

EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS

Author & Audience:

unknown author (often favored to be Barnabas or Apollos), writing to primarily Jewish Believers in the Diaspora, probably in Rome

Date:

64-70 C.E.

Purpose:

The Epistle to the Hebrews, while uplifting the central work of Yeshua the Messiah, particularly as High Priest, is still a very complicated text. It is easily recognized how the main audience of Hebrews composed Jewish Believers who were in danger of denying Yeshua, and hence returning to a Messiah-less Judaism. The author of Hebrews wants them to recognize the great blessings they would be abandoning, were they to do this. But rather than disparage the Torah, Moses, the Levitical priesthood, and the institutions of Israel—the author of Hebrews instead praises the value of these things, in order to issue much higher praise to Yeshua and His salvation.

1

God Has Spoken by His Son

¹ In many and various ways long ago, God spoke to *our* ancestors by the prophets,

² has in these last days spoken to us by *His Son*, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the ages.

³ And He, being the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His being, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had made purification of sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high;

⁴ having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.

The Son Superior to Angels

⁵ For to which of the angels did He ever say, "YOU ARE MY SON, TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN YOU [Psalm 2:7]?" And again, "I WILL BE A FATHER TO HIM, AND HE SHALL BE A SON TO ME [2 Samuel 7:14; 1 Chronicles 17:13]?"

⁶ And again, when He brings the firstborn into the world, He says, "AND LET ALL THE ANGELS OF GOD WORSHIP HIM [Deuteronomy 32:43, LXX; Psalm 97:7]."

⁷ And of the angels He says, "WHO MAKES HIS ANGELS WINDS, AND HIS MINISTERS A FLAME OF FIRE [Psalm 104:4]."

⁸ But of the Son *He says*, "YOUR THRONE, O GOD, IS FOREVER AND EVER, AND THE SCEPTER OF UPRIGHTNESS IS THE SCEPTER OF YOUR KINGDOM."

⁹ "YOU HAVE LOVED RIGHTEOUSNESS AND HATED LAWLESSNESS; THEREFORE GOD, YOUR GOD, HAS ANOINTED YOU WITH THE OIL OF GLADNESS ABOVE YOUR COMPANIONS [Psalm 45:6-7]."

¹⁰ And, "YOU, LORD, IN THE BEGINNING LAID THE FOUNDATION OF THE EARTH, AND THE HEAVENS ARE THE WORKS OF YOUR HANDS;

¹¹ "THEY WILL PERISH, BUT YOU REMAIN; AND THEY ALL WILL BECOME OLD AS A GARMENT;

¹² "AND AS A MANTLE YOU WILL ROLL THEM UP; AS A GARMENT THEY WILL ALSO BE CHANGED. BUT YOU ARE THE SAME, AND YOUR YEARS WILL NOT COME TO AN END [Psalm 102:25-27]."

¹³ But to which of the angels has He ever said, "SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR YOUR FEET [Psalm 110:1]?"

¹⁴ Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to do service for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?

2

The Great Salvation

¹ Therefore we must pay much greater attention to the things that were heard, lest we drift away from them.

² For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty,

³ how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard,

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

The Pioneer of Salvation

⁵ For He did not subject to angels the world to come, of which we are speaking.

⁶ But one has testified somewhere, saying, "WHAT IS MAN, THAT YOU REMEMBER HIM? OR THE SON OF MAN, THAT YOU CARE FOR HIM?"^a

⁷ "YOU SET HIM FOR A LITTLE WHILE LOWER^b THAN THE ANGELS; YOU CROWNED HIM WITH GLORY AND HONOR, AND HAVE APPOINTED HIM OVER THE WORKS OF YOUR HANDS";

^a An inclusive language rendering for *anthrōpos* and *huios anthrōpou* in 2:6, is seen in versions like the NRSV, "What are human beings that you are mindful of them, or mortals, that you care for them?" Or the TNIV, "What are mere mortals that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them?" The Kingdom New Testament has the carefully chosen, "What are humans that you should remember them? What is the son of man, that you should take thought for him?" For the sake of familiarity, 2:6 has been left in a more customary form, although the inclusive language translations present cannot be excluded from one's exegesis of 2:9-11.

While Yeshua's identification with humanity is in view (2:9-11), and there are a few likely echoes of the Son of Man titular references to Yeshua seen in the Gospels—here the reference to man/humanity and son of man/mortals is provided to emphasize more the calling that the Creator God had upon the people, men and women, specially made in His image. For many in Hebrews' audience, to possibly give up on Yeshua the Messiah, would mean giving up on God's good intention for His human creations. It is only in knowing Yeshua as Savior, that the redeemed in Him can fulfill the vocation of ruling over the world to come or New Creation, second only to God Himself (2:7-8).

^b Grk. *ēlattōsas auton brachu*; most often rendered as something like, "You made him a little lower" (HNV), perhaps implying just some kind of creation activity in view. What is more to the point is that the verb *elattoō* means "to cause to be lower in status" (BDAG, 313), indicating that the status of human beings is more in view here. The Moffatt New Testament rendering is better than some of the others one will encounter: "For a little while thou hast put him lower than the angels." Even The Amplified Bible has, "ranked him lower."

^c Not all Greek manuscripts include the latter clause, "AND HAVE APPOINTED HIM OVER THE WORKS OF YOUR HANDS" (cf. Nestle and Aland,

⁸ "YOU PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET" [Psalm 8:5-7, LXX]. For in that He subjected all things to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him.

⁹ But we see Him who has been set^d for a little while lower than the angels, *namely* Yeshua, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God He might taste of death for everyone.

¹⁰ For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many children^e to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings.

¹¹ For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all from one Father; for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters,

¹² saying, "I WILL DECLARE YOUR NAME TO MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS, IN THE MIDST OF THE ASSEMBLY I WILL SING YOUR PRAISE" [Psalm 22:22].

¹³ And again, "I WILL PUT MY TRUST IN HIM" [Isaiah 8:17, LXX; cf. 2 Samuel 22:3, LXX; Isaiah 12:2]. And again, "BEHOLD, I AND THE CHILDREN WHOM GOD HAS GIVEN ME" [Isaiah 8:18].

¹⁴ Since then the children share in blood and flesh, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless^f he who had the power of death, that is, the Devil;

¹⁵ and might deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives.

