

'These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off' (Heb. 11:13).

The purchased possession

There is more in this purchase of land than is at first sight evident, owing to the law of inheritance and its relation to redemption. When Boaz, the kinsman-redeemer, bought the land that belonged to Elimelech and Chilion and Mahlon, he also bought Ruth, the wife of Mahlon, to be his wife, *'to raise up the name of the dead* upon his inheritance, that the name of the dead be not cut off from among his brethren, and from the gate of his place' (Ruth 4:9,10). Jeremiah also bought a piece of land in Anathoth at the command of the Lord, and as an evidence of his faith in the restoration of his people:

'Buy thee my field that is in Anathoth: for the right of redemption is thine to buy it ... Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Take these evidences, this evidence of the purchase, both which is sealed, and this evidence which is open; and put them in an earthen vessel, that they may continue many days. For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Houses and fields and vineyards shall be possessed again in this land' (Jer. 32:7-15).

To the Hebrew who knew the law, those sacred burial grounds would be so many pledges of future resurrection and restoration. 'The purchased possession' would be redeemed, the inheritance would be enjoyed, and during the intervening time of waiting and discipline, 'faith is the substance of things hoped for'.

Moses, Faith that triumphs (Heb. 11:23-28)

In the structure of Hebrews 11, the witness of Joseph and Moses are coupled. Let us notice a lesson that arises out of the comparison of these two witnesses to overcoming faith. Both have to do with Egypt; both have to do personally with Pharaoh, but here the similarity ceases, and contrast begins.

In the case of Joseph, he was led steadily, step by step, through suffering and shame, until at last he sat upon the throne of Egypt and became the saviour of his people. In the case of Moses, he was led just as steadily to turn his back upon Egypt and its throne, and from greatness and wealth he descended to reproach and affliction that he, too, might be, equally and as surely, a saviour of his people. Now both these contrary actions were 'by faith'. How easy it would have been for Moses to have reasoned that in Joseph he had a precedent for accepting the honour of adoption, and of remaining attached to the throne of Egypt! How easily he could have deceived himself by reasoning that this closeness to the throne was a God-given responsibility that he must use for the amelioration of Israel's sorrows! Yet how false it would have been! Moses, as surely as Joseph, knew the promise of Genesis 15. God had declared that 'in the fourth generation' Israel should come out of the land of their affliction, and Moses knew that in his own person, *that fourth generation* stood represented. This can be easily seen by reading Exodus 6:16-20.

'These are the names of the sons of LEVI (generation No. 1)

Gershon, and KOHATH and Merari (generation No. 2)

The sons of Kohath, AMRAM, etc. (generation No. 3)

And ... took him Jochebed ... to wife; and she bare him Aaron and MOSES' (generation No. 4).

Moses' faith, like Joseph's, came by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. Joseph said, 'God shall surely visit you' - that Moses had heard, as recorded in Exodus 3. Moses knew that Israel were to leave Egypt; they were to be saved by no laws, however good, that emanated from that land of bondage. Joseph's faith as surely saw that Israel must remain in Egypt for some two hundred years, as Moses saw that they could not remain another generation. They both believed the Word, and though their actions, viewed externally, were so directly opposite, really they were entirely both in line and harmony.

Here is the right division of the Word of truth in actual practice. We have to see where we are in the outworking of the divine purpose, and to emulate *the faith*, but not copy the *external expression* of it, manifested in different periods, lest by so doing we err as surely as Moses would have done had he emulated Joseph and ruled in Egypt. By faith Moses forsook Egypt, and refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Abraham 'went out'. Moses 'refused', and 'forsook'.

Moses stands with Abraham in the list of witnesses, inasmuch as more space is devoted to these two than to all others. There are points of resemblance that should not be passed unnoticed. Abraham left a highly civilized

community to become a dweller in tents. Moses turned his back upon the treasures of Egypt to become associated with God's people in their affliction. Both Abraham and Moses had the faith that 'sees the invisible', a quality shared by Noah, and all who were moved with like precious faith, as the opening words of this chapter indicate.

The witness of Moses to that faith which is both the substance of things hoped for, and the proof and reproof associated with things not seen, is given in a series of statements that cover his life from the day of his birth until the great day of Israel's deliverance by the passover. His history, as given, is bounded on either side by protection from one who would destroy in the first place all the male children, and in the second the firstborn. At the beginning faith provided an ark of bulrushes, and at the end the blood of the passover lamb. Lying between these two extremes are four related acts that carry the story on to its blessed conclusion.

'By faith Moses ... REFUSED to be called the son ... CHOOSING rather to suffer affliction with the people of God ... ESTEEMING the reproach of Christ greater riches ... By faith he FORSOOK Egypt' (24-27).

The first item in this exhibition of faith is connected with his birth and, while included in the faith of Moses, is yet, strictly speaking, the faith of his parents. The last item, however, balances this, for while it reads 'by faith he kept the passover', this faith was shared by all Israel, so that we perceive that faith can sometimes be collective, while at others, as in the case of Moses refusing, choosing, esteeming and forsaking, it may be very personal and individual.

When Moses was born, two parts of God's promise drew near together. Amram his father knew full well that Moses was the fourth generation from the entry into Egypt. He also knew that there was another prophecy which must be fulfilled namely, that 400 years were to elapse (see Gen. 15:13 and 16). It might have been difficult to have understood clearly, before the event, how 400 years and a fourth generation could coincide, but by the time Moses was born the possibility of this coincidence became manifest.

We learn that the parents of Moses hid the child for three months 'because they saw that he was a proper child'. Stephen speaking of this same event, says Moses was 'exceeding fair', margin, 'fair to God', a Hebraism indicating something exceptional. The word *asteios*, 'fair', 'proper', is an unusual word, occurring only in Acts 7:20 and Hebrews 11:23. Etymologically it means 'belonging to the city', like 'polite' (from *polis*, a city), 'urbane' (from *verbs*, a city). One edition of the LXX introduces the name of God into the description of David in 1 Samuel 16:12, where it reads: 'Now he was ruddy ... and *fair in aspect through the Lord*'. It may be therefore that Moses at his birth had something about him that first of all caused his parents to stop and think, and then to perceive that here was the promised deliverer of the Lord's people.

'And they were not afraid of the king's commandment' (Heb. 11:23)

The hiding of Moses was by faith, not fear, for faith is not presumption. It would not have been an act of faith to have exposed Moses, and it is salutary to remember the Saviour's repudiation of the devil's suggestion to 'tempt the Lord'. When we read the record in Exodus 2 the mother alone is mentioned: 'When *she* saw, *she* hid, *she* took him', etc. Hebrews 11, however, assures us of the fact that both parents were associated in this venture of faith, even as Exodus 2 goes on to reveal the part played by the elder sister Miriam.

Faith and the powers that be

It will also be observed that faith set aside the commandment of the king. Normally, the child of God is called upon to be law-abiding. Taxes were paid both by the Lord (Matt. 17:27), by the command of the Lord (Matt. 22:21), and by the command of his servant Paul (Rom. 13:7). Human government was to be viewed as under the ordering of God (Rom. 13:1; Titus 3:1; 1 Pet. 2:17). The order of human society is not invaded because believers are 'all one in Christ'. Though it be true that 'in Christ' there are no longer 'male and female', yet these distinctions are observed in the order of the home life (Eph. 5:22-33), and in the church (1 Tim. 2:8-15). Though there be no longer 'bond and free', nevertheless the relationship of master and servant remains untouched (Eph. 6:5-9).

While this is the general attitude, it will be seen that there are times when faith takes the position of Peter and John:

'Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye' (Acts 4:19).

There are times when the commandment of the king must be ignored or flatly contradicted:

'Now when Daniel *knew* that the writing was signed ... he prayed, and gave thanks before his God, *as he did aforetim*' (Dan. 6:10).

'Be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up' (Dan. 3:18).

What it all amounts to is this, that whether we obey the command from the king, or whether we reject it, in both actions we must see to it that we are simply obeying the *Word of God*. This is what the parents of Moses did. Seeing by faith that this child was the one marked out by God for a special purpose, they had but one course of action, which they took, and so their names are found enroled upon the scroll of witnesses for that faith which is the substance of things hoped for.

The positive acts of faith that pertain to Moses now follow. The faith that marked the infant days of Moses was prominent in his after life. One or two notable manifestations of that faith which is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen, are given in the record of Hebrews 11:

Substance 'Refused ... choosing ... esteeming ... for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward' (Heb. 11:24-26).

Not seen 'Forsook ... not fearing ... for he endured, as seeing Him Who is invisible' (Heb. 11:27,28).

No act of faith is recorded of Moses until 'he was come to years'. The original has it: 'having become great', which is a quotation from the LXX of Exodus 2:11, and refers to his growth in years as much as, if not more than, to his greatness in wealth and position, although this too, belongs to the expression (see Gen. 24:35).

The example of Moses very aptly illustrates the exhortation of Hebrews 5:14; 6:1: 'Them that are of full age ... Leaving ... let us go on'. When faith is tested there is no make-believe about it. Moses was great, learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and mighty in words and deeds (Acts 7:22). He apparently had a definite offer made by Pharaoh's daughter of formal adoption into the royal house. It was a very real test. Abraham's trial of faith, too, was intensely real. Nothing on earth could have been so dear in his eyes as his beloved son Isaac. Paul's test of faith was real. The renunciation of the position and privilege of being a Hebrew and a Pharisee cannot be easily estimated by such as ourselves.

The activities of faith

Moses refused, chose, esteemed; had respect, forsook, endured, and kept by faith.

He *refused* to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.

He *chose* rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

He *esteemed* the reproach for Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt.

He *had respect* unto the recompense of the reward.

He *forsook* Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king.

He *endured*, as seeing Him Who is invisible.

He *kept* the passover, and the sprinkling of blood.

To the Hebrews had been written:

'Ye ... took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance. Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward' (Heb. 10:34,35),

and in Moses they would see a very glorious example. These Hebrews were exhorted to consider the 'enduring' nature of their heavenly possessions; they were urged to remember that they were associated with a kingdom that 'remains' (12:28), that here they had no continuing city, but sought one to come (13:14). So then the sinfulness of Egypt's pleasures is not stressed so much as their transience. Moses had a birthright and an adoption that he could not barter for Egypt's pottage (Heb. 12:16; Rom. 9:4), and there was a danger that the Hebrews would succumb under the pressure of their trials, and for a brief period of so-called 'peace', forfeit their heavenly calling. The essential element in the faith necessary to endure and overcome is that which is manifested in Moses' action, and

definitely expressed in Hebrews 11:6:'He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder (a recompenser) of them that diligently seek Him'.

Hebrews is the epistle of the 'right hand of God'. There the great High Priest has sat down, and because the Psalmist said 'At Thy right hand are pleasures for evermore', those whose faith enables them to 'see Him Who is invisible', are enabled to esteem, at their true worth, those 'pleasures of sin' that are 'for a season'.

Joseph and Moses

Joseph's faith led him step by step to the throne of Egypt. Moses' faith led him step by step away from Egypt and its throne to the wilderness and to hardship. The apostle had said earlier, concerning the Patriarchs, that 'if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned' (Heb. 11:15). We shall never lack the counsel of *Mr. Worldly Wiseman*, and our own hearts will often turn us astray. Think how one might have argued the case with Moses:

(1) Joseph's example. See how he used his exalted position for the glory of God and the well-being of his people.
(2) Are you not therefore disobedient to the example of such a man?
(3) Why not see in your preservation and adoption just the same all-powerful Hand, leading you on to this crisis in your life?
(4) Use your influence at court; get measures put into operation that shall ameliorate the sufferings of your people and be a deliverer indeed.