¹⁶ For assuredly He does not give help to angels, but He gives help to the seed of Abraham.

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

GNT, 565; Aland, GNT, 744). The NASB/NASU is a modern English version that leaves this clause intact, as it does appear in the Septuagint reading of Psalm 8:6.

^d Grk. verb *elattoō*; "put lower" (Moffatt New Testament).

^e Grk. *huios*; "sons and daughters" (TNIV).

^f This is sometimes rendered as "destroy" (RSV/NRSV/NIV/ESV/HCSB), but the verb *katargeō* more ably means "to make of none effect" (LS, 413) or "to cause someth. to lose its power or effectiveness, invalidate, make powerless" (BDAG, 425). A Messianic version like TLV has "break the power"; the Moffatt New Testament has, "he might crush him."

¹⁸ For since He Himself had suffered, having been tested, He is able to help those who are tested.

3

Yeshua Superior to Moses

¹ Therefore, holy brothers and sisters, partakers of a Heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Yeshua,

² who was faithful to Him who appointed him, as Moses also was in all His house.

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

⁴ For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God.

⁵ And Moses indeed was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken later;

⁶ but Messiah *is faithful* as a Son over His house, whose house are we, if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end^a.

A Rest for the People of God

⁷ Therefore, just as the Holy Spirit says, "TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE,

⁸ "DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS, AS IN THE PROVOCATION, LIKE IN THE DAY OF THE TRIAL IN THE WILDERNESS^b,

⁹ "WHERE YOUR ANCESTORS TRIED *Me* BY PROVING *Me*, AND SAW MY WORKS FORTY YEARS.

¹⁰ "THEREFORE I WAS ANGRY WITH THIS GENERATION, AND SAID, 'THEY ALWAYS GO ASTRAY IN THEIR HEART, AND THEY DID NOT KNOW MY WAYS';

¹¹ "AS I SWORE IN MY WRATH, 'THEY SHALL NOT ENTER INTO MY REST' [Psalm 95:7-11]."

¹² Take heed, brothers and sisters, lest there should be in any one of you an evil heart of unbelief, in falling away from the living God.

¹³ But exhort one another day after day, so long as it is called "Today," lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

¹⁴ For we have become partakers of Messiah, if we hold fast the beginning of our confidence firm until the end,

¹⁵ while it is said, "TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS, AS IN THE PROVOCATION [Psalm 95:7-8]."

¹⁶ For who, when they heard, provoked *Him*? Indeed, did not all those who came out of Egypt *led* by Moses?

¹⁷ And with whom was He angry forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness?

¹⁸ And to whom did He swear that they would not enter into His rest, but to those who were disobedient?

¹⁹ And so we see that they were not able to enter in because of unbelief.

4

¹ Let us fear, therefore, lest a promise is left open of entering into His rest, *that* any one of you should seem to have come short of it.

² For indeed we have had good news proclaimed to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard.

³ For we who have believed enter into that rest, just as He has said, "AS I SWORE IN MY WRATH, THEY SHALL NOT ENTER INTO MY REST" [Psalm 95:11], although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

⁴ For He has thus said somewhere of the seventh *day*, "AND GOD RESTED ON THE SEVENTH DAY FROM ALL HIS WORKS" [Genesis 2:2];

⁵ and again in this *passage*, "THEY SHALL NOT ENTER INTO MY REST" [Psalm 95:11].

⁶ Since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly had the good news proclaimed *to them* failed to enter in because of disobedience,

⁷ He again sets a certain day, "Today," saying through David so long afterward just as has been said before, "TODAY IF YOU HEAR

^a Not all ancient Greek manuscripts include the clause *mechri telous bebaian* or "until the end" (Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 665).

^b The author of Hebrews employs the terms "rebellion" and "testing" (3:8, RSV), whereas the Hebrew texts of Exodus and Psalms use *Masah* and *Merivah*. These respective place names mean "proving and strife" (M.A. MacLeod, "Massah and Meribah," in *ISBE*, 3:277). The Septuagint renders these proper names as the improper *paratikrasmos* and *peirasmos*, reflecting the interpretation of them meaning "rebellion" and "trial" (Psalm 95:8, Apostle's Bible). The author of Hebrews, primarily working from the LXX, follows suit.

HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS” [Psalm 95:7-8].^a

⁸ For if Joshua had given them rest, He would not have spoken afterward of another day.

⁹ There remains therefore a Sabbath rest^b for the people of God.

¹⁰ For the one who has entered into His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His.

¹¹ Let us therefore be diligent to enter into that rest, so that no one will fall by the same example of disobedience.

¹² For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

¹³ And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and laid bare before the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

Yeshua the Great High Priest

¹⁴ Having then, a great High Priest, who has passed through the Heavens, Yeshua the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.

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

¹⁶ Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.

5

¹ For every high priest, being taken from among mortals, is appointed on behalf of mortals in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins;

² he can bear gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself also is beset with weakness;

³ and because of it he is indebted—as for the people, so also for himself—to offer *sacrifices* for sins.

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

⁵ So also Messiah did not glorify Himself to become a High Priest, but He who said to Him, “YOU ARE MY SON, TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN YOU” [Psalm 2:7];

⁶ as He says also in another *passage*, “YOU ARE A PRIEST FOREVER ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK” [Psalm 110:4].

⁷ In the days of His flesh, having offered up prayers and supplications, with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and having been heard because of His piety,

⁸ though being a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered.

⁹ And having been perfected, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation,

¹⁰ being designated by God a High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

Warning against Apostasy

¹¹ About him we have many things to say, and *it is* hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing.

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

¹³ For everyone who partakes of milk is not experienced^c in the word of righteousness, for he is an infant.

¹⁴ But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses exercised^d to discern good and evil.

^a Psalm 95 in the Hebrew MT is strictly anonymous, but in the Greek LXX is “A laudation. Of an Ode. Pertaining to David” (Psalm 95:1, NETS; cf. Ralphs, *Septuaginta*, 2:104).