Doubtless we can supplement this from our own experience. But all this would be vain, *for God had spoken*. The promise made to Abraham and remembered by Joseph (Heb. 11:22), was nearly due to be performed. God had said that Israel would be afflicted, but at the set time He would *bring them out*, and Moses' faith, like our own, rested upon 'the Word of God' (Rom. 10:17).

By the time Moses was born, a new dispensation had dawned; 'a new king that knew not Joseph' occupied the throne. So the apostle would press upon the consciences of the Hebrews the necessity to weigh the change of dispensation ushered in by the rejection of their Messiah. They had to 'forsake', 'go forth unto Him without the camp', rather than continue in those things that had ceased to be the will of God.

By faith he forsook Egypt

We must now consider a difficult passage.

'By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing Him Who is invisible' (Heb. 11:27).

It is generally reckoned that this cannot refer to the time when Moses fled unto Midian, but to the second time that he left Egypt, victoriously at the time of the exodus. There is no need to comment upon the obvious 'faith' that enabled Moses to lead Israel out of Egypt, so we ask a moment's attention while we look once again at that earlier flight from Egypt.

'Not fearing the wrath of the king' When we have read through the chapters of Exodus detailing the attitude of Moses towards Pharaoh, the mighty miracles that were wrought, the power that moved heaven and earth and even the angel of death, it seems rather tame to say of that *triumphant* departure from Egypt, the Israelites loaded with the 'spoil' thrust upon them, that Moses 'forsook' Egypt, and did not 'fear' the wrath of the king. He had forsaken Egypt forty years before, and his return was with the express purpose of leading Israel out, not with any intention of settling down himself. Time after time he stood before Pharaoh, calm, unflinching, master of the situation. There was no wrath of the king to fear when, at the last, Israel moved out of the land, and the attempt of Pharaoh to overtake them at the Red Sea hardly fits the passage in the chapter we are considering.

There are several points of contact between Hebrews 11 and Stephen's speech in Acts 7. Stephen gives a very full account of the occasion that led to Moses' flight from Egypt:

'And when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel. And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian: *for he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood not.* And the next day he shewed himself unto them as they strove, and would have set them at one again, saying, Sirs, ye are brethren; why do ye wrong one to another? But he that did his neighbour wrong thrust him away, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us? Wilt thou kill me, as thou didst the Egyptian yesterday? Then fled Moses' (Acts 7:23-29).

Stephen supplies us with the *motive* that prompted Moses' action. He supposed that Israel would have risen as one man and acknowledged him as their deliverer. This was not to be. They rejected him. He left Egypt and remained away for 40 years. Then, Stephen continues:

'This Moses whom they refused, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge? the same did God send to be a ruler and a deliverer by the hand of the angel which appeared to him in the bush. He brought them out' (Acts 7:35,36).

It is very evident that Moses' two manifestations to Israel are typical of the First and Second Coming of Christ. His flight into Midian is parallel with the Lord's rejection, ascension to heaven and present period of waiting. Stephen, too, does not say that Moses forsook or left Egypt the second time, but that 'he brought them out'. Let us look at Exodus 2:11-14 again. Verse 11 opens with the words 'When Moses was grown' which is translated in the LXX by words identical with Hebrews 11:24. Exodus 2:12 gives a statement not repeated by Stephen:

'He looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand'.

It is easy to say, Moses evidently looked 'this way and that', to make sure that no man should witness the deed, but is that truth? Stephen tells us that he assumed that Israel would understand his motive, and Isaiah seems to use the expression in such a way as to compel us to believe that Moses was conscious of the Messianic foreshadowing of his acts:

'He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him' (Isa. 59:16).

'And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me' (Isa. 63:5).

While Exodus 2:14 says 'and Moses feared' it does not say he 'feared the wrath of the king'; but it appears that he feared something less personal and more vital. Spurrell translates the passage:'Then Moses was afraid, for he said, Surely this transaction is known', which endeavours to draw attention to what was passing in Moses' mind. We know from Stephen that Moses expected Israel to see in this act his credentials as a Godsent deliverer, and that when he was sent later, he said: 'They will not believe me ... they will say, The Lord hath not appeared unto thee' (Exod. 4:1), and that the signs of the serpent and the leprosy were given to him.

Let no one judge Moses for the slaying of the Egyptian. Under God he was the instrument of slaying thousands of Egypt's firstborn, and of overcoming the flower of their army at the Red Sea. We understand that at the reply of the quarrelling Israelites, Moses was seized with some apprehension that his mission would miscarry, saying: 'Surely the intention of my act is evident to them', much in the same way the Lord said to His disciples after He had washed their feet: 'What I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter', which refers to something more than the external act of washing the feet. The only possibility therefore was, that Moses should forsake Egypt. Pharaoh sought to slay him, and his flight out of Egypt was no more an act of unbelief than was the flight for much the same reason of Joseph and Mary, as recorded in Matthew 2.

These points we submit to the reader for careful consideration, believing that many an action may be really 'by faith' which, casually judged, may seem the product of some baser motive.

Faith and the better thing (Heb. 11:28-40)

We now reach the concluding pair of characters in the sevenfold series of Hebrews 11, viz., Israel and Rahab. The key thought is 'deliverance from destruction'.

Moses is linked with Israel in the keeping of the passover, 'lest He that destroyed the firstborn should touch them'. Israel pass unscathed through the Red Sea, 'which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned'. 'Rahab perished not with them that believed not'.

The faith of Moses is very comprehensive, and at either end of the record in Hebrews 11 it overlaps and includes the faith of others. In both it was a preserving faith, and connected with birth:

'By faith Moses, when he was born ...' (verse 23).

By 'faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest He that destroyed the firstborn should touch them' (verse 28).

There is no warrant for the change of expression from 'by faith' to 'through faith' in verses 27 and 28. It was the same faith acting in the same way that actuated Moses throughout. There is a real distinction intended between 'by faith' and 'through faith' in Romans 3:30. Here, however, it is a variation in the English version only, and no doctrinal difference is intended.

The passover

Several items of interest are given concerning Moses and the passover. 'By faith he *kept* the passover' The word 'kept' here is *poieo*, and in its true translation has a wider significance than 'kept'. It is used of the sprinkling of blood just as much as the passover, and it would be hardly true to say, 'he kept the sprinkling of blood'. Paul follows the LXX version here, which in its turn faithfully translates the Hebrew. 'To do the passover' (Exod. 12:47,48) does not seem good English, and it is not suggested as an alternative, but it points out the meaning, which is expressed in Exodus 12:50:

'Thus *did* all the children of Israel; as the LORD commanded Moses and Aaron, so *did* they'.

The faith that kept the passover found its warrant in the Word of God. We cannot too insistently bring this forward. All sorts of things are said to be done by the Lord's people 'by faith', but it is difficult sometimes to find any warrant for their actions in the Word. Hebrews 11:1 declares faith to be the substance of things hoped for; Romans 10:17 declares the Word of God to be the substance of that faith. The passover in Exodus 12 is of divine institution. Moses simply 'did' what he was told. 'And the Lord spake unto Moses ... saying ... Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel' (Exod. 12:1-3). The whole passage (Exod. 12:1-20) is the actual spoken Word of the Lord. Without break or introduction verses 12 and 13 say:

'For I will pass through the land'.

'When I see the blood'.

The sprinkling of blood

It is perhaps pardonable for the English reader to link these passages with the others in Hebrews that speak of 'sprinkling'. We have:

(1) The sprinkling of the water of purification (Heb. 9:13).
(2) The sprinkling of both the book and the people (Heb. 9:19).
(3) The sprinkling of the Tabernacle and its vessels (Heb. 9:21).

These find their fulfilment in:

(1) 'The blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel' (Heb. 12:24).
(2) 'Our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience' (Heb. 10:22).
(3) 'Sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ' (1 Pet. 1:2).

All these references use the word *rhantizo* or *rhantismos*. The word used in Hebrews 11:28, however, is *proschusis*, a word occurring nowhere else in the New Testament. Believing that the choice of words to express the truth is a part of that inspiration of God which characterizes the Scriptures, we feel that it is fatal to profitable exegesis to confound what God distinguishes. We have, however, the key to the problem. Elsewhere we have

sought to show the distinction that must be made between *redemption* and *atonement.* Now all the passages cited above have reference to a people *already redeemed*, whereas the passover speaks of the great act of redemption itself. There is no reference to cleansing, dedicating or service in the passover. It speaks of deliverance; consequently the record uses a distinct word. Instead, therefore, of linking Hebrews 11:28 with Hebrews 12:24, we have to make the following comparisons:

The passover and its sprinkled blood (Heb. 11:28) must be compared with such a passage as 1 Peter 1:18,19: 'Ye were, ... redeemed ... with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot'. The redeeming Sacrifice, and its sprinkled blood, must be placed in contrast with 'the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel' (Heb. 12:24), which refers rather to worship.

Faith versus assaying to do

The active faith of Israel begins with the crossing of the Red sea:

'By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned' (Heb. 11:29).

There is a lesson here regarding faith that may well detain us for a moment. By comparing the faith of Joseph with that of Moses, as given in Hebrews 11:22 and 24, we learned that the selfsame faith in different circumstances may produce very contrary actions. Faith led Joseph to occupy the throne of Egypt. Faith as certainly led Moses to turn his back on it. Now in the case before us we have two peoples performing the same act. Israel ventured to cross the Red Sea, and the Egyptians ventured to do the same. Externally the acts were similar; internally they were wide apart. Israel's faith rested upon the Word of God:'Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward' (Exod. 14:15). Egypt's following of Israel, though the same act, was not by faith but through hardness of heart: 'I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them' (Exod. 14:17). Is there no 'assaying to do' on the part of the Lord's people, that ends in disaster?

An outstanding example of faith in modern times is that of George Muller. Doubtless many have thanked God for that noble witness, but does it follow that because George Muller passed through that Red Sea of difficulties triumphantly, all should or could? The Lord's will has as much to do with faith as with *obedience*. He wills that one should suffer weakness, while He wills that another should be divinely healed. He wills to one pecuniary straitness, while to another He wills a full and plentiful supply. Faith will never seek to override these divine appointments. If it is His will that one should be poor, it will not be 'faith' but an Egyptian 'assaying to do', if that one seeks to alter this, however plausibly he may speak of the triumph of faith that can move mountains. Let us see to it that our Red Seas are crossed at the Word of God; *that* will be by faith. Let us have an holy shrinking from any act that looks like faith, but is a counterfeit.

Between Hebrews 11:29 and 30 lies a tragedy of unbelief. Marah, Manna, Meribah, Kadesh Barnea are passed over in silence. In the reckoning of faith they do not exist. There is no recorded gap between the triumph of the Red Sea, and the overthrow of Jericho forty years afterwards. Alas, we all know too well what these driftings and doubtings mean on the pilgrim path and they *are* recorded in chapters 3 and 4.

The faith that accomplished the overthrow of Jericho rested upon the Word of God:

'The LORD said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho ... ye shall compass the city ... six days ... and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets. And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him' (Josh. 6:2-5).

Here is the basis of the faith of Hebrews 11:30.

We saw in an earlier analysis that the seventh in the double list of witnesses in each instance is a woman. Sarah's faith is positive. Rahab's faith is negative: 'Rahab perished not with them that believed not' (Heb. 11:31).

A great deal of unprofitable discussion has taken place over Rahab. Some contend that the Hebrew word *zanah* (harlot) may mean just an innkeeper. Schleusner, with many commentators, would derive *zanah* from *zun*, 'be fed',

but the laws of language will not permit this derivation. There is no necessity to soften down the language of Scripture. The grace that can save Saul the Pharisee, Matthew the publican, and the like, can save Rahab the harlot.

'His mercy is free,
Twas given to Mary, Manasseh and me'.

Another difficulty that some have is the fact that Rahab told lies in defending the spies. Of this the New Testament record takes no notice. It neither minimizes her condition as a harlot, nor enters into any justification of her words and deeds. What it does fix upon is that, sinful, erring, ignorant and immoral as she was, she believed in God and His Word.

'I know that the LORD hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us ... we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red sea for you ... the Lord your God, He is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath' (Josh. 2:9-11).

We can well leave Rahab's morals to grow and expand under the illumination of the law of God. Harlot though she was, and untruthful as she was, she believed God, which is the beginning of all morals and all truth. There is one thing to be said of Rahab's false statements concerning the spies. She did not bear false witness *against* them. She did not *save herself* from the charge of lying at the expense of the life of the spies who had put themselves into her hands.

Joshua chapter 2 and Hebrews 11:31 are not written to justify Rahab's morals, but to bear witness to Rahab's faith. She is included to emphasize the many-sidedness of faith, the way in which it is exhibited by those who differ widely in other ways. Sarah and Rahab are in many points at extremes. Moses and Jacob have few points in common, yet each is bound to each by the common bond of faith.

We have now passed in review the fourteen great witnesses to faith that is the substance of things hoped for. We have seen faith in many aspects leading men and women in many ways, *but ever resting upon the Word of God*. Each example named has been associated with some particular aspect of faith. Before the apostle concludes, he enumerates yet another series of seven, but this time attaches no particular example of faith to any one of them:

'And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets' (Heb. 11:32).

It seems that we should honour this abbreviation, and not spend time in examining the life and doings of Gideon, Samson, and the rest. We pass on, with the apostle, to consider his own summary. He gives an impressive list of witnesses, the first set being the positive acts of faith, and the second, faith's endurance. The very tabulation of these acts of faith is solemnizing.

Eleven positive acts of faith

A Subdued kingdoms.
B Wrought righteousness.
C Obtained promises.
D Stopped the mouths of lions.
E Quenched the violence of fire.
F Escaped the edge of the sword.
G Were made strong out of weakness.
H Waxed valiant in fight.
I Turned to flight the armies of the aliens.
J Women received their dead raised to life again.
K Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance.

That they might obtain a BETTER resurrection.

Eleven negative acts of faith

A Others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings.

B Of bonds and imprisonment.
C They were stoned.
D They were sawn asunder.
E They were tempted.
F They were slain with the sword.
G They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins.
H Being destitute.
I Afflicted.
J Tormented.
K They wandered in deserts, in mountains, in dens and in caves of the earth.

God having provided some BETTER thing for us.

We shall only be side-tracked from our theme if we stay to discuss the problem of Jepthah's daughter, and it would take a volume adequately to deal with the faith of David and the prophets. Nevertheless the very mention of these names impresses upon the mind the length of the list of witnesses to faith found in the Word.

Without attempting that which the epistle sets aside as beyond the scope of the eleventh chapter, we can point out some obvious connections in these lists with the seven names given in verse 32. David subdued kingdoms, as Moab, Ammon, and Edom. The note of triumphant faith is sounded by him in Psalm 60: 'God hath spoken in His holiness; I will rejoice ... Moab is my washpot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe ... Through God we shall do valiantly'. *God had spoken*; that was the basis of David's triumphant faith.

Gideon supplies us with a wonderful example of weakness being made strong, and of turning to flight the armies of the aliens. When we read of the stopping of the mouths of lions and the quenching of the violence of fire, it is difficult to deny a reference to Daniel and his three companions. The women who received their dead raised to life must include the widow of Zarephath (1 Kings 17:22-24), and the Shunammite (2 Kings 4:36).

The better resurrection.

We now come to the crux of the passage. By consulting the arrangement of the subject-matter set out above, it will be seen that 'the better resurrection' and 'some better thing' are focal points.

What is the better resurrection, and how does it harmonize with the balancing clause, 'some better thing', the teaching of Hebrews 11 in particular, and of the epistle in general?

This 'better' resurrection evidently has something to do with the 'better' thing provided by God. We must endeavour first to see what this connection may be, then what the relation of this passage is to the teaching of the eleventh chapter as a whole and finally how far the teaching concerning 'the better resurrection' is supported by the general drift of the whole epistle.

The first thing we propose is to visualize the whole context with these 'better' things in view.

Hebrews 10:19 to 12:25

A 10:19-24. Exhortation 'Let us' Priest.
B 10:25,26. Warning 'No more sacrifice'.
C 10:27-31. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy ... how much more ...
D 10:32 to 11:40. Faith, and the better thing.
A 12:1-4. Exhortation 'Let us' Perfected.
B 12:5-24. Warning 'He found no place of repentance'.
C 12:25. They escaped not who refused Him that spake on earth, much more ...

Such is the broad outline, making 10:19-12:25 one large section. This will be useful as we proceed, but for the time being we are more concerned about the relation of the subject-matter with Hebrews 11, viz., 'faith' and the 'better thing'.

We accordingly amplify the member D 10:32 to 11:40, setting it out as follows:

Faith and the better things (10:32 to 11:40)

A 10:32-39. The better substance in heaven.
B 11:1-12. Faith Abel's offering and others.
A 11:13-16. The better and heavenly country.
B 11:17-35. Faith Abraham's offering and others.
A 11:35. The better resurrection.
B 11:36-38. Faith Unnamed believers and their sufferings.
A 11:39,40. The better thing foreseen.

The section (10:19 to 12:25) begins with exhortations in view of what Christ has done, 'Let us draw near', 'Let us hold fast'. It ends with fuller exhortations in view of what Christ has done, 'Let us lay aside', 'Let us run'. Christ's sufferings and death have, in the first case, consecrated for us a way into the holiest, and in the second set us an example for the race and the crown. In the first He is seen as Expiator, in the second as Exemplar. He is first Priest, then Perfecter.

The remainder of the structure is an alternation between faith and the better thing. There are four descriptions of this better thing which we must consider:

(1) The better and enduring SUBSTANCE in heaven.
(2) The better and heavenly COUNTRY.
(3) The better RESURRECTION.
(4) The better THING provided.

It is evident from the context of the first passage that the better substance is something in the nature of a reward. This is implied in the list of sufferings given in Hebrews 10:32-34, and expressly stated in the sequel: 'Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath *great recompense of reward*' (10:35), a feature that is repeated in 11:26, and in a similar context.

The second passage sets before us something which the patriarchs had in view that enabled them to be content to become strangers and pilgrims on the earth: 'Now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He hath prepared for them a city' (11:16). This city is the 'city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem', of Hebrews 12:22, closely associated with the spirits of just men made perfect, and the portion, not of sons merely, but of *the firstborn*, which we shall see as we read this chapter.

There is nothing said in the Old Testament about this heavenly country and city so far as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are concerned, yet they had it in view, and when Scripture says: 'These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off ... and embraced them' (11:13); it is but saying what in other language is expressed in the two remaining occurrences, namely, resurrection and future entry. 'These all *died* in faith', implies resurrection. 'Having seen them afar off' implies 'having foreseen some better thing'.

The better resurrection is something distinct. Because of it and its excellence some endured torture and refused deliverance. Now it was the hope of the whole twelve tribes that there should be a resurrection (Acts 26:7,8) quite apart from torture or endurance, quite apart from 'giving up' and acting like Abraham or Moses. We are here facing a parallel with the 'out-resurrection' of Philippians 3, which is not the *hope* but the *prize* of our high calling, and closely involved with 'perfecting', 'perdition' and the heavenly citizenship of Philippians 3:12,19 and 20; 'destruction' being the same word as 'perdition' in Hebrews 10:39, and 'conversation' being literally 'citizenship'. The long waiting, the far-off promises, the dying without receiving, are all explained by the fact that God had planned that all these overcomers should enter their reward together. Abel and Noah, Abraham and Moses, the suffering saints of the apostle's day, and the last one to endure under the economy of grace pertaining to the

Hebrews, shall not 'prevent' one another, but 'together with them' shall enter into this better thing, this better country, by way of this better resurrection.

We have seen the relation between the better resurrection and the better thing, we have seen their relation with Hebrews 11; there remains only the general theme of the epistle to be considered. In this epistle we have Christ as a Captain, leading *faithful* Joshuas and Calebs unto their promised possessions. In this epistle He is seen as Melchisedec the Priest Who blessed the *overcoming* Abraham. The historic background is the failure of Israel to go on by faith, and the warning is the possibility of drawing back to perdition. The Hebrew believers are exhorted to run with patience, and reminded of Esau. Their position is to be one of rejection now, 'without the camp', for theirs is soon to be the added glory of the overcomer, because though they have no continuing city, they seek one to come.

Ponder the double line of endurance (verses 32-38) and set your mind on things above where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

The seven-fold witness

We believe it will be of service to repeat the structure already given.

A Faith in connection with DEATH - Abel and Enoch.
  B Faith in connection with INHERITANCE - Noah and Abraham.
    C Faith in connection with PILGRIMAGE - Isaac and Jacob.
      D Faith in connection with RESURRECTION - Sarah and Abraham.
    C Faith in connection with BLESSING Isaac and Jacob.
  B Faith in connection with EGYPT - Joseph and Moses.
A Faith in connection with DELIVERANCE - Israel and Rahab.

Faith in its perfectness is seen in but one Person, the Lord Jesus Christ, but we may appreciate that perfect faith better if we can see it analysed for us in the 11th chapter of this epistle.

CHAPTER 12

THE AUTHOR AND FINISHER OF FAITH
(Heb. 12:1-4)

The long list of witnesses to faith having been written, 'the better thing' emphasized, a giving up and a patient endurance on the part of the faithful pointed out, the apostle turns to the Hebrews to apply the lesson.

Chapter 11 may be looked upon as a great parenthesis; chapter 12, fortified with chapter 11, reverts to the close of chapter 10, and gives a fresh application of its truth. Let us refresh our memories by a revisal of 10:32-39. We are in an atmosphere of suffering, yet a suffering illuminated by the prospect of future joys: 'knowing that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance. Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience ...'. The immediate danger that beset these Hebrews was that of 'drawing back', growing weary, and to encourage them the apostle puts forward three items:

(1) The Second Coming of the Lord. 'Yet a little while' (10:37).
(2) The examples of faith taken from the Old Testament (11).
(3) The example of Christ Himself (12:1-4).

It is this third feature which is now before us. Words are used in this passage which demand careful consideration, and it may be well, before attempting the whole passage, to be a little more certain of the words that are employed here.

WITNESSES (Greek *martus*). This word does not mean spectator. It means one who bears witness, even to the length of suffering martyrdom for it. The English word martyr is the Greek word for witness, and surely no martyr was a mere spectator. We find the word in Hebrews 10:28, 'two or three witnesses'. Revelation 1:5 speaks of 'Jesus Christ ... the faithful Witness'; and Revelation 2:13 uses the same words of 'Antipas, My faithful martyr'. Hebrews 10:15 says, 'the Holy Ghost is a witness', and 11:4 tells us that Abel 'obtained witness'.

It may be of service if we give all the occurrences of *martus*, *martureo* and *marturion* in the epistle to the Hebrews.

'For a *testimony* of those things' (3:5).

'Of whom it is *witnessed* that he liveth' (7:8).

'For He *testifieth*, Thou art a priest' (7:17).

'The Holy Ghost also is a *witness* to us' (10:15).