^b Grk. *sabbatismos*, which is to be notably distinguished from the normal word for “rest,” *katapausis*. The term *sabbatismos* is derived from the verb *sabbatizō*, used in the LXX meaning, “to keep the Sabbath” (LS, 722). This is why it is rendered in the CJB as “*Shabbat-keeping*,” perhaps followed by William L. Lane, *Word Biblical Commentary: Hebrews 1-8*, Vol. 47a (Nashville: Nelson Reference and Electronic, 1991), 93 with “Sabbath celebration.” The TLV has a more standard Messianic rendering in “*Shabbat rest*.”

^c Grk. *apeiros*; “pert. to lack of knowledge or capacity to do someth., *unacquainted with, unaccustomed to*” (BDAG, 100); “without experience” (ASV); “unskilled” (RSV/NRSV/ESV); “not accustomed” (NASU); “not acquainted” (NIV).

^d Grk. *gumnazō*; often rendered as “trained.”

6

¹ Therefore leaving the elementary doctrine^a of Messiah, let us press on to perfection^b, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,

² of teaching about immersions, and laying on of hands, and the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.

³ And this we will do, if God permits.

⁴ For it is impossible, for those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the Heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit,

⁵ and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come,

⁶ and *then* having fallen away, to renew them again to repentance, since they again execute to themselves the Son of God on a wooden scaffold, and put Him to open shame.

⁷ For the land which has drunk the rain that often falls upon it, and brings forth vegetation useful to those for whose sake it is also tilled, receives a blessing from God;

⁸ but if it bears thorns and thistles, it is worthless and near to being cursed; its end is to be burned.

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

¹⁰ For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you showed toward His name, in that having ministered to the holy ones, and still do minister.

¹¹ And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence, to the full assurance of hope until to the end,

¹² that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

God's Sure Promise

¹³ For when God made a promise to Abraham, since He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself,

¹⁴ saying, "SURELY BLESSING I WILL BLESS YOU, AND MULTIPLYING I WILL MULTIPLY YOU" [Genesis 22:17].

¹⁵ And thus, having patiently endured, he obtained the promise.

¹⁶ For human beings^c swear by one greater *than themselves*, and in every dispute of theirs the oath *given* is final for confirmation.

¹⁷ So when God, desiring to show more abundantly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, interposed with an oath,

¹⁸ so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we may have a strong encouragement, we who have fled for refuge, to lay hold of the hope set before us.

¹⁹ We have this hope as an anchor of the soul, *a hope* both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil,

²⁰ where as a forerunner Yeshua entered for us, having become a High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

7

The Priestly Order of Melchizedek

¹ For this MELCHIZEDEK, KING OF SALEM, PRIEST OF GOD MOST HIGH, WHO MET ABRAHAM RETURNING FROM THE SLAUGHTER OF THE KINGS AND BLESSED HIM,

² to whom also Abraham APPORTIONED A TENTH PART OF ALL *the spoils*, was first of all, by the translation of *his name*, king of righteousness, and then also KING OF SALEM, which is King of peace [Genesis 14:17-20].

³ Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but resembling the Son of God, he abides a priest perpetually.

⁴ Now consider how great this one was to whom Abraham, the patriarch, gave a tenth of the choicest spoils.

⁵ And indeed those descendants of Levi who receive the priest's office have commandment to collect a tenth from the people, according to the Torah, that is, from their kindred, although these have come out of the loins of Abraham.

^a Grk. *tēs archēs tou Christou logon*; perhaps more literally "the doctrine of the first principles of Christ" (ASV).

^b Grk. *epi tēn teleiōtēta*; more often rendered as "to maturity" (RSV/NASU/NIV/ESV).

^c Grk. *anthrōpoi*; "people" (ESV).

⁶ But the one whose genealogy is not traced from them has collected a tenth from Abraham, and has blessed him who has the promises^a.

⁷ But without any dispute the lesser is blessed by the greater.

⁸ And in this case mortals who die receive tithes, but in that case one *receives them*, of whom it is witnessed that he lives on.

⁹ And, so to speak, through Abraham even Levi, who receives tithes, paid tithes,

¹⁰ for he was still in the loins of his ancestor when Melchizedek met him.

¹¹ Now if there was perfection through the Levitical priesthood (for upon it the people were legislated)^b, what further need was *there* for another priest to arise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be designated according to the order of Aaron?

^a Grk. *echonta tas epangelias*; *echonta* is a present active participle, more literally, "having," but this clause is unfortunately frequently rendered as "had the promises" (RSV/NASU/NIV/ESV); among Messianic versions the TLV has the much appreciated, "holding the promises."

^b Grk. *ho laos gar ep' autēs nenomothetētai*; be aware of poor renderings of *ep' autēs* such as "for under it" (RSV/ESV/HCSB). Notably absent from this clause is the preposition *hupo* or "under."

While most contemporary English translations communicate something to the extent that "for on the basis of it the people received the Law" (NASU), it is necessary to probe the significance of the verb *nomotheteō*, "to make law" (LS, 535). Among interpreters, F.F. Bruce *New International Commentary on the New Testament: The Epistle to the Hebrews* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 164 fn#36 says that *nomotheteō* means "legislate." The verb *nomotheteō* does appear in the Septuagint to describe the giving of the Torah by God to Moses: "the commandments that I wrote to legislate [*nomotheteō*] for them" (Exodus 24:12, NETS; cf. Psalm 84:6; 4 Maccabees 5:25), but is this what is in view in 7:11?

Deuteronomy 17:10 notably says, concerning the Levitical priests, "And you shall do according to the word whatever they report to you from the place that the Lord your God may choose for his name to be called there, and you shall guard very much to do according to all things whatever is legislated [*nomotheteō*] for you" (NETS). The Levitical priesthood definitely had a Torah-prescribed responsibility to teach Ancient Israel God's commandments (Deuteronomy 33:10), to in other words "legislate" the people. That the verb *nomotheteō* can regard God's people being taught His Law and commandments, is something witnessed throughout the Septuagint version of Psalms, where *nomotheteō* translated the Hebrew verb *yarah* ([BibleWorks 8.0: LEH Lexicon](#) [Lust-Eynikel-Hauspie] notes how *nomotheteō* "always transl. of [*yarah*]," and can mean both "to give laws to" and "to instruct, to teach, to ordain"), in passages such as: Psalm 24:8, 12; 27:11; 119:33, 102.