'Died ... under two or three *witnesses*' (10:28).

'The elders obtained a good *report*' (11:2).

'He obtained *witness* that he was righteous' (11:4).

'God *testifying* of his gifts' (11:4).

'He had this *testimony*' (11:5).

'These all, having obtained a good *report*' (11:39).

'So reat a cloud of *witnesses*' (12:1).

CLOUD (*nephos*). The word does not occur elsewhere in Scripture, the usual word for cloud being the related *nephele*. It is a word in use among Greek writers for a great company. Homer, in the *Iliad*, has the line: 'With him followed a cloud of foot-men'. So Herodotus, Euripides and others. The figure was used likewise by Latin writers; Livy has the line *peditum equitumque nubes*, 'a cloud of horse and foot'.

PATIENCE (*hupomone*). The only occurrences of this word in Hebrews are 10:36 and 12:1. The word literally means 'to remain under'. We take note of it here because of its cognates that are not so obvious in the English translation. The verbal form (*hupomeno*) comes in Hebrews 10:32, 'Ye endured'; 12:2, 'He endured the cross'; 12:3, 'endured such contradiction'; 12:7, 'If ye endure chastening'.

Closely allied, and having a very definite bearing upon the theme, is the simple form *meno*, 'to remain'. It occurs six times in Hebrews:

'*Abideth* a priest continually' (7:3).

'He *continueth* ever' (7:24).

'An *enduring* substance' (10:34).

'Those things which cannot be shaken *may remain*' (12:27).

'Let brotherly love *continue*' (13:1).

'For here have we no *continuing* city' (13:14).

RACE (*agon*). The word means a contest, a race, a conflict, and the accompanying imagery is borrowed from the Greek games.

'So run, that ye may obtain ... every man that *striveth for the mastery* is temperate ... they do it to obtain a corruptible crown' (1 Cor. 9:24,25).

'I have fought a good *fight* ... henceforth ... a crown' (2 Tim. 4:7,8).

A connection hidden from the English reader is found in Hebrews 12:4 'Striving against' is *antagonizomai*, just the verbal form of *agon* as used in 1 Corinthians 9:25, with the prefix *anti*, against.

The consideration of these words has of itself created the true atmosphere of the passage. It is a race, calling for endurance, beset with peculiar difficulties, having a prize ahead, and a glorious Example. We are now ready for the structure, and can then pass on to the argument itself.

Hebrews 12:1-4

A 12:1. ENDURANCE (*hupomone*).
Race (*agon*) set before us.
Entangling sin (*hamartia*).
B 12:2. **a** Looking away to Jesus (*apo*).
b Captain and Perfecter of faith.
A 12:2. ENDURANCE (*hupomeno*). Joy set before Him.
B 12:2,3. ***b*** The right hand of the throne of God.
a Consider Him(*analogizomai*).
A 12:3,4. ENDURANCE (*hupomeno*).
Opposition (*antagonizo*).
Sinners (*hamartolos*).

With so great a cloud of witnesses as is found in the Scriptures ever with us, we are exhorted to take heart and run with patience or endurance the race set before us. Two things are enjoined, viz. (1) 'Lay aside every weight' and (2) 'Lay aside the easily entangling Sin'. He who would go on unto perfection must bear in mind the two sources of hindrance, (1) Weight, (2) Sin. The first is not of itself sinful. To one it will be riches, to another home ties, to another health, to another liberty. Each will know best what it is that hinders in the race. The second is sin in one of its many aspects, 'easily entangling'. It is not so much external 'sins' that are in view, but the old man, the old nature, the flesh. A reference to 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 plainly shows this:

'Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway (disapproved)'.

Then follows a passage dealing with Israel and the temptations in the wilderness; this is parallel with Hebrews 3 and 4. The passage, 'I keep under my body', recalls the opposite walk of those 'whose end is perdition', 'whose God is their belly'; (Phil. 3) - another passage dealing with a prize.

The greatest encouragement however is found not by looking at the great chain of witnesses, and certainly not by contemplating impediments and entanglements, but by the gaze being directed away to the Lord. In Hebrews 10:37 the soon-returning Lord was the encouragement to endure. In Hebrews 12:2 the victorious Leader at the right hand of God is the attractive power. The word 'looking' is really 'looking away', looking away from all lesser patterns, even those of Hebrews 11, and from all the weaknesses and hindrances found in self, looking away to the Lord Jesus.

He has two titles here that are suggestive. 'The Author and Finisher of faith'. Author is *archegos*, and we have the word already in Hebrews 2:10 translated 'Captain', and in close association with the next title, 'Finisher' for that is really 'Perfecter'. 'It became Him ... in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain (*archegos*) of their salvation perfect (*teleioo*) through sufferings'.

We are back again therefore in Hebrews 12 to the original theme: the need to go on unto perfection, the suffering that is associated with it, and the example of those who drew back unto perdition (Heb. 3 and 4).

'*Who for the joy that was set before Him*'. The word 'for' here is *anti*, which sometimes bears the meaning 'instead of'. This has given rise to an interpretation of the passage to the effect that the Lord gave up the joy that was before Him, and in its stead endured the cross. This, however, does not fit the context. The whole tenor of the epistle in general, and the particular example here is that, because of the joy that *lies ahead*, we can endure the suffering *now.*

That is the character of the example of Abraham and Moses, given at length in chapter 11. For the joy set before Abraham he was content to live a pilgrim and a stranger. For the joy set before Moses he turned his back on the treasures of Egypt. For the joy ahead of these Hebrew believers they were exhorted to endure. In this sense the sentence should be translated. Over and over again our problems would be solved if we allowed the Word more

way with us. If instead of giving time to speculation concerning this word *anti* we were to read on a few verses we should have our answer.

'Esau, who for (*anti*) one morsel of meat sold his birthright'. Here we have contrast. Esau exchanged the future blessing for the present, whereas we are to follow the example of Moses who exchanged present immunity from suffering for pleasures at the right hand of God which are for evermore.

Apart from the passage 'crucify to themselves' in Hebrews 6:6, this is the only occurrence of the cross in Hebrews. As in the parallel epistle, Philippians, the reference is to endurance in view of the crown or prize (Phil. 2:8; 3:18). In neither of these epistles is the cross mentioned in connection with redemption or atonement. The usage is similar to the earlier references like those of Matthew 10:38 and 16:24. The saying, 'No cross, no crown' exactly fits its usage. The cross is prominent in the epistle to the Corinthians, for they were carnal. The cross is prominent in the epistle to the Galatians, because they were being moved away from the faith. The only allusion to the cross in Romans is in Romans 6:6 where the old man is dealt with. The argument of Hebrews 12 is, surely, that just as He endured the cross, despising the shame, and is now seated at the right hand of God, so may the believer endure his cross, despise its shame (not 'glory in their shame' as Phil. 3:19), and in God's good time enter into that better thing, by that better resurrection, to enjoy that better and enduring substance connected with the heavenly city, Jerusalem.

We are bid to 'consider' Him Who endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest we be weary and faint. *Analogia* from which 'consider' is taken, is translated 'proportion' (Rom. 12:6), and here implies the act of weighing and balancing one thing with another. It would mean considering the pros and cons of gaining the whole world and losing one's own soul. It would mean estimating aright the actions of Esau (Heb. 12:16) and Moses (11:24-26), for just as loss now means the gaining of the soul in that day according to Matthew 16, so does it according to Hebrews 10:39.

We are now brought face to face with another cause of stumbling, 'the contradiction of sinners', producing weariness. Earlier we had the entangling nature of 'sin', now the 'contradiction of sinners'. *Antilogia* is translated 'strife' in Hebrews 6:16; 'contradiction' (7:7; 12:3) and 'gainsaying' of Korah (Jude 11).

This last reference bears rather pointedly upon the teaching of Hebrews concerning the One Priest. The four occurrences of *antilego* in Acts (13:45 and 28:19,22) give further light upon the special 'contradiction' that the Hebrews would be likely to meet. Each occurrence has to do with *Jewish opposition* to the ministry of Paul. The occurrences are confined to the beginning and the end of his Acts ministry. The only other reference during the Acts period speaks of Israel as 'a disobedient and gainsaying people' (Rom. 10:21).

Perhaps it is hardly necessary to explain to our readers that 'contradiction' is connected, too, with our own blessed calling, contradiction from those, who, like gainsaying Israel, 'have a zeal of God but not according to knowledge', and who, totally misunderstanding our witness, speak of ultradispensationalism! Let us not be weary and faint, even though undoubted men of God call us hard names, thinking they are serving God. This careful and proportionate consideration of what Christ endured will enable us to take up our cross, for none of us can suffer anything comparable with the sufferings of Christ.

'*Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin*'. When we see that the 'striving' here includes the word *agon* - race, we realize that the figure of the contest is still maintained.

Let us 'consider Him', the great Prince-Leader and Perfecter of faith, and see how He embraces all the qualities exhibited in Hebrews 11.

His offering 'speaketh better things than that of ABEL'.

He was the beloved Son of God in Whom God was 'well pleased (ENOCH).

He saves in a sense that was impossible to NOAH.

He was more intimate than even the 'friend of God' could be (ABRAHAM).

He was 'The only Begotten Son' offered by the Father (ISAAC).

He was One Who indeed blessed regarding things to come (JACOB).

He will be the great Ruler and Restorer (JOSEPH).

He is the Prophet greater than MOSES.

He embraces all the heroic acts of GIDEON, DAVID and others.

He endured as none else endure, refusing deliverance, refusing to save Himself, and finally attained unto that better resurrection to glory, where He waits the day of His return.

He is indeed the altogether lovely One, the chiefest among ten thousand. Here, as in Colossians 3, 'Christ is ALL'.

Sonship and Birthright (Heb. 12:5-25)

Hebrews 12:5-24 is occupied with a two-fold theme: 5-14, sons; 15-24, firstborn.

The first section, sons, speaks of that of which *all* are partakers if they are true children. The second, of that which only the *firstborn* attain, but of which *the Esaus* fail.

The structure of 12:5-14 is simple in its broad outlines, though involved when we approach the detail.

Hebrews 12:5-14

A 12:5-10. Mark of sonship. Discipline received.
B 12:10. The end. Partakers of His holiness.
A 12:11-13. Fruit of righteousness. Discipline exercised.
B 12:14. The pursuit. Peace and holiness.

The opening verse of Hebrews 11 is twofold in its aspect, viz., (1) faith is the substance of things hoped for; this is the theme of Chapter 11: (2) The *elengchos* of things not seen; this is the theme of Hebrews 12:5-14.

Elengchos is balanced by *elengcho* in Hebrews 12:5, where it is translated 'rebuked'. Now the quotation, 'the just shall live by faith' in Hebrews 10:38, takes us back to the same word, for in Habakkuk 2:1 we find it in the word 'reproved' as we have already seen. In Hebrews 12 the apostle quotes Proverbs 3:11,12, where in the LXX translation, we find *elengchos* as 'correction'. This 'rebuke', 'correction', 'discipline', is an essential accompaniment of sonship and growth.

Let us now look at one or two passages that illuminate the purpose and instruments of chastening:

'Thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldst keep His commandments, or no. And He humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that He might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live. Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years. Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the LORD thy God chasteneth thee' (Deut. 8:2-5).

We are apt to fix our minds upon the painful side of chastening, and, by reason of our folly, there is often a need for that phase, but it is good also to notice that a part of this discipline or chastening was the provision of the daily manna, the marvellous preservation of clothing, and the care of the wanderers' feet.

'The LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity. Blessed is the man whom Thou chastenest, O LORD, and teachest him out of Thy law' (Psa. 94:11,12).

'We are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world' (1 Cor. 11:32).

Here is another comfort: *chastening is not condemnation. Chastening* is for *sons, condemnation* for the unbelieving *world.* Man's thoughts are vain; he needs a two-fold treatment, chastening to remove folly, teaching to supply the needed instruction.

Chastening is not only the work of the Father, for Christ Himself says to the Laodicean church: 'As many *as I love*, I rebuke and *chasten*: be zealous therefore, and repent' (Rev. 3:19).

The apostle puts the matter of this chastening before the reader in a variety of ways. First, the attitude of mind toward it. Do not despise it. Do not faint when rebuked. Perhaps 'despise' is too strong a word. Rather, what is meant is to hold lightly, to have very little concern about it. That is one attitude to be avoided. There is the opposite extreme, however, that is, of magnifying the chastening endured, and so 'fainting' at the rebuke. This also is wrong. We have to remember that the chastening has to do with us 'as sons' (Heb. 12:5-7). It comes to us from One Who loves us (Heb. 12:6). To be without chastening is to be without proof of sonship. The little gutter child, unkempt, uncorrected, uncared for, is free from the discipline, restraint, training, care and correction that loving fatherhood imposes, but who, knowing the truth, would exchange the 'discipline' of the one for the 'liberty' of the other?

The apostle proceeds to reason from the lesser to the greater. We have had fathers in this life whose discipline was brief, and, as far as they knew, right. But it was sometimes in error, yet we held them in respect. God is the Father of our spirits; His discipline is never at fault, and it tends to life. Shall we not then much rather render submission to Him?

The object that the Lord has in view all this time is revealed in Hebrews 12:10: 'That we might be partakers of His holiness'. Holiness is the atmosphere of Hebrews, as righteousness is of Romans. The sanctification of believers is entirely outside their own deeds or endeavours. They are sanctified by the blood of Him Who suffered 'without the gate' (Heb. 13:12). If they are called upon to go unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach (Heb. 13:13), it is but manifesting in act and character what has been already accomplished. The going without the camp will never sanctify, but it may *manifest* sanctification.

'By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all' (Heb. 10:10).

'For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified' (Heb. 10:14).

This 'perfecting for ever' is in nowise altered or minimized because the epistle proceeds to urge each to 'go on unto perfection', or because it associates perfecting with suffering and obedience. When therefore we read that this discipline has in view the partaking of His holiness, we do not understand that any amount of scourging can sanctify, but that the believer, already perfectly sanctified in Christ, is now trained and encouraged to walk in harmony with such a blessed position. This is practical sanctification.

While the apostle urged the believer to treat with all due reverence the chastening of the Lord, he assumed no stoic indifference. There is something intensely human in the admission: 'Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby' (Heb. 12:11).

Three items in this verse demand attention. First, the words 'nevertheless afterward'. While mother-love is immediate and protective, father-love is concerned with the future. The one sees the babe that is now; the other visualizes the man that is to be. The underlying thought is very close to that of 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 which hinges upon the words, 'while we look not at the things which are seen'.

Then there is the Greek expression translated 'the peaceable fruit of righteousness'. We understand this to mean in English, 'the peaceable fruit, *namely*, righteousness'. Holiness in Christ is manifested, and imputed righteousness has produced its peaceable fruit. The chastening and the discipline has had the effect of pruning; it has produced fruitfulness. Here is a parallel with Philippians 1:11 which speaks of bringing forth the *fruits* of righteousness.

All, however, turns upon the third expression: 'To them which are exercised thereby', just as the prayer in Philippians urges the need for discernment and trying the things that differ.

Watch the effect of discipline upon two of the Lord's children. One becomes mellow, the other hard and sour. The one is going on unto perfection, the other drawing back unto perdition. Look at Israel in the wilderness. After their first experience at Marah one would have thought that the next problem concerning water would, at once, have thrown them back on the memory of the Lord's earlier intervention on their behalf, and that they would have trusted in quiet confidence. But no, so far as they were concerned, the discipline of Marah was wasted upon them; they were not 'exercised thereby'. Let us not pass through trials and reap no benefit! Let us ever seek to be 'exercised' by the discipline of our pathway, and then it will turn to our profit and the Lord's glory. This exercise is the mark of the 'perfect' or mature: 'But strong meat belongeth to them that are perfect, even those who by reason of use have their *senses exercised* to discern both good and evil' (Heb. 5:14). A baby has senses, a man has *senses exercised*. A

true son of God is exercised by the chastening of the Lord; he is unworthy of the Name if he is indifferent or hardened.

It is not without bearing upon the theme of Hebrews 12 that the word 'exercise' is *gumnazo*. The word actually means 'to be naked' because in the Greek sports the competitors were stripped. So we have *gumnos* translated 'naked' in Matthew 25:36; 2 Corinthians 5:3; Hebrews 4:13 and other places. Coming, as it does, after the exhortation to 'lay aside every weight and the easily-entangling sin, and run with patience the race set before us', this word *gumnazo* is very apt.

Seeing then that chastening, though unpleasant, is fruitful, we are exhorted to: 'Lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be dislocated; but let it rather be healed. Follow peace with all men' (Heb. 12:12-14). In other words, we are not to seek martyrdom; we are not to pose as sufferers; we are not to pick the roughest tracks and run the thorniest way. Rather are we to gird up the loins and hope to the end; make the place for our feet as level as we can, not aggravate the lame ankle, but rather get it well, that we may finish our course with joy. Further, we are to follow peace with all men. Our discipline will sometimes come through the permitted oppression of man, and when it does we must bow before the Father's good pleasure. On the other hand we should not go out of our way to irritate our fellows or ask for trouble, but as far as in us lies, we are to make peace. The word 'safe' in Philippians 3:1 is the Greek *asphales*, a grip for the feet of a runner, our modern asphalt. Here is another parallel between Philippians and Hebrews.

Another line of exhortation is discovered here by observing a parallel with Philippians 3:19, where the believer is urged to mark those who so walk that their end is perdition or loss. So here, those who were running the race are told to make a firm track so that others not so strong or fleet of foot would be encouraged to continue.

'And holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord' (Heb. 12:14).

This will cause us to run up against the elements of the world and the tradition of men, and will probably provide all the chastisement that we can endure, but without it, we are warned that 'no man shall see the Lord'.

The two words that should be emphasized in the whole passage under consideration are 'endure' and 'exercise':

'If ye *endure* chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons' (Heb. 12:7).

'Nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them that are *exercised* thereby' (Heb. 12:11).

We now pass from that which is common to all sons to that which is peculiar to the firstborn, namely, the birthright. It will help us in the approach to this section to see the structure first:

Hebrews 12:15-25

A 12:15. **a** Looking diligently.
b Lest any man fall back.
B 12:16,17. The birthright bartered (*Prototokia*).
C 12:18-21. Ye are not come. Six 'ands' SINAI.
C 12:22-24. But ye are come. Seven 'ands' SIN.
B 12:23,24. The birthright enjoyed (*Prototokos*).
A 12:25. ***a*** See.
b Lest ye refuse.

The section opens with a warning: 'Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God'. It does not say 'fall from the grace of God', but '*fail* of the grace of God'. *Hustereo*, 'to come short', occurs in Hebrews 4:1, and that passage partially explains what we are considering here: 'Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it'. The context speaks of Israel's forty years' wandering in the wilderness, and their failure, though redeemed to 'go on unto perfection'. We are not dealing with sonship, but with birthright; not salvation, but possession, not deliverance from Egypt, but entry into Canaan. The warning is threefold:

(1) Lest any fail (come short) of the grace of God.

(2) Lest any root of bitterness spring up.

(3) Lest there be any fornicator or profane person as Esau.

What is this root of bitterness? The apostle is quoting from Deuteronomy 29 and a reference to that passage will show his meaning clearly. Moses is addressing the people of Israel before his death, at the close of forty years' wandering in the wilderness, and in verse 18 says:

'Lest there should be among you man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turneth away this day from the LORD our God, to go and serve the gods of these nations; lest there should be among you a *root that beareth gall and wormwood*' (Deut. 29:18).

Here is the 'root of bitterness', a heart that turns away from God, or, in the language of Hebrews 3:12:

'Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God'.

The words of Amos 6:12 seem to have some reflection upon the 'peaceable *fruit* of righteousness' and the '*root* of bitterness': 'Ye have turned judgment into gall, and the fruit of righteousness into hemlock'. The effect of this root of bitterness is trouble and defilement. A reference to John 18:28 will show the nature of the defilement - something that was profane, something from which a Jew would shrink.

We have next to learn in what sense Esau was a fornicator, and what bearing it has upon the teaching of this passage. There are two outstanding events in Esau's history that are recorded against him. One is the selling of his birthright for a mess of pottage; the other his marriage with women outside the covenant:

'And Rebekah said to Isaac, I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth: if Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these which are of the daughters of the land, what good shall my life do me?' (Gen. 27:46).

The word 'fornicator' is not to be taken literally, but is rather explained by the apostle to refer to 'a profane person'. Now this word profane (*bebelos*) is made up of the particle *be*, denoting privation, and *belos*, a *threshold of a temple;*: hence one who was debarred from entry into a holy place. In the same way the Latin word *profanus* means one who stands *pro fano* - at a distance from a temple; hence too, our English word 'fane', a church. Esau had no appreciation of either his birthright or the holy nature of the Covenant of God. He becomes a warning to the Hebrews who were being tempted to cast away the precious and enduring substance of their heavenly birthright for the mess of pottage of present earthly ease.

Verse 17 is a complete explanation of the difficult passage in Hebrews 6. There the exhortation is to go on unto perfection. 'But', says the writer, 'It is impossible for those who were once enlightened ... if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance'. So, of Esau it is written: 'For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears'. Esau and his example stand out in the closing portion of Hebrews, as the children of Israel in the wilderness stand out in the opening section (chapters 3 and 4). The warning is for the Hebrews who, like their fathers and like Esau, were in danger of drawing back, turning aside, losing the heavenly for the sake of the earthly. Hebrews 8:7 continues 'Then should no place have been sought for the second', showing that the two Covenants are here in view. The apostle now brings before the mind the two mountains, Sinai and Sion, which are explained in Galatians 4 as representing the two Covenants, Sinai standing for 'Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children', and Sion for 'Jerusalem which is above is free, which is our mother' (R.V.) (Gal. 4:24-26).

We have in Hebrews 12:18-21 Moses, the mediator of the old Covenant, and in Hebrews 12:22-24 Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant, and it is under the New Covenant and not under the old, that the birthright can be enjoyed.

The figure called *Polysyndeton* (or 'many ands') is employed in the description of both covenants. Let us notice it:

'For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, AND that burned with fire, AND (nor? JP) unto blackness, AND darkness, AND tempest, AND the sound of a trumpet, AND the voice of words ...'.

'But ye are come unto mount Sion, AND unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, AND to myriads of angels, a full assembly, AND to a church of firstborn ones, having been enrolled in heaven, AND to God the Judge of all, AND to the spirits of righteous ones having been perfected, AND to the Mediator of the new covenant - Jesus, AND to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel' (not AV JP).

It will be seen that a due observation of these 'ands' will help us to keep each feature in its place.

The A.V. leads one to read: 'To the general assembly and church of the firstborn', as though it were one company. *Paneguris*, the word translated 'general assembly', means an assembly met together for some festal or joyful occasion, and the construction of the passage necessitates the translation: 'And to myriads, a festal assembly of angels'.