The rendering offered for 7:11 here concurs with the conclusion that upon the basis of the priesthood, the people of Ancient Israel were to be "legislated," i.e., taught the Torah. That the First Century Jewish community was not properly "legislated," meaning taught God's Torah from the Temple priesthood, is easily witnessed. The Saddusaical priesthood was decisively impotent to instruct people in perfection—precisely because "the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, nor an angel, nor a spirit" (Acts 23:8a, NASU)—and a new priesthood, that of Yeshua the Messiah, needed to be established!

¹² For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there takes place a change of the Torah^c also.

¹³ For the one of whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no one has officiated at the altar.

¹⁴ For it is evident that our Lord has sprung forth^d from Judah, a tribe with reference to which Moses spoke nothing concerning priests.

¹⁵ And this is yet more abundantly evident, if according to the likeness of Melchizedek there arises another priest,

¹⁶ who has become a *priest* not according to a law of a fleshly command^e, but according to the power of an indestructible life.

¹⁷ For it is witnessed *of Him*, "YOU ARE A PRIEST FOREVER ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK" [Psalm 110:4].

¹⁸ For, on the one hand, there is a setting aside of a former commandment because of its weakness and ineffectiveness

¹⁹ (for the Torah made nothing perfect)^f, and on the other hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.

²⁰ And inasmuch as *it was not without an oath*

²¹ (for they indeed became priests without an oath, but He with an oath through the One saying to Him, "THE LORD HAS SWORN AND WILL NOT CHANGE HIS MIND, 'YOU ARE A PRIEST FOREVER'" [Psalm 110:4]);

²² so much the more also has Yeshua become the guarantee of a better covenant.

²³ And indeed, they are many *who* are made priests, because by death they are prevented from continuing,

²⁴ but He, because He abides forever, holds His priesthood permanently.

^c Grk. *nomou metathesis*; "a transformation of Torah" (CJB); "an alteration of law" (TLV).

^d Grk. verb *anatellō*; "to make to rise up or to grow up" (LS, 63); more commonly rendered as "descended from" (RSV/NASU/NIV).

^e Grk. *kata nomon entolēs sarkinēs*; lit. "law of a fleshly" command" (Brown and Comfort, 771); other versions have something like "a law of physical requirement" (NASU); "a legal requirement concerning bodily descent" (RSV); "a regulation as to his ancestry" (NIV).

Messianic versions vary, including the renderings: "a rule in the Torah concerning physical descent" (CJB); "a Torah requirement of physical descent" (TLV); "a law of a commandment concerning the flesh" (The Messianic Writings).

^f Grk. *ouden gar eteleiōsen ho nomos*; "for the Torah did not bring anything to the goal" (CJB); "Because the Law did not bring anything to completion" (The Messianic Writings); what is in view here is the Torah's inability to provide a permanent solution for the human sin problem, the perfection referenced being complete reconciliation with the Creator God.

²⁵ Therefore, also, He is able to save completely those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

²⁶ For such a high priest was fitting for us: holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners, and exalted above the Heavens;

²⁷ who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins, and then for the *sins* of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.

²⁸ For the Torah appoints mortals as high priests who are weak, but the word of the oath, which came after the Torah, *appoints* a Son, made perfect forever.

8

The High Priest of a New and Better Covenant

¹ Now the main point of the things being said *is this*: we have such a High Priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the Heavens,

² a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not a human being.

³ For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices; therefore it is necessary that this *High Priest* also have something to offer.

⁴ Now if He were on Earth, He would not be a priest at all, since there are those who offer the gifts according to the Torah;

⁵ who serve a copy and shadow of the Heavenly things, just as Moses, being warned *by God* when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, “SEE,” He says, “THAT YOU MAKE all things ACCORDING TO THE PATTERN WHICH WAS SHOWN TO YOU ON THE MOUNTAIN” [Exodus 25:40].

⁶ But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been legislated upon better promises^a.

⁷ For if that first *service*^b had been faultless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second.

⁸ For finding fault with them, He says, “BEHOLD, DAYS ARE COMING, SAYS THE LORD, WHEN I WILL EFFECT A NEW COVENANT WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AND WITH THE HOUSE OF JUDAH;

⁹ “NOT LIKE THE COVENANT WHICH I MADE WITH THEIR ANCESTORS IN THE DAY WHEN I TOOK THEM BY THE HAND TO LEAD THEM OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT; FOR THEY DID NOT CONTINUE IN MY COVENANT, AND I DID NOT CARE FOR THEM, SAYS THE LORD.

¹⁰ “FOR THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS THE LORD: I WILL PUT MY TORAH {more lit. ‘MY LAWS’}^c INTO THEIR MIND, AND ON THEIR HEART ALSO WILL I WRITE IT^d. AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE.

¹¹ “AND THEY SHALL NOT TEACH EVERYONE HIS FELLOW CITIZEN, AND EVERYONE HIS BROTHER, SAYING, ‘KNOW THE LORD,’ FOR ALL WILL KNOW ME, FROM THE LEAST TO THE GREATEST OF THEM.

¹² “FOR I WILL BE MERCIFUL TO THEIR INIQUITIES, AND I WILL REMEMBER THEIR SINS NO MORE” [Jeremiah 31:31-34, LXX].

¹³ In His saying, “A new *service*,”^e he has made the first old. But that which is becoming old and ageing is close to vanish away.

most English versions provide it. (The NASB/NASU is most appreciable in that “*covenant*” is marked by *italics*, unlike most others.)

While the New Covenant is something that features within the author’s discussion for sure, what is *hē prōtē* really connected to? Is adding “covenant” an inappropriate value judgment, as made by most Bible translators? Grammatically speaking, given the surrounding context, there are four possible feminine nouns that can be legitimately associated with *hē prōtē*. *Diathēkē* or “covenant” is certainly one of them (7:22; 8:6, 9, 10; 9:4, 16, 17, 20), but so are *skēnē* or “tabernacle” (7:22; 8:6, 9, 10; 9:4, 16, 17, 20), *hierōsunē* or “priesthood” (7:11, 12, 24), or even *leitourgia* or “ministry/service” (8:6; 9:21). The latter three would be used as referents to the Levitical sacrificial system, which the author of Hebrews has affirmed previously in ch. 8, is surpassed in effectiveness by the Melchizedekian priesthood of Yeshua (8:1-4).