We learn that myriads of angels were associated with Sinai and the giving of the law: 'The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: The Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place' (Psa. 68:17; see also Deut. 33:2). If these angels were at mount Sinai, they shall also be at Mount Sion, and there they will be a 'festal assembly', for 'the marriage of the Lamb' will have come.

This church is the church of the firstborn, a special company, those who did not despise their birthright, nor barter it away for a morsel of meat. This same company is referred to as: 'The spirits of just men made perfect', each expression having been used in the context of chapters 11 and 12. In 12:9 we read of 'The Father of spirits'; in chapter 11 'the righteous' are in view (10:38; 11:4,7,8), and in 11:40 it is the perfecting: 'God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be perfected'.

The close association of the 'better thing', the 'better country' and the 'better resurrection' with this perfecting shows that here in Hebrews 12 we are taken to that time when this church of the firstborn shall be complete and enter into its inheritance and become the Bride, the Lamb's wife. Here Abraham will set foot in that city for which he looked; Moses will receive that reward unto which he had respect; all who believed, yet died, not having received the promise, will enter into their birthright. The mediator is not Moses, neither is the blood the blood of bulls and goats: 'Jesus' is the Mediator of the New Covenant, and this blood of sprinkling speaks better things than that of Abel.

This heavenly Sion is before the apostle right through the epistle. The 'so great salvation' of 2:3 is connected with the 'age to come' of which he wrote in 2:5, and the 'glory' unto which the Captain of salvation was leading (2:10). The words: 'He is not ashamed to call them brethren' (2:11), the thought of the Captain being 'perfected' through sufferings (2:10), find their echo in the word: 'God is not ashamed to be called their God: for He hath prepared for them a city' (11:16), and the 'perfecting' of the spirits of just men in 12:23.

It was toward this goal that the apostle urged the Hebrew believers to 'go unto the goal (perfection)'. The weights which they were counselled to lay aside would include those things mentioned in 6:2, a passage we have already seen in close connection with Esau and his vain seeking for repentance (6:4-6; 12:16,17).

The section closes with a word of warning, very similar to the warning that precedes chapter 11. In the structure we show it thus:

C 10:26-31. 'He that despised Moses' law died without mercy ... how much more ...'.
C 12:25. 'They escaped not who refused Him that spake on earth, much more ...'.

Here we return to the teaching of chapter 2. In that passage the comparison is between the words spoken by angels and the words spoken by the Lord, and the question is put: 'How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?' In the other passage the angels are omitted, and the comparison is made between the seriousness of refusing him who spoke on earth, namely, Moses, the servant, and of refusing the Son Who has since spoken from heaven.

The epistle opens with the fact that God has spoken, and that He has spoken in two ways; once through His servants, and now in His Son. The Hebrews were in danger of minimizing the sin of refusing to hear what the Lord

had said. The epistle as it continues leads away from the ministry of angels, the mediatorship of Moses, the captaincy of Joshua, the priesthood of Aaron, and the blood of bulls and goats, and focuses all its light upon the Lord Jesus, Who sums up and outshines them all. He has now spoken from heaven. He is there at the right hand of God. There He ever liveth. There He sits 'henceforth expecting'.

There are 'much mores' of mercy, but Hebrews 10:26-31 and 12:25 contain 'much mores' of warning and judgment.

CHAPTER 13

THE TYPICAL SET ASIDE FOR THE REALITY IN CHRIST.

Outside the Camp (Heb. 12:25 to 13:12)

The epistle now draws to its conclusion. Much that these Hebrews had prized and valued as permanent had been shattered and was passing away. This element is introduced in the opening chapter. Speaking of the creation, the works of the Lord's hands, it says: 'They shall perish; but Thou remainest' (Heb. 1:10,11). This finds its echo in Hebrews 12: 27: 'The removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things that are not shaken may remain'.

All through the epistle there is the exchange of the passing for the permanent. The law concerning the Aaronic priesthood is disannulled and gives place to Christ, the Priest after the power of an endless life (Heb. 7:16-18). The Tabernacle made with hands gives place to the true Tabernacle not made with hands, which the Lord pitched and not man (Heb. 8:1,2; 9:24). The old Covenant is not found faultless, and is ready to vanish away, giving place to the New Covenant of which the Lord is the Mediator (Heb. 8:7-13; 10:16). The sacrifices and offerings of the old system pass away in the presence of that one Sacrifice offered once for all (Heb. 10:1-14). The Hebrews were to learn that the Mosaic law was transient, and that the kingdom that remains and which cannot be moved is found alone under the sway of the true King-Priest of the order of Melchisedec, Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Flowing from the contemplation of these solemn issues comes a series of practical exhortations. The first is: 'Let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a consuming fire' (Heb. 12:28,29). The words: 'for our God is a consuming fire' are taken from Deuteronomy 4:24, and come in a context of deepest solemnity. Chapter 4 opens with a warning concerning adding to or diminishing from the Word of God, and then refers to the evil of Baal-Peor. What took place there is described in Numbers 25. The close relationship between idolatry and immoral practices will explain the sudden reference to marriage etc., in chapter 13 of Hebrews. In Deuteronomy 4:11,12 also is the reference to the mountain that burned with fire and 'the voice of the words'.

The Hebrews would be warned that the service of God was not something within the authority of man to arrange. God Himself had set aside the visible, external and typical; let them therefore remember that acceptable worship would now be concerned with the heavenly, the true and antitypical. The word 'acceptably' is *euarestos*. It occurs as follows in Chapter 13.

'With such sacrifices God is *well pleased*' (Heb. 13:16).

'Working in you that which is *well-pleasing*' (Heb. 13:21).

These references look back to the example of Enoch, and to the divine comment: 'Without faith it is impossible to *please* Him'.

In close and startling proximity to the need for acceptable service and the fact that God is a consuming fire come the words:

'Let brotherly love continue (remain)' (Heb. 13:1).

'Be not forgetful to entertain strangers' (Heb. 13:2).

'Remember them that are in bonds' (Heb. 13:3).

'Marriage is honourable in all' (Heb. 13:4).

When we remember that the glorious doctrine of Ephesians is linked by the apostle with its practical outworking expressed in the relationship of husband and wife, parent and child, master and servant, and that similar warnings concerning immoral acts are included (see Eph. 5 and 6), we are the more prepared to learn that our whole life, with its complete circle of outgoings, is involved in this blessed and glorious service. Carnal ordinances, baptisms, fasts, feasts and ceremonies have given place to hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, bodies washed with pure water, and heart-service in every sphere of life.

Brotherly love and the entertaining of strangers are a part of acceptable service to God. This is seen by a further reference to 13:15,16: 'By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name'. lf we stop here, however, we are not rendering *acceptable* service. Brotherly love and hospitality must be added; therefore the passage continues: 'But to do good and to have fellowship, forget not'. The words 'forget not' are the structural link with Hebrews 13:1,2:

'Be not forgetful' (verse 2).

'For with SUCH sacrifices God is *well pleased*' (verse 16).

This close connection between God and the brotherhood in service has been expressed in Hebrews 10:22-24:

'Let us draw near ... Let us hold fast ... Let us consider one another'.

While we have no room for humanism, we are also sure that a mere doctrinal exactness is not acceptable with God. The true service embraces the Lord and His people, and is sound both in doctrine and practice. So the third reference to 'acceptable' stresses 'doing':

'Now the God of peace (literally 'of the peace', something already mentioned and understood, Heb. 7:2; 12:11,14), that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting (age-abiding) covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working (doing) in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ' (Heb. 13:20,21).

Philippians, the parallel epistle in the dispensation of the Mystery, has the same emphasis:

'It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do'.

'Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, DO: and *the God of peace* shall be with you' (Phil. 2:13; 4:9).

Hospitality (*philoxenia*), 'the entertaining of strangers', is urged upon the believer more than once in the epistles. Romans 12:10 and 13 unite 'brotherly love' with 'hospitality' as does Hebrews 13:1,2. One of the qualifications of the bishop was that he should be 'given to hospitality' (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:8), and 1 Peter 4:9 says: 'Use hospitality one to another without grudging', for an element of unwillingness blights service to the Lord. The onus of hospitality in our present mode of life often falls upon the woman. Here is an act of acceptable service which can be truly rendered to God as the prayer, praise and pulpit utterance of her husband. Indeed, Hebrews 13:15,16 shows that worship in the assembly may be vitiated by the lack of consideration for others afterwards. The times for true acceptable service are not only Sundays at 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m., but they may have as much to do with clean sheets as with robes of righteousness, and in dispensing the bread that perisheth as with the Word of truth.

We have had brotherly love and love of strangers (*philadelphia* and *philoxenia*). We are now reminded of love that goes out to those who, though not present with us, need our sympathy: 'Remember them which are bound' (Heb. 13:3). God is ever 'mindful' (same word) of man 'and visited him' (Heb. 2:6). We are neither to forget hospitality nor to omit sympathy, for the full quotation of verse 3 is much beyond mere remembrance.

'Remember them which are in bonds (bound), AS BOUND WITH THEM, and them which suffer adversity, AS BEING YOURSELVES ALSO IN THE BODY'.

This sympathy has been spoken of earlier: 'becoming partakers with them that were so used. For ye ... had compassion on them that were in bonds' (Heb. 10:33,34 R.V.). The intimate relationship between believers has been expressed in 1 Corinthians 12:13,14,26: 'Whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it'. So sympathy goes out to those in bonds, as bound with them, and to those in adversity, as being equally in the body.

There is much to be said for the interpretation that makes the passage equivalent to, 'For you also are still in the flesh, and liable at any moment to similar adversity'.

The statement in verse 4 that marriage is honourable, and its most intimate relationships undefiled, seems to have been necessitated by the presence of those who, like the Essenes, taught that marriage should be shunned. The word 'undefiled' in this particular is noteworthy, for it occurs in but one other place in Hebrews, namely 7:26, where it speaks of our 'undefiled' High Priest. This is a sufficient answer to those who would impose celibacy upon God's ministers, and is a word in season for us on whom the night of 1 Timothy 4:1-3 is fast descending. The danger is all the other way. The decrying of marriage cannot but lead many into the paths of Baal-Peor, the doctrine of Balaam and the teaching of that woman Jezebel. George Bernard Shaw writes in *John O'London's Weekly* under the heading *The Right to Motherhood*:

> 'No political constitution will ever succeed unless it includes the recognition of an absolute right to sexual experience and is untainted by the Pauline or romantic view of such experience as simple in itself ... legalizing polygamy, because there are more adult women in the country than men'.

Over against this insidious propaganda that fills the columns of certain periodicals, we must place with the utmost resolution the words of Holy Scripture, remembering that Hebrews 13:4 is not 'Pauline', but 'given by inspiration of God'. And however the evils that are advocated may be glossed under the titles 'free love', 'liberty of the sexes' etc., it still stands written: 'Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge'. We are still in sight of the heavenly city, the new Jerusalem, and there, we have already seen, is 'God, the Judge of all'. And of that city it is written:

> 'The fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolators, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death ... And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth ... but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life' (Rev. 21:8,27).
>
> 'The church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven' (Heb. 12:23 not AV JP).
>
> 'Our God is a consuming fire' (Heb. 12:29).

For certain purposes we speak of some sins as social sins. Some acts are crimes, some are civil offences, but for the believer (as in the case of David) murder and adultery become sins against heaven and against God (Psa. 51:4). This but anticipates the kingdom of God on earth, when God's will shall then be law, as it is in heaven.

We drew attention earlier to Deuteronomy 4 with its two-fold sin, and we have seen that marriage and its travesty are brought before us in Hebrews chapter 13. Where is idolatry? Were the Hebrews warned against that sin? And were they in any real danger of falling into it? The answer is that idolatry is mentioned, and the Hebrews were in danger of committing it.

'Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have' (Heb. 13:5).

'Without covetousness' is *aphilarguros* = 'not loving silver'. We have, therefore, *philadelphia*, *philoxenia*, and *philarguros* in sequence, with true married love implied in verse 4. True service turns on love, and love out of place or spent on the wrong object is at the bottom of all evil. 'The love of money (*philarguria*) is a root of all evil' (1 Tim. 6:10).

'Men shall be lovers of their own selves .	*philautoi.*
Covetous	*philarguroi.*
Haters of good men	*aphilagathoi.*
Lovers of pleasures	*philedonoi.*
Rather than lovers of God'	*philotheoi.*

(2 Tim. 3:2-4).

This catalogue of the evils that shall characterize the 'last days' and the 'perilous times' begins and ends with false love, and has at its centre lack of love for the good.

Now this covetousness under the form of *pleonexia* ('the wish to have more') is condemned as 'idolatry' (Eph. 5:5; Col. 3: 5). The corrective for 'the wish to have more' and for 'covetousness' and 'the love of money' is the conscious presence of the Lord:

'Be content with such things as ye have: for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me' (Heb. 13:5,6).

At the risk of wearying the reader with the truth that 'Philippians is parallel with Hebrews', we draw attention once more to the teaching of Philippians 4:

'Let your moderation be known unto all men. *The Lord is at hand (near)* ... I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, *to be content* ... Ye have well done, that ye did *communicate* with my affliction' (Phil. 4:5,11,14).

Covetousness and contentment cannot thrive together. Philippians 2:13,14 makes the inworking of God parallel with Hebrews 13:21, and absence of murmuring parallel with the contentment of verse 5.

Murmuring, fornication and idolatry are brought together in 1 Corinthians 10:7-10, which, together with tempting the Lord in the wilderness, is similar teaching to chapters 3 and 4 of Hebrews and also to the theme of the book. Further, 1 Corinthians 9:24; 10:1-14; Philippians 3, and Hebrews as a whole, all dealing with running for a prize, being perfected, becoming a 'castaway' or disqualified by drawing back to 'perdition' or 'destruction', and the citizenship, the heavenly city, and inter-related themes, are a stronger witness to the peculiar teaching and purpose of these epistles than any criticism can overthrow.

There are three passages of the Old Testament in which appears the promise quoted in Hebrews 13:5: 'I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee'. The first is Deuteronomy 31:6; the second, Joshua 1:5; the third 1 Chronicles 28:20. In the first Moses is addressing the children of Israel, saying:

'The LORD thy God, He will go over before thee, and He will destroy these nations from before thee, and thou shalt possess them; and Joshua, he shall go over before thee, as the LORD hath said ... Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, He it is that doth go with thee; He will not fail thee, nor forsake thee' (Deut. 31:3-6).

We give the structure of the section so that what has been seen, and what is yet to be studied, may be kept in their right relationship:

Hebrews 12:25 to 13:21

A 12:25 to 13:4. **a** Things that remain.
b Acceptable service (*euarestos*).
c Forget not hospitality (*epilanthanomai*).
B 13:5-8. **d** Conversation (*tropos*, manner of life).
e Remember them that have the rule over you.
C 13:9-13. **f** Established with grace, not meats.
g His own blood.
h Bearing His reproach.
A 13:14-16. ***a*** No remaining city.
c Forget not to have fellowship (*epilanthanomai*).
b Acceptable sacrifice (*euaresteo*).
B 13:17-19. ***e*** Obey them that have the rule over you.
d Live honestly (*anastrepho*).
C 13:20,21. ***g*** Through the blood of the *aionian* covenant.
f Perfect you.
h Doing that which is well pleasing (*euarestos*).

This is exactly in line with the theme of Hebrews, the pressing on into the land of promise, and triumph over opposing forces, encouraged by the presence of the Lord (Joshua here is a type of Christ, the true Captain of salvation).

The third passage deals with the building of the Temple by Solomon:

'And David said to Solomon his son, Be strong and of good courage, and do it: fear not, nor be dismayed: for the LORD God, even my God, will be with thee; He will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the LORD' (1 Chron. 28:20).

This typifies the house built by Christ, 'the Son', as contrasted with that in which Moses was a servant (Heb. 3:5,6).

The reader may remember the line of the hymn: 'I'll never, no never, no never, forsake'. This iteration and reiteration of negatives may be employed merely to meet the demands of metre and rhythm, but even so, it is but an echo of the passage, 'I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee', which contains in the original, no less than five negatives. Literally rendered it reads:

'*No*. I will *not* leave thee; *nor* yet *not* by *no* means will I forsake thee'.

This is the ground of contentment, the antidote for covetousness, the secret of perseverance.

The great Leader (*archegos*, 2:10; and 12:2), the true Joshua, appointed others as subordinates, who also are called 'leaders', for the words 'them which have the rule over you' are literally 'your leaders', in both verses 7 and 17 of Chapter 13. Let us observe what is said of the leaders:

'Remember them which are your leaders, who have spoken unto you the Word of God; whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation, Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and unto the ages' (literally).

'Obey them that have the rule over you (are your leaders), and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you'.

Some very important characteristics of the true leader are given here:

(1) They speak the Word of God.

(2) Their faith is such that it is worth imitating.

(3) The issue of their conversation is Christ.

(4) They watch on behalf of your souls.

(5) They will have to render an account.

The reference to 'imitating' makes one think of Philippians 3:17-19: 'Be joint-imitators of me, and mark those who walk ... whose end is perdition'.

A great variety of opinion has been expressed by writers on the meaning of the word 'end' in Hebrews 13:7. Some take it to refer to the martyrdom or death of these leaders. The word is *ekbasis*, and occurs in but one other place in the New Testament, namely, 1 Corinthians 10:13, where the A.V. translates it 'a way to escape'. Has it ever struck the reader that it is somewhat strange to read of 'a way of escape' being provided, 'that ye may be able to bear it'? If we escape the temptation, how do we bear it? A more accurate rendering and one which seems to give the apostle's meaning is, 'God ... will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also *make the issue*, that ye may be able to bear it'.

This verse in 1 Corinthians 10 is in a context exactly parallel with Hebrews 3 and 4. Just as the trial of the Corinthians was bearable because they knew that God held the issues in His hand, because the trials had an object and a purpose of which they had been made aware, so in Hebrews 13:7 we hear once again the words of 12:11, 'nevertheless afterward'.

In chapter 13:17 the Hebrew believers are exhorted to obey their leaders. *Hegeomai*, the word for a leader, means to think or esteem, then to lead and to rule. We read in Acts 15:22 that Judas and Silas were 'chief' men among the brethren. In Acts 14:12 Paul was reckoned the 'chief' speaker. The apostle enjoined a ready obedience

and submission to any who were Scripturally qualified to lead, and this would be readily yielded by a believer to any who manifested the mark of the true pastor. 'They watch for your souls, as they that must give account'. The leader who answers to this description has no sinecure. He has a position of utmost responsibility and is accountable to the Lord. He must continually act in the light of this: 'that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you'.

Some connect the words, 'that they may do it', with the rendering of an account at the judgment seat of Christ. Others connect the words with the present watching. Possibly the double thought is intended, for whatever is true here has its counterpart when the account is given: 'Look to yourselves, that ye destroy not the things which ye have wrought, but that ye receive a full reward' (2 John 8, R.V. margin). This reference in 2 John 8 is followed by a warning concerning the doctrine of Christ.

In Hebrews 13:8, immediately following the reference to the leaders, and immediately before the warning not to be carried away with divers and strange doctrines, comes the glorious passage 'Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and unto the ages'. The same truth lies at the threshold of the epistle: 'They shall be changed, but Thou art the same' (Heb. 1:11,12). Through all the changes in this creation, both past and future, the Lord remains unchanged; throughout all changes in the dealings of God with men, the decaying and waning of the old Covenant, as well as of the old creation, there is One Who remains the same. This is the bedrock of our faith. This was the issue of the manner of life of the leaders whose faith was to be followed. It was the corrective against the divers and strange doctrines which they were to avoid.

These words 'yesterday and today and for the ages' are parallel with the titles 'Alpha and Omega', or 'Which was and which is, and which is to come'. In the 'yesterday' we know that Abraham saw the day of Christ; that Moses esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; in the 'today' He is still the same. He is still the one great counter-attraction that more than compensates for all reproach or loss, and this will remain unalterably true throughout the ages.

The divers and strange doctrines that were likely to 'carry these believers about' as by adverse currents, were evidently closely connected with 'meats', and these can but refer to all those things that had been left behind:

'Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings (baptisms), and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation' (Heb. 9:9,10).

The glorious standing given to the believer in Christ by the gospel has no room for the shadowy sanctity pertaining to 'meats':

'But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse' (1 Cor. 8:8).

These things of the past are on the same level as circumcision:

'Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God' (1 Cor. 7:19).

'For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men' (Rom. 14:17,18).

We have seen before that the thought of 'acceptable service' runs through the closing chapter of Hebrews, and this passage from Romans follows the same theme.

To us at the present time, this scruple regarding 'meats' (food) seems to have no parallel. We are not concerned about food having been offered to idols, neither are we under any law that divides foods into clean and unclean. At the same time it will not take us long to discover that a great deal passes as 'holiness' and 'privilege', which rests not upon Christ, but upon accessories that have their basis in the flesh. Let us have none of them. All such have been buried in the tomb, and in the new creation they cannot exist:

'We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle. For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore

unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach. For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come' (Heb. 13:10-14).

We may be assisted in the understanding of this passage by the following subdivision:

A Grace not meats. We have an altar.
  B Bodies ... blood ... *without* the camp.
A Jesus, that He might sanctify.
  B His own blood, suffered *without* the gate.
A Let us go forth unto Him.
  B *Without* the camp.
A His reproach bearing.
  B We have *no* continuing city.

We have here two alternating themes, one dealing with sanctification, the other pointing outside the camp or gate. Sanctification is dealt with as something beyond the ceremonial and typical separation involved in 'meats': it has to do with 'grace', and an altar totally distinct from Israel after the flesh. Some have taught that the words, 'we have an altar', refer to the Lord's Supper, a doctrine so foreign to the context that there is no need to waste space in confuting it. Others teach that our altar is the cross. The cross throughout the New Testament is spoken of as a symbol of shame, and in Galatians 3:13 the death on the tree is a death under the curse of the law. Matthew 23:19 declares that the altar is greater than the gift upon it, and that the altar sanctifies the gift. We never read that the cross was greater than the glorious offering of Christ, neither is there the remotest suggestion that the cross sanctified the sacrifice of Christ. Full well we know the reverse is the case.

When we read the Old Testament directions concerning the altar and its treatment, we are not left in doubt as to the altar that 'we have'. The altar built of stone had to be left untouched by the tool of man, for that would pollute it (Exod. 20:25). The altar was cleansed, atoned for, anointed and sanctified, and it was most holy (Exod. 29:36,37). There is no difficulty to faith in believing that the Lord, in the offering of that one Sacrifice, became both the redeeming Passover Lamb, the whole Burnt Offering for acceptance, and the Sin Offering under the curse, and, not only so, but that He, at once the Sacrifice and Sin Bearer, was at the same time High Priest, Altar and Mercy Seat, combining the Sin Offering, burnt to ashes without the camp, with the blood of atonement taken within the veil.

The apostle here in Hebrews 13:11, refers to the offering on the Day of Atonement, which also figures in Hebrews 9, and he quotes Leviticus 16:27. The actual law upon which he builds his argument is expressed in Leviticus 6:30. 'And no sin offering, whereof any of the blood is brought into the tabernacle of the congregation to reconcile withal in the holy place, shall be eaten: it shall be burnt in the fire'.