It was largely the first “*priesthood*” that was actually discovered by God to not be “faultless,” because its human occupiers (“them,” 8:8) cannot perform the same type of work that Yeshua the Son performs before the Father in Heaven. If, for the statement *Ei gar hē prōtē ekeinē*, translators provided “first *priesthood*,” “first *tabernacle*,” “first *ministry*”—or perhaps the most encompassing of these three, “first *service*”—the reference would be placed upon the Levitical priesthood and Tabernacle service. Not enough realize, that it is upon the basis of Yeshua’s priesthood, that the New Covenant has been inaugurated forth (8:6). The problem was not with any previous covenant God had made with His people, but it was with the actual people—especially the priests—that definitely required salvation history to progress forward (1:1-2), and for a new arrangement to be made via the sacrifice of Yeshua the Messiah, providing permanent atonement and forgiveness.

^a Grk. *nomous mou*; lit. “My laws” (NASU) in the plural; The Messianic Writings follows suit with “My laws”; the rendering provided here conforms to the TLV, “My Torah.”

^b Grk. *autous*; lit. “them,” conforming to *nomous mou* or “My laws.”

^c Grk. *en tō legein kainēn*; “in the saying ‘new’” (YLT).

^a Grk. *hētis epi kreittasin epangeliais nenomothētai*.

^b Grk. *Ei gar hē prōtē ekeinē ēn amemptos*; “For if that first was faultless” (LITV); “For if that first one had been flawless” (TLV); this clause notably lacks the the term *diathēkē* or “covenant,” even though

9

The Earthly and Heavenly Sanctuaries

¹ Now even the first *service*^a had regulations of Divine worship and the Earthly sanctuary.

² For there was a tabernacle prepared, the outer one^b, in which *were* the lampstand^c and the table and the bread of the Presence^d; this is called the holy place.

³ And behind the second veil *was* a tabernacle which is called the Holy of Holies,

⁴ having a golden censer of incense^e and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which *was* a golden jar holding the manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant.

⁵ And above it *were* cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat; of these things we cannot now speak in detail.

⁶ Now these things having thus been prepared, the priests go continually into the outer^f tabernacle, performing the services,

⁷ but into the second only the high priest *enters*, once a year, not without *taking* blood, which he offers for himself and for the sins of the people committed in ignorance^g.

⁸ The Holy Spirit *is* signifying this, that the way into the holy place has not yet been disclosed, while the first tabernacle^h still has a standingⁱ,

⁹ which *is* a symbol for the present time. Accordingly both gifts and sacrifices are being offered which cannot make the worshipper perfect in conscience,

¹⁰ *relating* only to foods and drinks and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until a time of setting things straight.

¹¹ But Messiah, having arrived *as* a high priest of the good things to come, *entered* through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation;

¹² neither through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered once for all into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption.

¹³ For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled, sanctify for the cleansing^k of the flesh,

¹⁴ how much more will the blood of Messiah, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

¹⁵ And for this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, in order that since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were *committed* on the basis of the first covenant^l, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

¹⁶ For where a covenant is, there must of necessity be the death of the one who made it.

¹⁷ For a covenant is secure on the basis of dead bodies^m, for it is never in force while the one who made it lives.

^a Grk. *Eiche men oun [kai] hē prōtē*; almost all versions insert "covenant," in spite of the fact that *diathēkē* does not appear in the Greek source text. While this rendering has chosen "service," as this would be an encapsulating term for the first *priesthood/tabernacle/ministry* (Levitical) to be compared and contrasted to the Messiah's priestly service (Melchizedekian), it is notable that the 2011 Kingdom New Testament by N.T. Wright actually has "The first Tabernacle had..." for 9:1.

^b Grk. *hē prōtē*; lit. "the first" (ASV).

^c Grk. noun *luchnia*; "the Septuagint for [menorah]; a [candlestick] lampstand, candelabrum" (Thayer, 384).

^d Grk. *hē prothesis tōn artōn*; "setting out of the bread" (Brown and Comfort, 775).

^e Grk. noun *thumiaterion*; most often rendered in modern versions as "golden altar of incense" (RSV, et. al.), but properly defined as "a vessel for burning incense, a censer" (LS, 371); "golden censer" (KJV/NKJV).

^f Grk. *tēn prōtēn*; lit. "the first" (ASV).

^g Grk. *tou laou agnoēmatōn*; some versions just have something like "the errors of the people" (RSV), but the specific term employed is *agnoēma*, "sin committed in ignorance/unintentionally" (BDAG, 13).

^h Grk. *tēs prōtēs skēnēs*; sometimes rendered as "the outer tabernacle" (NASU).

ⁱ Grk. *echosēs stasin*; "having standing" (Marshall, 657).

^j Grk. *dikaiōmata sarkos*; "carnal ordinances" (ASV); "fleshy ordinances" (HNV); "physical requirements" (The Messianic Writings).

^k Grk. *katharotēs*; also rendered as "purification" (RSV/NRSV/ESV/HCSB).

^l Grk. *thanatou genomenou eis apolutrōsin tōn epi tē prōtē diathēkē parabasōn*; the clause of interest for readers is *epi tē prōtē diathēkē*, most often rendered as "under the first covenant." Yet, the common preposition legitimately rendered as "under" is *hupo*, and what appears here is *epi*. Lane, 47b:229 offers the more appropriate translation in his WBC volume, "a death having occurred for redemption from transgressions committed on the basis of the former covenant," with *epi* rendered as "on the basis of." In a dative clause (indicating indirect object), the preposition *epi* can be used as a "marker of basis for a state of being, action, or result" (BDAG, 364). Yeshua came to die because of sins committed by people, who obviously violated the Mosaic covenant.

^m Grk. *diathēkē gar epi nekrois bebaia*; commonly and poorly translated with something like, "For a covenant is valid *only* when men are dead" (NASU). A somewhat rough rendering might be "for a covenant over dead bodies [is] ratified" (Brown and Comfort, 777), with a smoother translation seen in YLT, "for a covenant over dead victims is steadfast." Lane, 47b:229 similarly has, "For a covenant is made legally secure on the basis of sacrificial victims."