The position 'without the camp' and 'without the gate' puts an end to Judaism and the old Covenant. Those who have 'boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus' (Heb. 10:19), will also have grace given to go to Him without the camp, leaving behind the types and shadows that could never bring to maturity nor touch the conscience.

There is a word of warning here that it may not be unprofitable to give and to heed. Hebrews 13:13 does not say: 'Let us go forth without the camp'. There are many who, by temperament, are 'separatists'. Three clauses need to be added to the above quotation to make it true:

(1) The addition of 'therefore'.

(2) The placing of 'unto Him' before 'without the camp'.

(3) The closing phrase, 'bearing His reproach'.

'Therefore'. Our removal from 'the camp' or organized and carnal religion must be based upon the work of Christ, and not upon our own inclinations. Further, we go out 'unto Him'; if He is rejected and outside the camp, then we go there too; but in itself, the position of being 'outside' has no attractions for us. We go there because it is 'unto Him'. Then, the added clause, 'bearing His reproach', teaches us that we are not dealing with words, but realities, and Hebrews 11:24-27 reveals the seriousness of the step. The experiences of Hebrews 10:32-35 are the experiences of His 'reproach', and are not to be entered upon lightly.

The statement in verse 14: 'For here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come' turns us back to 11:8-16, where Abraham and his seed, though heirs of God, voluntarily became strangers and pilgrims on the earth, declaring plainly by their withdrawal outside the camp 'that they seek a country, wherefore God hath prepared for them a city'. This is true separation and sanctity, and is set over against the 'meats and drinks, and divers baptisms, and carnal ordinances' that obtained during the time of type and shadow. 'Christ being come' (Heb. 9:11) has made the difference. Christ has suffered without the gate and has ascended to the right hand of God. These facts give us our two-fold position: 'Let us draw near!' 'Let us go forth!' Hebrews recognizes no middle course.

'Outside the camp' and 'within the veil' find their equivalent in the prison epistles where we are seated together in the heavenlies. We find our citizenship in heaven, counting all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, having no room for the elements of the world, or for its attempts at sanctity. We, too, shall find that, as we set our minds on things above where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God, there will be a corresponding mortifying of the members that are on the earth.

The Great Shepherd (Heb. 13:18-25)

We now consider the closing portion of this wonderful epistle: 'Pray for us; for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly. But I beseech you the rather to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner'. Paul continually expressed a desire for the prayers of the saints on his behalf. The following may be taken as samples:

'Ye also helping together by prayer' (2 Cor. 1:11).

'Praying ... for all saints; and for me' (Eph. 6:18,19).

'Finally, brethren, pray for us' (2 Thess. 3:1).

His reference to a 'good conscience' is also quite characteristic, and especially when he has been touching upon the passing of the faith of his fathers:

'Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day' (Acts 23:1).

'But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers ... I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men' (Acts 24:14-16).

His request is that these Hebrews should pray for him that he might be restored the sooner, and the reference to Timothy being 'set at liberty', or 'dismissed', show that those to whom the epistle was written knew who the writer was and the circumstances in which he was then placed. We do not, and it is evident that such knowledge is unnecessary for the understanding of the epistle.

The writer of the epistle calls it a 'word of exhortation' and 'a letter in a few words'. Whether the word *apoluo* should be interpreted as 'set at liberty', as from prison, or 'dismissed' in the sense of being sent on a journey, we cannot decide. The salutation from those 'of Italy' (verse 24) would express the desire for unity between those who were Jews by nature and those who were Gentiles, but whether the writer was actually in Italy at the time of writing cannot be decided from these words. We now give our attention, in closing, to the prayer of the apostle for the Hebrews to whom he had written this word of exhortation:

'Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the *aionian* covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to Whom be glory for ever and ever (unto the ages of the ages). Amen' (Heb. 13:20,21).

The apostle often speaks of the God of peace toward the close of an epistle:

'Now the God *of peace* be with you all. Amen' (Rom. 15:33).

'And the God *of peace* shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly' (Rom. 16:20).

'Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace: and the God of love and *peace* shall be with you' (2 Cor. 13:11).

'Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God *of peace* shall be with you' (Phil. 4:9).

'And the very God of *peace* sanctify you wholly' (1 Thess. 5:23)

'Now the Lord of *peace* Himself give you *peace* always by all means' (2 Thess. 3:16).

It was the lot of the apostle Paul continually to stir up strife. He likens his whole life's ministry to a conflict, yet he ever desired, and hoped for peace.

The emphasis here in Hebrews 13:20 is upon the resurrection, 'that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus'. This is the only place in the epistle where the resurrection of Christ is specifically mentioned. In Romans the resurrection is prominent, and this is so in 1 and 2 Corinthians, Ephesians and Colossians, but in Hebrews the emphasis is upon the ascension; the seated Priest Who has passed through the heavens to the right hand of God. That there should be no occasion to say that the epistle to the Hebrews takes no cognisance of the resurrection however, this passage stands written. That resurrection is acknowledged and essential to the doctrine of the epistle, a reference to Hebrews 7:16,23,24 and 28 will show, and its presence in the great examples of faith (11:19,22 and 35) confirms its place in the scheme of the epistle.

Christ is here called 'that great Shepherd of the sheep'. This, it is suggested, is an allusion to Moses: 'Then He remembered the days of old, Moses, and his people, saying, Where is He that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock?' (Isa. 63:11). Moses was the shepherd of the sheep, Christ the *great* Shepherd of the sheep. Moses was brought up out of the sea, Christ was brought up again from the dead.

As the Shepherd, Christ is presented to us in a three-fold capacity in the New Testament. As the *good* Shepherd He gives His *life* for the sheep (John 10:11). (The word 'life' being strictly 'soul' has reference to the shedding of blood). As the *chief* Shepherd He is yet to appear and give a crown of glory to the faithful under-shepherds left in charge of the flock of God (1 Pet. 5:2-4). These three titles correspond with the three 'appearings' of Hebrews 9:23-28, the order of the first two being changed.

The word 'great' of Hebrews 13:20 may read with the clause, 'through the blood of the *aionian* Covenant', i.e., He was great through the blood etc., or it may indicate that Christ, as the great Shepherd, was raised from the dead because the blood of the Covenant had been shed, and all things pertaining to sin and salvation had been dealt with.

'Make you perfect' (*katartizo*) has in it the idea of adjusting to new circumstances. For example, it is used for 'mending' nets (Matt. 4:21). It is rendered, 'perfectly joined together', in connection with 'divisions', in 1 Corinthians 1:10. Galatians 6:1 renders it 'restore' where a fall or rupture had occurred. *Katartismos* is the word used in Ephesians 4:12 to explain the work of the new ministry given after the great change of Acts 28. This is the intention in Hebrews 11:3, where the 'ages were adjusted', and in Hebrews 10:5, 'the body prepared' for the Lord, when the time came for the setting aside of sacrifices and offerings. To offer acceptable service these Hebrew believers were under the necessity of being 'fitted', 'mended', 'restored', or 'adjusted' to the new dispensation and to the terms of the New Covenant. This is also true of ourselves. If we are members of the One Body, blessed under the terms of the Mystery, we must be adjusted or fitted to our new calling before we shall be acceptable. Hence the prayers of Ephesians 1 and Colossians 1 with this in view. Hence, also, the special ministry of Ephesians 4.

This acceptable service is summed up in the words of Hebrews 13:21, 'to do His will', and this is true for every dispensation and phase of the divine plan. It is true of the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 6:10), as well as of the Mystery (Eph. 1:9). It is the goal of all prayer (Col. 1:9; 4:12). The will of God comprises the whole work for which Christ came, lived and died (Heb. 10:7,9, 10). The will of God sums up all service (Heb. 10:36; 13:21).

All is 'through Jesus Christ, to Whom be glory unto the ages of the ages, Amen'. Here is the purging of the conscience from dead works in order that service to the living God may begin (Heb. 9:14). This alone makes service acceptable. Throughout the epistle there has been one movement, away from all else to Christ, and it will refresh us to go over the epistle with this in mind before we finish.

(1) SPEAKING OF THE WORD HE SAITH:

'God, Who at sundry times ... spake in time past ... by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us in Son' (Heb. 1:1,2).

(2) SPEAKING OF ANGELS HE SAITH:

'Unto which of the angels said He at any time, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee?' (Heb. 1:5).

'Of the angels He saith, Who maketh His angels spirits ... But unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever' (Heb. 1:7,8).

(3) SPEAKING OF CREATION HE SAITH:

'They shall perish; but Thou remainest ... They shall be changed: but Thou art the same' (Heb. 1:11,12).

(4) SPEAKING OF ADAM HE SAITH:

'But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus ... crowned with glory and honour' (Heb. 2:8,9).

(5) SPEAKING OF MOSES HE SAITH:

'Moses verily was faithful ... as a servant ... But Christ as a Son over His own house' (Heb. 3:5,6).

(6) SPEAKING OF JOSHUA HE SAITH:

'For if Jesus (Joshua) had given them rest, then would He not afterward have spoken of another day' (Heb. 4:8).

(7) SPEAKING OF THE LEVITICAL PRIESTHOOD HE SAITH:

'They truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: but this Man, because He continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood' (Heb. 7:23,24).

(8) SPEAKING OF THE HIGH PRIEST'S WORK HE SAITH:

'Into the second (tabernacle) went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people'.

'But Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained (found) *aionian* redemption for us' (Heb. 9:7-12).

(9) SPEAKING OF THE SACRIFICES HE SAITH:

'Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast Thou prepared Me ... we are sanctified through (by) the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all' (Heb. 10:5-10).

(10) SPEAKING OF FAITH HE SAITH:

'By faith Abel, Enoch, Noah', etc.

'Looking off unto Jesus the Captain and Perfecter of faith' (Heb. 11 and 12).

(11) SPEAKING OF THE MEDIATOR HE SAITH:

Israel 'entreated that the Word should not be spoken to them any more (through Moses the mediator)'.

'But ye are come ... to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant' (Heb. 12:19-24).

(12) SPEAKING OF THE LEADERS HE SAITH:

'Remember your leaders. Obey your leaders'.

'The Lord Jesus that great Shepherd of the sheep' (Heb. 13:7-21).

Shadow gives place to substance, the transient to the abiding, the old to the new, and throughout, CHRIST IS ALL.

Throughout this series we have given structures in fairly full detail. We now repeat, in barest outline, the structure of the epistle as a whole, the details of which can be pieced together by the reader from the chapters dealing with the passages themselves:

HEBREWS AS A WHOLE

A	1 and 2.	THE WORD SPOKEN.	Thou *remainest*. Thou art the *same*. How escape, if *neglect*? Bring in again the First Begotten.
B	3 to 6.	ON TO PERFECTION.	Let us come boldly. Example of unbelief. Perfect v. babes. No renewal unto repentance. Senses exercised. Crucify afresh the Son.
C	7 to 10:18.	PERFECTION WHERE FOUND	*But this Man*. No perfection in priesthood No perfection in law. No perfection in ordinances No perfection in sacrifices *But this Man*.
B	10:19 to 12:24.	BACK TO PERDITION	Let us draw near. Examples of faith. Sons v. firstborn. Found no place for repentance. Discipline exercised. Trod underfoot the Son.
A	12:25 to 13.	HIM THAT SPEAKETH.	Things that *remain*. Jesus Christ the *same*. Not escape if *refuse*. Brought again from the dead.

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