The term in the NASU rendered "men are dead" is the plural *nekrois*. There is no term relating to "men" (Grk. sing. *anēr* or "humans" (Grk. sing. *anthrōpos*) appearing here. A rendering like "dead ones" or "those dead" (LITV) is much better. The emphasis is

¹⁸ Therefore even the first *covenant* was not inaugurated without blood.

¹⁹ For when every commandment had been spoken by Moses to all the people according to the Torah, he took the blood of the calves^a, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the scroll itself and all the people,

²⁰ saying, "THIS IS THE BLOOD OF THE COVENANT WHICH GOD COMMANDED YOU" [Exodus 24:8].

²¹ And in the same way he sprinkled both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry with the blood.

²² And according to the Torah^b, *one may almost say*, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

Sin Put Away by Messiah's Sacrifice

²³ Therefore it was necessary for the copies of the things in the Heavens to be cleansed with these, but the Heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.

²⁴ For Messiah did not enter into a holy place made with hands, a copy of the true one, but into Heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us;

²⁵ nor was it that He would offer Himself often, as the high priest enters into the holy place year by year with blood not his own.

upon Ancient Near Eastern covenant procedures, where animals would be sacrificed, and those who would make the covenant would agree to be like the dead animals, should the agreement ever be violated.

The rendering chosen for 9:17a follows that of the TLV, "For a covenant is secured upon the basis of dead bodies." The Messianic Writings has the similar, "because a covenant is confirmed over dead bodies."

^a Grk. *tōn moschōn [kai tōn tragōn]*; most versions will have "the blood of the calves and the goats." This may be inaccurate when viewed in light of Exodus 24:5, which only says that "young bulls" (NASU) were sacrificed as a part this event.

While we cannot exclude the possibility for 9:19 that the author of Hebrews is reflecting upon an ancient Jewish tradition of the blood of goats also being offered, it is also quite true how the reading *tōn moschōn [kai tōn tragōn]*, does not appear in all ancient Greek sources of Hebrews. "[A]nd the goats" notably appears in brackets, in critical editions such as the Novum Testamentum Graece 27th Edition (1993; p 576) and GNT Fourth Revised Edition (1998; p 758). It may be speculated that copyists over time added "and the goats" to conform to the earlier reading of 9:12. In spite of this, though, most English Bibles read with "the calves and the goats." The NIV/TNIV is the only major Bible version that follows the correct form "he took the blood of calves," also followed by Lane's rendering in *WBC*, "taking the blood of calves" (47b:229). The CJB also has, "After Moshe had proclaimed every command of the *Torah* to all the people, he took the blood of the calves," followed by the 2011 *The Messianic Writings*, "he took the blood of the calves."

^b Grk. *kata ton nomon*; correctly rendered as "according to the Law" (NASU) or "according to the *Torah*" (CJB/TLV), incorrectly rendered as "under the law" (RSV/NRSV/ESV).

²⁶ Otherwise, it would have been necessary for Him to have suffered often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

²⁷ And inasmuch as it is appointed for mortals to die once and after this *comes* judgment;

²⁸ so Messiah also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation, without *reference* to sin, to those who eagerly await Him.

10

¹ For the Torah, having a shadow of the good *things* to come *and* not the very image of the things, can never by the same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, make perfect those who draw near.

² Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshippers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have had consciousness of sins?

³ But in those *sacrifices* there is a reminder of sins year by year.

⁴ For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

⁵ Therefore, when He comes into the world, He says, "SACRIFICE AND OFFERING YOU HAVE NOT DESIRED, BUT A BODY YOU HAVE PREPARED FOR ME;

⁶ "IN WHOLE BURNT OFFERINGS AND *sacrifices* FOR SIN YOU HAVE TAKEN NO PLEASURE.

⁷ "THEN I SAID, 'BEHOLD, I HAVE COME (IN THE SCROLL OF THE BOOK IT IS WRITTEN OF ME) TO DO YOUR WILL, O GOD'" [Psalm 40:6-8].

⁸ After saying above, "SACRIFICES AND OFFERINGS AND WHOLE BURNT OFFERINGS AND *sacrifices* FOR SIN YOU HAVE NOT DESIRED, NOR HAVE YOU TAKEN PLEASURE *in them*" [Psalm 40:6] (which are offered according to the Torah),

⁹ then He said, "BEHOLD, I HAVE COME TO DO YOUR WILL" [Psalm 40:7]. He takes away the first in order to establish the second.

¹⁰ By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Yeshua the Messiah once for all.

¹¹ And every priest indeed stands daily ministering and offering repeatedly the

same sacrifices, which can never take away sins;

¹² but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD [Psalm 110:1];

¹³ then waiting UNTIL HIS ENEMIES BE MADE A FOOTSTOOL FOR HIS FEET [Psalm 110:1].

¹⁴ For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.

¹⁵ And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after saying,

¹⁶ "THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THEM AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS THE LORD: I WILL PUT MY TORAH {more lit. 'MY LAWS'}^a UPON THEIR HEART, AND UPON THEIR MIND I WILL WRITE IT^b"; *He then says,*

¹⁷ "AND THEIR SINS AND THEIR LAWLESS DEEDS I WILL REMEMBER NO MORE" [Jeremiah 31:34].

¹⁸ Now where there is forgiveness of these things, there is no longer *any* offering for sin.

Exhortation and Warning

¹⁹ Having therefore, brothers and sisters, confidence to enter into the holy place by the blood of Yeshua,

²⁰ by the way which He inaugurated for us, a new and living way, through the veil, that is, His flesh,

²¹ and *having* a great priest over the house of God,

²² let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled *clean* from an evil conscience and our body washed with pure water.

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

²⁴ and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good works,

²⁵ not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the custom of some, but encouraging *one another*; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near.

²⁶ For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,

²⁷ but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and A FURY OF FIRE WHICH WILL CONSUME THE ADVERSARIES [Isaiah 26:11].

^a Grk. *nomous mou*; lit. "My laws" (NASU) in the plural; The Messianic Writings follows suit with "My laws"; the rendering provided here conforms to the TLV, "My Torah."

^b Grk. *autous*; lit. "them," conforming to *nomous mou* or "My laws."

²⁸ Anyone who has set aside the Torah of Moses dies without mercy on *the testimony* of two or three witnesses.

²⁹ How much severer punishment, do you think, will be deemed worthy, *of one* who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?

³⁰ For we know He who said, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY" [Deuteronomy 32:35]. And again, "THE LORD WILL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE" [Deuteronomy 32:36; Psalm 135:14].

³¹ It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

³² But remember the former days, in which, after you were enlightened, you endured a great conflict of sufferings,

³³ partly, being made a public spectacle, both by reproaches and tribulations, and partly by becoming partakers with those who were so treated.

³⁴ For you both had compassion on the prisoners, and accepted joyfully the seizure of your property, knowing that you have for yourselves a better possession and an abiding one.

³⁵ Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward.

³⁶ For you have need of perseverance, so that having done the will of God, you may receive the promise.

³⁷ FOR YET IN A VERY LITTLE WHILE, HE WHO IS COMING WILL COME, AND WILL NOT DELAY.

³⁸ BUT MY RIGHTEOUS ONE SHALL LIVE BY FAITH; AND IF HE SHRINKS BACK, MY SOUL HAS NO PLEASURE IN HIM [Habakkuk 2:3-4, LXX; cf. Isaiah 26:20, LXX].

³⁹ But we are not of those who shrink back to perdition; but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul.

11

Faith

¹ Now faith is assurance of *things* hoped for, a conviction of things not seen.

² For by it the elders received approval.

³ By faith we understand that the ages were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.

⁴ By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he

received approval that he was righteous, God testifying about his gifts, and through faith^a *though* he is dead yet he speaks.

⁵ By faith Enoch was translated so that he would not see death; AND HE WAS NOT FOUND, BECAUSE GOD TRANSLATED HIM [Genesis 5:24]; for he obtained the witness that before his translation he was pleasing to God.

⁶ And without faith it is impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

⁷ By faith Noah, being warned *by God* about things not yet seen, having been reverent, prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

⁸ By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going.

⁹ By faith he lived as a sojourner in the land of promise, as in a *land* not his own, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs with him of the same promise;

¹⁰ for he was looking for the city which has the foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

¹¹ By faith he received the ability to deposit seed, even though Sarah herself was past the proper age, since he counted Him faithful who had promised;^b

^a Grk. *kai di' autēs*; lit. "and through it" (ASV).

^b Grk. *Pistei kai autē Sarra steira dunamin eis katabolēn spermatos elaben kai para kairon hēlikias, epei piston hēgēsato ton epangeilamenon*; more commonly rendered as "By faith even Sarah herself received ability to conceive, even beyond the proper time of life, since she considered Him faithful who had promised" (NASU).

There is some controversy over how to translate 11:11, and whether or not Sarah or Abraham is the subject. The Greek offers us a challenge, reading with *eis katabolēn spermatos*, literally "for the deposition of seed" (Bruce, *NICNT*, 296), speaking of the father's, not the mother's, role in procreation.

Most versions will render 11:11 with something like "By faith Sarah herself received power to conceive" (RSV), as *Sarra* appears in the nominative case (indicating subject) in most critical versions. However, Metzger suggests that it is best to view v. 11 "to be a Hebraic circumstantial clause, thus allowing [Abraam] (ver. 8) to serve as subject of [elaben] ('by faith, even though Sarah was barren, he [Abraham] received power to beget...)" (*Textual Commentary*, 672), thus reading *Sarra* in the dative case (indicating indirect object). This is why the NIV reads as "By faith Abraham, even though he was past age—and Sarah herself was barren—was enabled to become a father because he considered him faithful who had made the promise." Lane in his *WBC* volume renders 11:11 as, "By faith Abraham was enabled to become a father, even though Sarah herself was sterile and past the normal age of child-bearing, because he considered the one who had made the promise faithful" (47b:343).

The rendering provided hopefully offers a fair synthesis of what is seen in the ASV, NASB, and *WBC*.

¹² therefore, also, there was born of one, and him as good as dead, *so many* AS THE STARS OF HEAVEN IN NUMBER, AND AS THE SAND, WHICH IS BY THE SEASHORE, INNUMERABLE [Genesis 15:5-6; 22:17; 32:12; Exodus 32:13; Deuteronomy 1:10; 10:22; Daniel 3:36, LXX].

¹³ These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them and welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and sojourners on the Earth.

¹⁴ For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own.

¹⁵ And indeed if they had been thinking of that *country* from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return.

¹⁶ But as it is, they desire a better *country*, that is, a Heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed of them, to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them.

¹⁷ By faith Abraham, being tested, offered up Isaac; and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten son;

¹⁸ *it was he* to whom it was said, "IN ISAAC SHALL YOUR SEED BE CALLED" [Genesis 21:12].

¹⁹ He considered that God *is* able to raise *people* even from the dead; from which he also received him back as a type.

²⁰ By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau, even concerning things to come.

²¹ By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph; and WORSHIPPED, *leaning* UPON THE TOP OF HIS STAFF^c [Genesis 48:15-16, LXX].

²² By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the exodus of the children of Israel, and gave orders concerning his bones.

²³ By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents,

^c Readers need to note the differences presented by the MT and LXX of Genesis 47:31. The Hebrew MT reads with *rosh ha'mittah* or "head of the bed," whereas the Greek LXX has *epi to akron tēs hradou autou*, "on the top of his staff." These differences may come from the fact that the vowel markings for the Hebrew MT are Medieval in origin, and without them the Hebrew word for "staff," *matteh*, is spelled with exactly the same consonants, *mem*, *tet*, and *heh*, as *mittah* or "bed." The LXX follows the point of view that Jacob was leaning on his staff as he blessed his sons, and the NIV follows this reading in its rendering of Genesis 47:31:

"Swear to me," he said. Then Joseph swore to him, and Israel worshiped as he leaned on the top of his staff" (Genesis 47:31, NIV).

because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's edict.

²⁴ By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;

²⁵ choosing rather to share ill-treatment with the people of God, than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin;

²⁶ considering the reproach of Messiah greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward.

²⁷ By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing Him who is invisible.

²⁸ By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood, that the destroyer of the firstborn would not touch them.

²⁹ By faith they passed through the Red Sea as though *they were passing* through dry land, on which the Egyptians, having made an attempt *to pass*, were *then* swallowed up.

³⁰ By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they had been encircled for seven days.

³¹ By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, having received the spies in peace.

³² And what more shall I say? For the time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets,

³³ who through faith conquered kingdoms, worked righteousness^a, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions,

³⁴ quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight.

³⁵ Women received *back* their dead by resurrection; and others were tortured, not accepting their release, so that they might obtain a better resurrection;

³⁶ and others experienced mockings and scourgings, yes, even chains and imprisonment.

³⁷ They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were put to death with the sword; they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated

³⁸ (*people* of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in deserts and mountains and caves and holes in the ground.

³⁹ And all these, having gained approval through their faith, did not receive what was promised,

⁴⁰ God having provided something better for us, that apart from us they would not be made perfect.

12

The Discipline of the Lord

¹ Therefore let us also, seeing that we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us,

² looking to Yeshua, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the wooden scaffold, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

³ For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary, fainting in your souls.

⁴ You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood, striving against sin;

⁵ and you have forgotten the exhortation which addresses you as children, "MY CHILD, DO NOT REGARD LIGHTLY THE DISCIPLINE OF THE LORD, NOR FAINT WHEN YOU ARE REPROVED BY HIM;

⁶ "FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES, AND HE SCOURGES EVERY CHILD WHO HE RECEIVES" [Proverbs 3:11-12].

⁷ It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with children; for what child is there whom *his* father does not discipline?

⁸ But if you are without discipline, of which all have been become partakers, then you are bastards and not children.

⁹ Furthermore, we had the fathers of our flesh^b to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live?

¹⁰ For they indeed, for a few days, disciplined *us* as seemed best to them, but

^a Grk. *eirgasanto dikaiosunēn*; rendered as either "performed acts of righteousness" (NASU) or "enforced/administered justice" (RSV/NIV/NRSV/ESV/HCSB). The ASV has "wrought righteousness," followed by the LITV and HNV with, "worked out righteousness." What is offered here is "worked righteousness" (Brown and Comfort, 787).

^b Grk. *tēs sarkos hēmōn pateras*; other versions render it as "earthly fathers" (RSV/NASU/ESV); "human parents" (NRSV); "natural fathers" (HCSB).

He disciplines us for our benefit, that we may be partakers of His holiness.

¹¹ All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet afterward it yields peaceable fruit to those who have been trained by it, *the fruit* of righteousness.

¹² Therefore lift up the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees,

¹³ and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame not be put out of joint, but rather be healed.

Warning against Rejecting God's Grace

¹⁴ Pursue peace with everyone, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord.

¹⁵ See to it that *there be* no one who falls short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up trouble *you*, and by it many be defiled,

¹⁶ and that *there be* no fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one meal sold his own birthright.

¹⁷ For you know that even afterwards, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought for it with tears.

¹⁸ For you have not come to *a mountain* that may be touched, and that burned with fire, and to darkness and gloom and whirlwind,

¹⁹ and the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words, which *voice was such that* those who heard entreated that no further word should be spoken to them.

²⁰ For they could not bear that which was ordered, "IF EVEN A BEAST TOUCHES THE MOUNTAIN, IT WILL BE STONED" [Exodus 19:12-13].

²¹ And so fearful was the sight, *that* Moses said, "I AM EXCEEDINGLY FEARFUL and trembling" [Deuteronomy 9:19].

²² But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels,

²³ to the festal gathering and assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of *the* righteous made perfect,

²⁴ and to Yeshua, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than *the blood of* Abel.

²⁵ See that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. For if those did not escape when they refused him who warned *them* on Earth, much more *will we not escape* who turn away from Him who *warns* from Heaven,

²⁶ whose voice shook the Earth then, but now He has promised, saying, "YET ONCE MORE I WILL SHAKE NOT ONLY THE EARTH, BUT ALSO THE HEAVEN" [Haggai 2:6].

²⁷ And this *phrase*, "Yet once more," signifies the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that have been made, in order that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.

²⁸ Therefore, receiving a Kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us have gratitude^a, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe;

²⁹ for our God is a consuming fire.

13

Service Well-Pleasing to God

¹ Let mutual love^b continue.

² Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels, unaware of it.

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

⁴ *Let marriage be held* in honor among all, and *let the marriage bed be* undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge.

⁵ *Let your character be free* from the love of money, being content with the things you have; for He has said, "I WILL NEVER FAIL YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU" [Deuteronomy 31:6],

⁶ so that we can confidently say, "THE LORD IS MY HELPER, I WILL NOT BE AFRAID. WHAT WILL MORTALS DO TO ME?" [Psalm 118:6]"

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

^a Grk. *echōmen charin*; more lit. "have grace" (ASV); the NASU has "show gratitude."

^b Grk. *philadelphia*; "love of the brethren (NASU); "Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters" (TNIV).

^c Grk. *tēn ekbasin tēs anastrophēs*; "the outcome of their {way of} life" (RSV/NIV/NRSV/ESV).

⁸ Yeshua the Messiah *is* the same yesterday and today, *yes* and forever.

⁹ Do not be carried away by various and strange teachings; for it is good that the heart be established by grace, not by foods, through which those who were so occupied were not benefited.

¹⁰ We have an altar, from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat.

¹¹ For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy place by the high priest *as an offering* for sin, are burned outside the camp.

¹² Therefore Yeshua also, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered outside the gate.

¹³ So, let us go forth to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach.

¹⁴ For we do not have a lasting city *here*, but we are seeking *the city* which is to come.

¹⁵ Through Him then, let us offer up a sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of lips confessing His name.

¹⁶ And do not neglect doing good and sharing; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

¹⁷ Obey your leaders and submit *to them*; for they keep watch over your souls, as those who will give an account. *Obey them* in order that they may do this with joy, and not

with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.

¹⁸ Pray for us, for we are persuaded that we have a good conscience, desiring to conduct ourselves honorably in all things.

¹⁹ And I urge *you* all the more to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner.

Benediction and Final Greetings

²⁰ Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep, in the blood of an eternal covenant, our Lord Yeshua,

²¹ make you complete in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Yeshua the Messiah, to whom *be* the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

²² But I urge you, brothers and sisters, bear with this word of exhortation, for I have written to you briefly.

²³ Know that our brother Timothy has been released, with whom, if he comes soon, I will see you.

²⁴ Greet all of your leaders and all the holy ones. Those from Italy greet you.

²⁵ Grace be with you all. Amen.